



Health & Safety Audit of Nettleham Parish Council

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PART OF **pibGroup**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 An audit of Nettleham Parish Council was carried out on 25 August 2020 hosted by Michelle Vale, Facilities Manager.
- 1.2 The council still has 6 direct employees all of which are part time workers. The workforce includes the Parish Clerk, Accounts / Admin, Receptionist (vacant post), Facilities Manager, Facilities Assistant and Handy Man.
- 1.3 There are no mobility issues however two employees have been identified as suffering with vertigo, but this is being well managed.
- 1.4 The premises are council owned and within Nettleham parish on the outskirts of Lincoln. There are four buildings in total, the Old Police Office, Mulsanne Pavilion / Sports Ground and The Old School which comprises of the small and large halls. All facilities have parking adjacent to the premises.

2.0 Policy and Organisation for Health and Safety

- 2.1 A H&S Policy is in place which was prepared in 2017 by PIB Risk Management (or Lincsafe as they were then) and has been reviewed annually since. It was last formally reviewed in July 2019 so is due for another review now. There have been no H&S legislative changes in the last 12 months, so the Policy is unlikely to need any updates.
- 2.2 New employees receive an induction to council policy and procedures which is recorded on an induction form. A receptionist was taken on in January 2020 however there was no evidence of a formal induction being carried out. It was agreed that going forward, inductions should be completed and recorded within the first week of employment to ensure everything is covered in a timely manner.

3.0 Arrangements for Health and Safety

- 3.1 The arrangements for management of health and safety are reflected within the H&S Policy and Council procedures. General arrangements were discussed as below:
- 3.2 **Asbestos** – All buildings have had an Asbestos Management Survey completed and any recommendations made have been closed out with ongoing monitoring in place.

The Mulsanne Pavilion has areas of asbestos identified with appropriate labelling. Some areas within the changing rooms had been damaged previously and a local Asbestos company (Rilmac) was called in to appropriately remediate these areas (via encapsulation).

Prior to undertaking any minor maintenance work within premises, a copy of the Asbestos Management Plan should be checked to ensure employees, contractors or sub-contractors do not inadvertently disturb any. Work with Asbestos can only be undertaken by persons with suitable training (i.e. UKATA Cat B Training minimum).

Any major refurbishment work will require a full 'refurbishment and demolition asbestos survey' to be conducted which is intrusive and covers all areas.

It is still recommended that the Facilities Manager, Assistant and Handy Man should undertake an Asbestos Awareness Training course, so they can easily identify any potential Asbestos Containing Materials. Online training would be suitable. This has now been agreed and will be completed soon.

- 3.3 **Health surveillance** is not currently undertaken nor deemed to be relevant with the current scope of works.

The main health risks involved include manual handling and use of some hazardous substances for maintenance and cleaning purposes.

An open-door communication policy exists where any health issues are discussed with the Parish Clerk or Facilities Manager. If necessary, then an Occupational Health Company will be contacted for further advice.

- 3.4 **Work equipment** includes Class 1 and 3 ladders, battery drills, spades, strimmers, hand tools, and barrows / trolleys etc. The majority of equipment is council owned however some belong to employees and Michelle confirmed that all staff have been asked to provide a list of items of their own that they bring for use so these can be purchased by the Council for future use.

Regular maintenance and inspections are undertaken as required with records kept. Pre-use checks are part of the procedures and the Facilities Assistant had a good level of awareness.

No formal training is carried out for personnel who use work equipment items however there are courses available that cover the general use of machinery which would be beneficial and this is on the list of training to be completed.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is provided to employees free of charge and exchanged as required. The Handy Man (Kevin) has a dedicated storage area within the workshop at the Old school for PPE. Michelle also mentioned that waterproofs have recently been requested and are being sourced.

- 3.5 **PAT** testing for office and building equipment is undertaken on an annual basis by an external contractor with records kept. The testing was last undertaken in August 2019 and Michelle is now looking at renewing this. There has been a slight lapse due to Covid-19 restrictions, but this is not a problem as it will be completed by September at the latest.

