

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Customer & Digital (Introduced by the Executive Member for Streetscene)	Executive Cabinet	18 th January 2018

WATER SAFETY POLICY

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To formalise the Council's procedures for risk management and water safety at council-owned water features (reservoirs, lodges, ponds).

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. To agree the new water safety policy in accordance with recommendations made by the council's insurers and internal audit.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. The Council's insurers have requested the adoption of a formalised water safety policy that includes agreed procedures for risk assessment, regular inspections and management of water bodies. The Council has responsibilities under public and occupiers liability and relevant associated statutory duties.

4. In accordance with Zurich Risk Engineering UK 'Water and Open Spaces Report', the Council reviewed its risk management practices at water bodies and undertaken recommended improvement actions. This includes the creation of a water safety policy document.

5. The risk based approach to defining all water bodies on council owned land is now complete and the policy has been reviewed and presented to senior management team. Adoption of this policy will formalise the process of water inspections and associated risk management practices, and help to satisfy the council's insurers and internal audit.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Key Decision? Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Reason Please bold as appropriate	1, a change in service provision that impacts upon the service revenue budget by £100,000 or more	2, a contract worth £100,000 or more
	3, a new or unprogrammed capital scheme of £100,000 or more	4, Significant impact in environmental, social or physical terms in two or more wards

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

6. The Council's insurers have requested the adoption of a formalised water safety policy that includes agreed procedures for risk assessment, regular inspections and management of water bodies.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

7. To not formally adopt the policy could leave the Council exposed to financial and reputational risk associated with claims made against the council arising from incidents at council-owned water bodies.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

8 This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all		A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy homes and communities	x	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	

BACKGROUND

9. At the request of Chorley Council, in September 2013 Zurich Risk Engineering UK presented an independent external assessment of pre-agreed water and open space sites in order to provide risk management recommendations with regard to the Council's responsibilities under public and occupiers liability and relevant associated statutory duties.
10. The scope of the 'Water and Open Spaces Report' was to focus on the facilities owned by the Council and activities carried out by the Council with particular emphasis on the Birkacre Reservoir and consider internal procedures, systems and working practices to assist in addressing potential problems before an accident or incident occurs or in defending liability claims. A detailed scoping document was generated and formally agreed with the Council on a selection of sites for inclusion in the review which consists of all the larger sites and some representative examples taken from the other categories.
11. The report highlighted a variety of matters that present health and safety risks and potentially could lead to injury of the public. In addition advice on the management of the facilities was provided which is reasonable, sensible and cost effective. The report should assist the Council with the risk management process to reduce the potential of public liability claims against the Council as a result of defects at these types of facilities.
12. The Council has undertaken the recommended improvement actions, which have been recorded on the internal audit system. This includes the creation of a water safety policy document, based upon a detailed risk assessment process and sound risk management practices. The only outstanding action is to formally adopt the new policy.

OUTCOMES

13. The risk based approach to defining all water bodies on council owned land is now complete and the policy has been reviewed and presented to senior management team. It should be noted that many of the actions in the report are already being carried out by council staff. Adoption of this policy will formalise the process of water inspections and associated risk management practices, and help to satisfy the council's insurers and internal audit.

14. Inspection of water bodies are being carried out by Streetscene staff. Inspection frequency varies between weekly and annually and inspections are currently recorded on a paper based system but it is planned to digitise the process.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

1. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal		Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area	x	Policy and Communications	

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

2. The costs to the Council of implementing the Water Safety Policy can be met within existing resources

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

3. The approval of the policy will assist the council in demonstrating compliance with our statutory obligations and protect the Council's insurance position.

Asim Khan
DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER & DIGITAL

There are background papers to this report.

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Chorley Council Water Safety Policy (plus appendices)	02/09/16	\\cbc-us-file\Temp Storage\Water Safety Policy\Water Safety Policy documents\CBC WATER SAFETY POLICY 2016.doc	\\cbc-us-file\Temp Storage\Water Safety Policy\Water Safety Policy documents
Zurich Risk Engineering UK 'Water and Open Spaces Report'	28/07/13	\\cbc-us-file\Temp Storage\Water Safety Policy\Chorley BC - Water Open Spaces Report_Final Report 28072014.pdf	\\cbc-us-file\Temp Storage\Water Safety Policy\Water Safety Policy documents
'Water and Open Spaces Report'	05/02/16	\\cbc-us-file\Temp Storage\Water Safety Policy\Chorley BC - Water and Open Spaces Review FEB 16 - final.pdf	\\cbc-us-file\Temp Storage\Water Safety Policy\Water Safety Policy documents

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Doug Cridland	5661	14 December 2017	***