

Swaffham Town Council - HR & Governance Committee

Report on Health & Safety meetings from Cllr Judy Anscombe – 27th September 2019

Following the HR & Governance Committee meeting on Monday 5th August 2019 and the item regarding the Health & Safety Actions from the Audit, it was agreed that I would meet with Hannah Duggan and Claire Smith to discuss the outstanding actions from the audit that had been carried out in April 2019 by external provider.

August 22nd 2019 met with Hannah Duggan and was able to have an up to date picture on the actions: several had now been completed and others are work in progress.

We discussed how the wording on some of the actions could be improved by being more specific in reference to dates when these should be completed by. Hannah had just put out for review the COSHH and Manual Handling Risk assessments.

There were several items for action that are specific to staff training, the online training programme being purchased in April 2019, but members of staff had not completed any courses at that time; Graham West has delivered Toolbox talks to his team. The reason for training not being completed was given as lack of time and we discussed that training is necessary as part of accident prevention.

There were some issues that came under Risk Management which are the responsibility of Claire Smith, Deputy Town Clerk.

We also looked at the Fire Risk Assessment, which encompasses Town Hall, Cemetery, Public Toilets and the Museum.

Again, online training is an outstanding action and managers have been reminded that this needs to be completed; this action is continuous from 2018 and is now marked as 'started' August 2019.

There are actions listed for Emergency lighting for Public Toilets, which has been recorded as being on hold due to refurbishment in 2018; this will now be part of the current toilets project.

As highlighted in the Fire Risk Assessment the actions that are of concern are those that refer to the Museum and for which there are 4 items that are marked as 'work in course' since 2017, all of which are graded as priority 1; it is unclear from the audit as to whether these actions have been completed or not as they are shown with a dates of March 2017 for completion or review.

Because the museum is a separate workplace, Hannah was uncertain as to how follow this up and I therefore spoke with the Town Clerk.

Post meeting note: Discussed with Richard to clarify the Museum and the actions required for compliance with Fire Safety Risk Assessment. He confirmed that the Town Hall/Museum insurance covered both workplaces and therefore the museum needs to be complaint. We

agreed that I would attend the next meeting for Estates/Heritage & Maintenance Committee meeting where these issues could be discussed.

September 16th 2019 meeting with Claire Smith to discuss Risk Management and follow on queries regarding actions from the Health & Safety Audit, as discussed with Hannah.

We discussed the need for staff training, although it takes time, it can prevent accidents as staff have gained knowledge to make them aware of hazards in the workplace and the safe operation of equipment. Also suggested that for best practice, dates of any staff training should be logged and not just state 'completed'.

The Health & Safety Audit document itself, currently runs as a continuous document by years and we spoke about how this is confusing; audits should demonstrate a yearly picture and any actions should be completed within a time frame.

Under Risk Management we looked at the Risk Assessment for Events and have suggested that the plan of action for each risk could be improved by being more specific.

We agreed to look at the R/As for Open Spaces and will arrange a further meeting.

Summary

Following the meetings with Hannah and Claire it is good to report that the outstanding actions for staff training are being addressed. I have briefly spoken to Graham this week, who advised that he's delivering training sessions to his team and is supporting 2 members of staff that have literacy problems, which is good to hear.

The main concerns now are those relating to the Fire Safety Assessment in connection with the Museum and the need to complete these actions as soon as possible; that is if not already achieved, these are high priority actions that are outstanding from 2017.

I would also like to note that the audit is somewhat confusing where dates are recorded; some are shown with a date as being either completed or reviewed but are rated in colour as work in progress. Plan to meet with Claire again on this aspect and to look at some the Risk Assessments, when she is back to work.