



LONGSTANTON PARISH COUNCIL

LONE WORKER POLICY

Approved 13th May 2019

1. Introduction

Longstanton 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 and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Longstanton Parish Council has a duty of care to advise and assess risk for workers when they work by themselves in these circumstances. However, employee(s) 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.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of Longstanton Parish Council.

3. Definition

The Health & Safety Executive defines lone workers as 'those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision'. This covers Longstanton Parish Council's employee, the Clerk, who is required to carry out his or her duties for all or part of his or her working day in isolation in the office or at other locations owned by the Council; such as outside on the Recreation Ground, Hattons Road Cemetery or on work related travel. This could include: working at and/or opening and closing sites, working in the office, visiting Council owned properties and outside contractors and employees who work alone outside normal working hours.

4. Aims

The aim of this policy is to:

- Increase employee 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 reasonably practicable;
- Ensure that appropriate support and training is available to all employees in all areas that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone;
- Ensure that appropriate support is available to staff who have to work alone;
- Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Councillors and the Clerk are responsible for:

- Ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working;
- Providing resources for putting the policy into practice; and
- Ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the effectiveness of this policy is regularly reviewed.
- Ensuring that all employees are aware of the policy;
- Taking all possible steps to ensure that lone workers are at no greater risk than other employees;
- Identify situations where people work alone and decide whether a system can be adopted to avoid workers carrying out tasks on their own;
- Ensuring that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly;

- Putting procedures and safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone;
- Ensuring that employees identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training, including training at induction, updating and refreshing this training as necessary;
- Managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents;
- Ensuring that appropriate support is given to employees involved in any incident; and
- Providing a mobile phone and other personal safety equipment, if and where this is felt to be desirable.

5.2 Employees are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions;
- Following guidance and procedures designed for safe working;
- Reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate;
- Taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy;
- Reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone; and
- Always maintain good communication to minimise risk.

6. Guidance for Risk Assessments for Lone Working

Risk assessment is essential to good risk management. Assessment will be carried out for and on behalf of all employees whose working practice makes them vulnerable. This includes employees that are based but work in isolation as well as any mobile staff whose work takes them out into the community. Recommendations will be made to eliminate or reduce the risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable. A lone worker's checklist will be completed (appendix A). This will be used as a tool to identify if the existing control measures are adequate and if not, what modifications or additional actions can be considered necessary to help reduce the risks associated with lone working. Once the checklist has been completed a risk assessment will be carried out and documented in a risk assessment form.

Risk assessments for site based lone workers will include:

- Is the person fit and suitable to work alone?
- Does the workplace or task present a special risk to the lone worker?
- Safe access and exit?
- Is there a risk of violence;
- Are women especially at risk if they work alone?
- Safety equipment for individual use
- Adequate channels of communication in an emergency
- Security arrangements, i.e. alarm systems and response to personal alarms
- Can the whereabouts of a lone work be traced?

Risk assessments for mobile lone workers will, additionally, include:

- Travelling between sites;
- Reporting and recording arrangements;
- Communication and traceability and personal safety/security.

Following completion of the Risk Assessment consideration will be given to any appropriate action that is required.

7. Good Practice for Lone Workers

- 7.1. During their working hours, all employees leaving the workplace should leave written details of where they are going and their estimated time of arrival back.
- 7.2. If, in the course of a trip away from the office, plans change significantly, this should be communicated back to the appropriate colleague/councillor.
- 7.3. If the visit is assessed to have a sufficient risk, arrangements should be made with a colleague or councillor to check that a lone worker has returned to their base on completion of the visit. If possible delay the visit until more people can attend.
- 7.4. Telephone contact between the lone worker and a colleague/councillor may also be advisable. Staff should avoid being left on their own with a client in their workplace, or leaving a colleague/councillor in this situation.
- 7.5. Lone workers should have access to adequate first aid facilities and mobile workers should carry a first aid kit suitable for treating minor injuries.
- 7.6. Lone workers should be provided with a mobile phone and other personal safety equipment where this is necessary.
- 7.7. Occasionally risk assessment may indicate that lone workers need training in first aid.
- 7.8. Staff should **never** transport a child on their own and should assess any risk before transporting a vulnerable adult alone.
- 7.9. Before making home visits, the lone worker must have full knowledge of the hazards and risks to which he or she may be exposed to and apply control measures to eliminate or reduce the potential risks.

Having collected all the relevant information you then need to plan your contact:

- Trust your intuition and always think of your personal safety;
- What is the best time of the day to visit? Assess the situation. Are you familiar with the property locations? Consider the weather/visibility/seasons – will you be driving in the dark?
- Where is the most appropriate place to see this person?
- Do you need to take a colleague or councillor with you?
- If another agency is involved, can a joint visit be arranged?
- Ensure that someone knows where you are at all times and do not make last minute/unplanned visits.
- Do you have a mobile (if applicable) – check it is charged.
- Know where you are travelling to; check your route to avoid stopping and asking strangers for directions.
- Park near street lighting or lit areas whenever possible.
- Reverse into parking spaces to ensure a quick getaway.
- Keep all doors locked whilst driving and keep valuables out of sight.
- If you do not intend to return to the office after your visit let someone know.

This policy will be reviewed annually by Longstanton Parish Council to ensure it is relevant to working practice.

Appendix 1 Checklist

Date Completed:

Location:

Main issues of concern

- Do staff work alone? Yes/No
- Do staff work outside normal office hours?..... Yes/No
- Do staff meet with members of the public in an isolated location? Yes/No
- Is there enough security provision? Yes/No
- Is there safe access to the building? Yes/No
- Do staff activities involve working in confined spaces?..... Yes/No
- Do staff activities involve handling dangerous substances? Yes/No
- Do staff carry out work in high-risk locations (i.e. areas with high crime rates)?..... Yes/No
- Do staff carry out work in isolated areas?..... Yes/No

Control Measures for Consideration

- Do you provide joint working for high-risk activities (i.e. in confined spaces and with dangerous substances)? Yes/No
 - Do you carry out regular supervisor or colleague checks during activities? Yes/No
 - Do you use entrance security systems (i.e. digital locks or swipe cards)? Yes/No
 - Is there security lighting around access points and parking areas? Yes/No
 - Have you installed panic buttons, linked to manned locations? Yes/No
 - Do employees have information and training on basic personal safety? Yes/No
 - Are employees trained in strategies for preventing and managing violence? Yes/No
 - Do employees have access to forms for reporting incidents or near misses and appreciate the need for this procedure? Yes/No
 - Do you provide accompanied visits when there are concerns about safety? Yes/No
 - Do you share risk information with other agencies? Yes/No
 - Are there systems for monitoring employee whereabouts and movements for regularly reporting to base? Yes/No
 - Have you issued mobile phones? Yes/No
 - Have you issued personal attack alarms? Yes/No
- Are the existing control measures adequate? Yes/No
- If 'No', what modifications or additional actions are necessary?

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