

Waltham on the Wolds and Thorpe Arnold Parish Council

Lone Worker Policy

INTRODUCTION

The Parish Council recognises that its employee(s) are required to work by themselves for significant periods of time without close or direct supervision in the community, in isolated work areas and out of office hours. Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Parish Council has a duty of care to advise and assess risk for workers when they work by themselves in these circumstances. Employee(s) also have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work and to co-operate with their employers in meeting their legal obligations.

DEFINITION

Lone workers are employees who work by themselves in buildings or at other locations managed by the Council in isolation without close or direct supervision. They are found in a wide range of situations, for example, where only one person works in an office, in a contractual setting such as grass cutting or home workers.

SCOPE

The policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of the Council's employees and contractors. Whilst lone working is not in itself unsafe, lone workers face unique risks arising from the fact that they are required to work on their own for some or all of the time and thus are especially vulnerable to risk.

AIMS OF THE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to reduce the risks of lone working as far as is reasonably possible and practicable. The policy aims to:

- increase councillor and staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working
- ensure that the risk of lone working is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way, and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practicable.
- ensure that appropriate support and training is available to all staff that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone
- encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working
- reduce the number of incidents and injuries to staff related to lone working.

IDENTIFIED LONE WORKERS

The policy applies to all staff, whether full time, part time or temporary workers, contractors and volunteers.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Council and the Clerk are responsible for:

- implementing the policy by identifying, evaluating and managing the risks associated with lone working
- ensuring that staff identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training, including training at induction, updating and refreshing this training as necessary
- ensuring there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the Council regularly reviews the effectiveness of this policy
- providing resources for putting the policy into practice
- ensuring all lone workers are aware of this policy
- ensuring risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly
- putting procedures and safe systems of work in to practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone
- ensuring that appropriate support is given to lone workers involved in any incident
- managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents

Lone workers are responsible for:

- taking reasonable care of themselves and of other people affected by their actions
- following guidance and procedures designed for safe working, including taking part in training
- for reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate
- reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone
- maintaining good communication to minimise risk

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment is essential to good risk management. Assessment will be carried out for and by all those whose working practices make them vulnerable as lone workers. Recommendations will be made to eliminate or to reduce the risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

Consideration should be given to:

- risk of violence and aggression
- fitness to work alone
- site conditions: safe access and exit (especially if isolated) and security concerns
- travelling between sites
- safety of equipment for individual use
- channels of communication in an emergency

CONTROLLING THE RISK

Control measures may include instruction, training, supervision, protective equipment, mobile phones, 'calling in systems', etc. Council should take steps to check that control measures are used and review the risk assessment from time to time to ensure it is still adequate.

When risk assessment shows that it is not possible for the work to be done safely by a lone worker, arrangements for providing help or back up should be put in place.

INCIDENT REPORTING

An incident is defined as "an unplanned or uncontrolled event or sequence of events that has the potential to cause injury, ill health or damage". All incidents where lone workers feel threatened or unsafe or verbally abused (even if this was not a tangible event/experience) should be reported. The Health & Safety Executive defines work-related violence as: 'any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work'.

CONTACTING/INVOLVING THE POLICE

The Council is committed to protecting staff from violence and assault. All staff are encouraged to report violent incidents to the police and will be supported by the Council throughout the process. Except in cases of emergency, employees and contractors should inform the Clerk of any incident immediately and the Clerk will thereafter take responsibility for contacting the police.

This document was adopted by the Council at its meeting held 21st March 2024.

Signed _____ Chair

Appendix A – Lone Worker Risk Assessment Form

Priority of Risk Management				
Likelihood of occurrence	Highly Likely (Score 3)	Medium (3 x 1)	High (3 x 2)	Very High (3 x 3)
	Possible (Score 2)	Low (2 x 1)	Medium (2 x 2)	High (2 x 3)
	Unlikely (Score 1)	Very Low (1 x 1)	Low (1 x 2)	Medium (1 x 3)
		Negligible (Score 1)	Moderate (Score 2)	Severe (Score 3)
Impact				

Hazard	Potential Harm	Control Measures	Likelihood	Impact	Risk
Individual					
Medical Fitness: Do any medical conditions pose an increased risk when working alone?	Unable to leave the building if taken ill. Unable to leave the building without assistance.	Medical conditions must be highlighted and fully discussed. Always carry mobile phone.	Unlikely 1	Moderate 2	L
Supervision: Are arrangements in place to keep in regular contact?	Harm to individual's health, safety and well-being.	Comply with out of hours procedures. Advise others of whereabouts.	Possible 2	Moderate 2	M
Training/Competency Has the necessary training been given? Is the lone worker competent to carry out the work alone?	Compromise to lone worker's health, safety and well-being.	Training undertaken. Lone worker must be conversant with the emergency procedures.	Unlikely 1	Moderate 2	L
Location/Premises					
Building Security Is the building secure?	Possible violence at work or intruders in the building.	Access to Parish Office is restricted. Keep key codes secure.	Unlikely 1	Negligible 1	V L
Access Is there a safe means of access/egress?	Personal security issues.	Entrance well lit. The lone worker should be aware of potential personal safety issues when arriving and leaving.	Unlikely 1	Negligible 1	V L
Emergencies Does the worker have access to emergency warning devices e.g fire alarm?	Injury	Lone workers should know the local arrangements in case of an emergency.	Unlikely 1	Moderate 2	L
First Aid Are the arrangements in place to deal with a situation where the lone worker becomes ill or has an accident?	Minor or severe injury, ill health. Unable to get medical help.	First Aid boxes available. Lone worker should return home if feeling unwell.	Unlikely 1	Moderate 2	L

Welfare Facilities Is there adequate heating, lighting, access to drinking water and toilets?	Harm to individual's health, safety and well-being.	All in place.	Unlikely 1	Negligible 1	V L
Process/Work Activity					
Use of computers and general office equipment	Harm to individual's health, safety and well-being.	Ensure work place correctly set up. Take regular breaks from screen work.	Unlikely 1	Moderate 2	L
Slips/trips/falls	Injury	Regular inspection to deal with trip hazards. Individuals with temporary mobility issues should not work alone	Possible 2	Moderate 2	M
Electrical Equipment	Injury	All equipment PAT tested	Unlikely 1	Negligible 1	V L
Work with hazardous substances or machinery	Injury – burns, breathing or long term illness	Training undertaken. Qualified to work with machinery.	Unlikely 1	Moderate 2	L
Single handed lifting or handling of heavy loads	Injury to lone worker	Training undertaken. Manual handling procedures followed correctly.	Unlikely 1	Moderate 2	L
Meeting other individuals alone e.g. members of the public, contractors	Unsafe situations	Inform others of appointments – time and location. Always carry mobile phone	Unlikely 1	Moderate 2	L
Travel between sites					
Personal safety and choice of transportation method between sites	Accidents or injury during travel	Inform others of travel plans and method of travel.	Unlikely 1	Moderate 2	L