

WALTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

LONE-WORKING POLICY

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this Policy is to explain the duties of this Council regarding the health, safety and welfare of those who work alone or without close supervision on a regular or ad hoc basis.
- 1.2 Under the provisions of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HASAWA), this Council has a duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of its employees irrespective of whether they work alone or without close supervision. The Council also has a duty to assess the risks to those employees under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 (MHSWR).
- 1.3 This Council acknowledges that there may be implications for its employees when working alone. Suitable risk assessments shall be carried out to identify the risks to lone workers and safe working arrangements shall be introduced to minimize the risks as far as is reasonably practicable. This policy should therefore be read in conjunction with any risk assessments that have been prepared in respect of Lone Working
- 1.4 Members of staff who may have to work alone shall be provided with information and training as appropriate in order to minimize any risks associated with lone working.
- 1.5 The main hazards of lone working are often categorised as being violence at work, injuries when working alone and staff working in unsafe ways. This list is by no means exhaustive and all local potential risks shall be considered.
- 1.6 For the avoidance of doubt, a lone worker is someone who permanently or temporarily works alone without close or direct supervision.

2.0 Assessment of risk

- 2.1 A risk assessment must identify the hazards, assess the risks involved and put in place the appropriate control measures to avoid or control any risks arising out of lone working.
- 2.2 This Council must identify situations where members of staff work alone or without close supervision. Once the risk assessment has been completed there may be a need to consider:
 - changes to working arrangements
 - additional information, instruction and/or training
 - increased supervision
 - additional/new equipment
 - implementation of safe systems of work

3.0 Responsibilities of lone working or working in isolation

- 3.1 All members of staff are responsible for taking reasonable care of themselves, and other people affected by their work, and must follow all health and safety guidelines laid down by this Council. They should use equipment appropriately, report any defects and unsafe conditions, and report accidents and incidents or matters of concern. If they lift heavy loads they should follow the prescribed lifting procedures set by this Council and should have manual handling training if necessary.

4.0 Equipment

- 4.1 Arising out of any risk assessments conducted, equipment may be identified for staff working alone, e.g. use of a mobile phone; the installation of a “panic button”; or the provision of a portable audible alarm. Any such equipment shall remain the property of this Council and must be checked regularly. Staff must report equipment defects promptly and this Council shall take immediate steps to rectify any faults.
- 4.2 All electrical equipment must be tested annually by a competent person. Some portable equipment which is subject to vigorous conditions, and use, may need more frequent testing. This Council shall arrange for the equipment to be tested as required by law or by policy.
- 4.3 Members of staff shall not use personal electrical or electronic equipment whilst at work unless permission has been granted by this Council. A portable electrical equipment test shall be carried out and that piece of equipment used only if it has passed and been deemed to be fit for use.

5.0 Training

- 5.1 During the annual staff appraisals, relevant courses and other training in respect of lone working shall be discussed and arrangements made for engagement in such training if agreed as being necessary.

6.0 Emergencies

- 6.1 This Council shall keep a record of all the accidents and incidents that occur and report serious ones to the appropriate body.

7.0 Accidents and incidents

- 7.1 All accidents and incidents shall be reported and recorded in the record set aside for that specific purpose.

8.0 Practical Procedures relating to Lone Working.

Office based Staff

- 8.1 This Council has agreed that the office based staff will be available to the public and councillors during the office opening hours (10.30am to 12 noon Monday to Friday) on a ‘drop in basis’ to carry out Council business. During this period a lone worker shall have access to the means of summoning emergency assistance as has been identified in the risk assessment (e.g. a fully charged mobile phone or a panic button or portable alarm).
- 8.2 Members of this Council will be advised that every endeavour should be made to make an appointment when wishing to meet with a member of staff.
- 8.3 It is acknowledged that a member of the office based staff may occasionally work away from their normal workplace whilst attending meetings, courses, undertaking inspections etc. A register of evening meets and attendance at training courses shall be kept.
- 8.4 An “out of normal working hours” phone number for the Town Clerk will be issued to any member of staff working alone during such a period.
- 8.5 When working away from the office, a record should be kept at the office of that employee’s identified destination and likely time of return.

Outdoor Staff

- 8.5 Any member of staff employed on non-office based duties will largely undertake their daily tasks unsupervised and away from the Office. The employee/s will report to office every day giving, or being given, daily information about their work locations which will be recorded in the Office. At least once during the working day the employee/s will report to the Office to confirm their location and advise on any issues arising. The employee/s will be provided with a means of contacting the Council in an emergency.

9.0 Review

- 9.1 This policy will be reviewed annually or following any accident or incident arising out of lone working.