

**Public
Key Decision - Yes**

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Open Spaces Water Safety Policy - Implementation

Meeting/Date: Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Communities and Environment) – 10 January 2017
Cabinet – 19 January 2017

Executive Portfolio: Councillor Jim White – Executive Councillor for Operations

Report by: Neil Sloper – Head of Service (Operations)

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

To present the Council's Open Spaces Water Safety Policy for approval and implementation as set out in this report.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet invited to approve the Open Spaces Water Policy for implementation.

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To present the Council's Open Spaces Water Safety Policy for endorsement and approve its implementation as set out in this report.

2. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

- 2.1 The draft Open Spaces Water Safety Policy was submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Community and Environment) in January 2016 to explain how the Council would manage the safety of users of its public open.
- 2.2 The draft Policy was designed and developed based on advice and guidance from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), 'Safety in Inland Water Sites - Operational Guidelines' (RoSPA document). The Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) were engaged to review the draft after competitive tender. Their advice was used to significantly improve the policy and establish a programme of risk assessments. The amended policy document is appended to this report.
- 2.3 In partnership with the RLSS a complete list of sites to be Risk Assessed was agreed. The list was then divided into 2 categories:
- 1 – Priority/Phase 1 – to include sites with high footfall and highest perceived risk
 - 2 – Phase 2 – to include local brooks and drainage ditches
- 2.4 In May 2016, RLSS undertook to train 11 members of staff to carry out Risk Assessments in relation to water safety. 7 completed the course exam and now hold a Level 3 Award in Risk Assessment Principles and Practice. During the training, staff received 'on the job' guidance and the priority phase risk assessments were completed.
- 2.5 Phase 2 risk assessments will be completed by the end of March 2017.
- 2.6 A programme of projects to reduce risk further is now in place, such as installing small signs and life buoys.

3. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND ACTIONS

Action	Date	Complete
Policy submitted to RLSS and amendments made to reflect their expertise	July 16	Yes
Final Policy approved by RLSS & Head of Service	Aug 16	Yes
Staff Training	May 16	Yes
Priority/Phase 1 Risk Assessments carried out as part of training	May 16	Yes
Priority/Phase 1 Urgent actions allocated when received from RLSS	Sept 16	Yes
Priority/Phase 1 Remedial actions allocated	Nov/Dec 16	Yes
Phase 2 Risk Assessments allocated to staff	Dec 16	Yes
Phase 2 Risk Assessments to be completed	Mar 17	
Phase 2 Urgent actions to be completed	Apr 17	
Phase 2 remedial actions to be completed	June 17	

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

- 4.1 The Open Spaces Water Safety Policy – Implementation Report was presented to the Panel. Members were informed that the Council is required to have an Open Spaces Water Safety Policy for sites of open static water.
- 4.2 The Panel wanted reassurance that there will be the resources to implement the Policy and that an Officer will be responsible for maintaining the Policy.
- 4.3 Members expressed concern that there was little oversight from Members to ensure that Policies are working well and that staff are adequately trained to implement the Policies.
- 4.4 The Panel recommended that the Cabinet endorse the report.

5. REVIEW

- 5.1 The policy requires that the risk assessments are reviewed every 6 months to take account of seasonal changes that may not have been present previously i.e. increased water level or waterlogged areas.

6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

- 6.1 The policy will contribute to the Corporate Plan as follows:

- Enhancing fundamentally the safety of the green environment of the District.
- Operations becoming more efficient in the way it delivers safe services.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The policy has been developed within existing resources. The implementation of the policy will be incremental to enable it to be delivered within existing resources. However pump priming of £30,000 from underspending in 2015/16 will be provided for equipment and signage confirmed as necessary from the site specific risk assessments.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The policy is consistent with the following Council health and safety documents:

- General Statement of Safety Policy;
- Health & Safety Policy – Organisation & Responsibilities;
- Health & Safety Arrangements.

9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 9.1 The scrutinising of the recommended Open Spaces Water Safety Policy gives the Panel the opportunity to influence the final document submitted to the Cabinet for endorsement.

10. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

- 10.1 Appendix 1: Open Spaces Water Safety Policy.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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