- 3.6 **COSHH** Assessments have been undertaken for hazardous substances although they are generally limited to cleaning chemicals, and a few mechanical related substances in the workshop store. These should be formal reviewed every 3 years to check the Material Safety Data Sheets have not changed (MSDS). The next review will be due in 2021.

Cleaning is undertaken by a contract cleaning company, so they are responsible for doing their own assessments.

Kevin has a bunded store for hazardous substances with some level of segregation.

- 3.7 **Legionella** – There is a tank fed water system in place at the Mulsanne Pavilion, the showers are run weekly as part of the weekly checklist and regular water temperature checks are now undertaken and recorded. Jane (Facilities Assistant) attended a course in 2018 on the control of Legionella so is now competent in this area.

A specialist water hygiene contractor (Second Element) completed a Legionella risk assessment and provided a report. All recommendations have since been closed out which is positive. The Parish Council have an annual package with Second Element which is due for renewal soon and should consist of another formal assessment and advice in this area.

- 3.8 **Manual handling** is avoided or at least minimised wherever possible. Risk assessments have been undertaken for generic movement of equipment and barrows / trolleys are available for use when moving heavy or larger items (i.e. charis / ladders).

Formal manual handling training has been undertaken by the Facilities Assistant in a previous role however it was agreed that it would be beneficial for all non-admin staff to complete another course / refresher and online training would suffice.

There is a good level of signage in place within the facilities to advise of the required stacking levels for furniture and how to safely move them, this is also covered within the terms of hire.

- 3.9 **First aid** training (EFA) has been undertaken by the Facilities Assistant (Jane) in March 2019, she is currently the only trained person within the Parish Council and it would be beneficial if Kevin could also do this course so that cover is available for both of them.

Each building has a first aid kit situated in a prominent position. They are regularly checked and re-stocked by a nominated person within the office, (Receptionist or Facilities Assistant) with records kept.

- 3.10 **Fire** risk assessments have been completed for each building by Michelle with no issues highlighted. These should be reviewed every year to ensure they remain up-to-date and relevant.

A sample of fire extinguishers in each of the buildings were checked and found to have appropriate inspection dates. All were last serviced in July 2020 by an external fire company and certificates are displayed within each building.

Fire inspections and checks are carried out by the Jane and log-book entries made. Fire checks should include testing of alarm systems, emergency lighting, fire extinguishers and exits as a minimum.

Fire action signage had been put in place for Mulsanne Pavilion, stating action and muster points. Fire evacuation muster points were evident in other locations and information is provided to those who rent out the premises.

Fire alarms and smoke detectors are in place around each building and it was noted that Kevin's store / workshop also has a smoke detector now following the fire risk assessment.

- 3.11 **Work at height** is generally only via ladders / step ladders. They are inspected on a 6-monthly basis with records kept. Visually they appeared in good working order on the day of the audit and are stored appropriately within the workshop or storage areas.

No formal ladder training has been completed by those that use them. It is suggested that more formal training should be considered for use of ladders and working at height as well as regular refresher briefings / information. Online training would suffice, and a course has been identified.

- 3.12 ***Lone Working:*** - Jane and Kevin generally work alone across the parish buildings and external areas. They complete a morning check-in with the Michelle but then there may be no further contact made until 13:00hrs. They do however carry a mobile phone at all times in case of emergency and hours are limited so it is not thought to be a problem.

4.0 Access to Competent General Health and Safety Advice

- 4.1 PIB Risk Management (formerly Lincsafe) are the retained external Safety Advisers to Nettleham PC and will assist the Company in all areas of health and safety as required. This includes an annual audit and review of the company Safety Policy and documentation.
- 4.2 Advice will also be given on an as-required basis with any relevant updates communicated via Newsletters or direct emails / discussion.

