

MALVERN HILLS TRUST

Staffing Committee

Manor House, Grange Road, Malvern

Thursday 6 July 2017, 6.30 pm

Present: Mr D Baldwin, Mr M Davies, Dr P Forster, Mr S Freeman (ex officio), Mrs G Rees (Vice Chair).

In attendance: Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Secretary to the Board, Conservation Manager, Dr S Braim, Mr C Rouse, Mr P Watson.

Mrs Rees took the chair in the absence of Ms Stace, and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence

Mr Hall-Jones, Mr C Penn, Prof J Raine, Ms H Stace.

2. Chair's announcements

There were none.

3. Declaration of interests

There were none.

4. Update on health and safety issues

There had been no notifiable accidents since the last meeting.

The CEO went through the paper and his report on the two accidents which had occurred.

He confirmed that insurance for the quad bike provided by MHT was the grazier's responsibility. The Conservation Manager confirmed that MHT ask to see both the policy and the insurance renewal each year. In future, the CEO intended to ensure that the contract with the grazier stipulated that only competent persons could use the equipment provided by MHT. It was suggested that the grazier's insurance cover should be checked to ensure that other drivers were covered. The grazier should also have carried out a risk assessment for the activity and Mr Baldwin suggested MHT should ask to see that.

In relation to the tractor accident, in addition to the matters identified in the paper, the CEO reported that consideration was being given, in association with the manufacturers, to fitting a second roll cage to the tractor. Mr Rouse pointed out that it was important to check that the equipment did not become top heavy.

The CEO had arranged a meeting with Keith Tompkins, MHT's Health and Safety advisor, in early August to complete an audit of H & S matters, focusing on operational areas. It was clear that additional emphasis should to be placed on the need for staff to report near misses and to read (and confirming they had done so by a signature) the relevant risk assessments. The CEO was planning to implement a system of regular refresher talks on H & S matters. Mr Baldwin confirmed that the Risk Assessments should be discussed with staff and particularly the hazards which they identified. The

CEO had reviewed the competencies of staff as part of the annual appraisal. Refresher training was needed in some areas.

Mapping the paths, in conjunction with the Access Plan, would identify which paths could safely be cut using machinery. This might entail re-grading some of the paths to ensure they could be safely cut by machine. The Lone Worker Policy needed to be revisited.

5. Review of Deputy Conservation Officer post

The Conservation Manager went through the paper. It was an opportune moment to review the role of the Deputy Conservation Officer, but it would be prudent to await the outcome of the Countryside Stewardship application and the MHT Pension Scheme review, the results of which should be known during September 2017. The Conservation Manager would then prepare a revised job specification for the post. It was therefore intended to ask the temporary Deputy Conservation Officer to continue in post at least to 29 September and then review the matter again. Mr Freeman suggested that the title of the post might change in line with any change in the job description.

6. To consider and approve Risk Schedule (in relations to matters relevant to Staffing Committee)

The CEO highlighted the moderate and high risk areas and the additional safeguards which he was proposing.

Item 2.3, Ms Stace had suggested including competency assessments, review of training records and Health and Safety awareness training. Mr Baldwin said these should be included in the H & S policy.

Item 4.7, the CEO felt that he might review the risk score, in the light of recent events. The COSHH record needed to be updated. Mr Baldwin confirmed that the records under COSHH had to be retained for 40 years.

7. Proposals from Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service to cut cover at Malvern Fire Station (agenda item 8)

Malvern Fire Station provided rescue services, including water and rope rescue. The CEO understood it was planned to change the staffing arrangements to reduce the number of full time fire fighters, who would only be available 8am to 6pm. Cover would otherwise be provided by retained or part time fire crews. The CEO understood that Malvern might lose its water and rope rescue teams for out of hour's calls. There might also be a reduced level of familiarity with the Hills. The changes could impinge on the level of response to incidents on MHT land. Mr Baldwin said that the authority had to make substantial savings and had already made cuts at Ledbury, which covered the western side on the Hills.

8. Field staff recruitment (agenda item 7)

Henry Yardley had left and MHT were recruiting for another full time member of staff. The budget had provided for a .8 FTE post, but because of impending changes in pension arrangements, and as Henry was at the top of the relevant pay

scale, the cost of a new full time staff member would only be £500 more than the budgeted figure. Mrs Rees was concerned about the loss of an experienced team member. The CEO said that succession planning was important as 3 members of staff might retire in the next 6 years.

9. Urgent business

Governance Committee had asked the Staffing Committee to consider staff eligibility for expenses for attending evening meetings. This would come to the next meeting.

10. Date of next meeting

There would need to be a Staffing Committee meeting after the Board meeting to deal with the impact of the decision on the pension scheme. It was agreed that a meeting would be needed before the November Board meeting and that the CEO and Secretary to the Board would put forward a date in consultation with the Finance and Administration Officer and the Chair and Vice Chair of the committee.

The meeting closed at 8.05pm

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