5.0 Training

- 5.1 A training matrix is in place and updated by Michelle. It would be useful to have expiry dates of courses so that refresher training can be easily identified.
- 5.2 DSE assessments have been undertaken by most staff, these just need a review every year to ensure they are still relevant. Also consider home working assessments if employees are going to continue to work from home for any length of time.
- 5.3 As mentioned previously, the Facilities Manager and Assistant would benefit from more formal training for ladders / work at height, manual handling, use of work equipment and asbestos awareness. Michelle thought online training would be easier to arrange and has identified a suitable provider to do this. This is still outstanding but has progressed to being agreed by the Parish Council and now is just a matter of finding time to complete the training.
- 5.4 Jane and Kevin have completed Play Equipment training (May 2018) to facilitate the management of playground equipment. This requires refresher training every three years so will be due in May 2021.
- 5.5 Kevin has also completed training for the management and use of Weed Control Chemicals, this covers the main hazardous substances used in this role. Refresher training will also be required for this.

6.0 Monitoring, Audit and Review

- 6.1 PIB RM undertake an annual H&S audit of the premises and H&S related documentation relating to the Parish Council.
- 6.2 Weekly site inspections are completed by Jane and recorded on a job sheet or specific form. These include RoSPA checklists for play equipment, routine premise inspections and weekly shower checks in the Pavilion.

It was agreed that formal monthly premise inspections would be useful to ensure there is a paper trail of these inspections. A generic inspection checklist has been sent for adaptation and future use.

7.0 Consultation – Workforce Involvement

- 7.1 Nettleham PC operates an 'open door' policy regarding consultation and communication with employees.
- 7.2 Regular Parish Council meetings are currently held with notes taken and formally minuted. Health & safety matters can be discussed and closed out during these meetings.
- 7.3 Daily briefings take place between the Facilities Manager and Assistant to discuss the coming days work. This includes an element of H&S (i.e. any accidents or incidents and method statements etc. for contracted services).
- 7.4 Risk assessment reviews have also been completed and included the workforce which is really good to see. They have also all been signed as read and understood.

8.0 Accident Reporting

- 8.1 Accident information is recorded in each premise within the accident book with pages removed as per the data protection act. Jane checks these periodically when visiting the premises.
- 8.2 There have been no accidents or incidents noted in 2020.
- 8.3 A near miss form is now in place and the importance of gathering this information was discussed. It is clear that all employees are aware of the need to report any incidents however none have occurred in the last 12 months.

10.0 Control of Contractors

- 10.1 Nettleham PC currently use contracted services for cleaning and some maintenance activities.
- 10.2 They are asked for their public liability insurance and credentials, but no formal H&S screening takes place. However, risk assessments and method statements are requested by the Facilities Manager during the tender process.
- 10.3 A Sub-contractor questionnaire is now in place and should be sent out to prospective contractors to check competence prior to engagement. Michelle will look into using this going forward.

11.0 Risk Assessments Leading to a Safe Method of Work

- 11.1 Nettleham Parish Council have generic risk assessments in place which were compiled by PIB RM in 2019, these were then reviewed internally and made specific to the Parish Council which is very good practice.

Following the review and update they were then circulated to all staff for comment prior to being implemented. It would be useful to do this annually to ensure that all relevant tasks are covered and that the controls mentioned are still suitable.

- 11.2 Method statements are not currently compiled. It was noted however that for larger projects they are requested by the Facilities Manager or for high risk work to agree a safe system of working.

12.0 Premises and Housekeeping

- 12.1 The premises were found to be in good order throughout all of the buildings with the only issue raised being that the bins behind the Muslanne Pavilion are too close to the building and could pose an arson / fire risk. These should be moved to another area if possible.
- 12.2 Lighting and ventilation were found to be good with a mixture of both artificial and natural methods available.
- 12.3 Access and egress within the premises was found to be generally good with floor / surfaces in good condition and doors kept clear.

- 12.4 Welfare facilities are provided in all premises and include toilets and kitchen areas along with seating.
- 12.5 No smoking signs are displayed throughout the premises.
- 12.6 Storage areas were found to be in reasonable condition with racking in place to help keep the areas tidy.

13.0 Conclusions

- 13.1 There were only a few items raised during the audit which is positive. The main areas to focus on are further training (especially for Jane and Kevin) as well as more documenting of inspections.
- 13.2 It is refreshing to find a team who are proactive in relation to Health and Safety and this shows in the findings above.

