



Kings Hill Parish Council

Lone Worker Policy

Adopted 26/05/2022

Controlled Document

Title	Lone Worker Policy
Author	Nina Henley
Owner	Kings Hill Parish Council
Subject	Lone Worker
Created By	Deputy Clerk
Document Version	Version 1
Created	May 2022
Approved by	
Review Date	Feb 2023 or earlier where there is a change in the applicable law affecting this Policy Guidance

Version Control:

Version	Date	Author	Description of Change
1	13/05/2022	Deputy Clerk N Henley	New Policy Version

Contents:

1. Introduction
2. Scope
3. Purpose
4. Definition
5. Responsibilities
6. Risk Assessment
7. Risk Reduction
8. Health and Safety
9. Reporting

If printed, copied or otherwise transferred from this website this document must be considered to be an uncontrolled copy.

Policy amendments may occur at any time and you should consult the Policies page on the website for the latest update.

1. INTRODUCTION

Staff working alone are often at increased risk of harm from the normal hazards associated with their work. They are also at an increased risk should they suffer an injury, particularly if they become incapacitated or otherwise unable to summon assistance themselves.

Parish Council staff are sometimes required to work alone for significant periods of time such as staff working at Parish Council locations, traveling or in their own homes.

This policy applies to employees, councillors, contractors or self employed people carrying out work for the Parish Council, and for the purposes of this policy, lone working is defined as anyone who works in isolation for any period without close or direct contact with another individual or supervisor.

There is no specific law dealing with lone working but the Parish Council has a general duty to its staff under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and a specific duty to carry out risk assessments under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

2. SCOPE

The Parish Council recognises its responsibility to its staff, volunteers and contractors for managing the risks associated with lone working. By implementing this policy the Parish Council ensures that the risks associated with lone working are controlled and minimised.

The Lone Working Policy applies to any member of staff, volunteer or contractor carrying out work for the Parish Council without close or direct supervision, in an isolated work area or who is working out of hours.

Working out of hours is any work occurring outside of the Parish Council's core working hours, Monday to Thursday 09:00 to 15:00

3. PURPOSE

The Parish Council recognised that when its staff need to work alone, it seeks to ensure the health and safety of the individuals.

This document:

- Raises awareness of the safety issues relating to lone working;
- Identifies and assesses potential risks to an individual working alone;
- Explains the importance of reasonable and practicable precautions to minimise potential risk;
- Provides appropriate support to lone workers; and
- Encourages reporting of all incidents associated with lone working so that they can be adequately managed and used to help reduce risks and improve working arrangements for the future.

4. DEFINITION

'Lone worker' refers to a person who works by themselves without work colleagues either during or outside normal working hours. Examples include:

- A caretaker who opens and closes the Community Centre or Halls;
- Cleaners; and
- Employees who work alone on the premises or away from the premises on parish council business (e.g. travelling to a training course).

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

All parish council individuals have a responsibility for the health and safety of work colleagues. The key responsibilities are as follows:

The Clerk shall:

- Try to avoid the need for lone working as far as is reasonably practicable;
- Ensure that the worker is competent to work alone;
- Ensure that all lone working activities are formally risk assessed (this should identify the risk to lone workers; any control measures necessary to minimise those risks; and emergency procedures)
- Make clear to staff arrangements for lone working and explain the details of what can or cannot be done while working alone;
- Inform lone workers of the hazards and understand the necessary control measures that need to be put in place and allow them the opportunity to contribute to the risk assessment;
- Maintain a list of emergency contacts for each employee;
- Raise the alarm if staff cannot be contacted or do not return as anticipated; and ensure that all staff are aware of this lone working policy and provide appropriate levels of training and guidance on lone working.

All staff shall:

- Take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their work;
- Follow any instruction given by management or the parish council;
- Raise with their line manager any concerns they have in relation to lone working;
- Inform their line manager at the earliest opportunity in the event of an accident, incident of violence or aggression whilst working alone; and be aware of colleagues working on their own and alert to unexpected changes of routine, for example unanticipated periods where there is no communication.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

The Clerk shall complete (or ensure the completion of) a Lone Working Risk Assessment prior to every lone working activity and update it as appropriate.

The risk assessment should be reviewed by the lone worker before undertaking the work and communicated to all relevant staff or councillors.

People who work alone will of course face the same risks in their work as those doing similar roles/tasks. However, they may additionally encounter hazards such as:

- Sudden illness
- Using substances hazardous to health
- Faulty equipment
- Travelling alone
- Remote locations
- Abuse from members of the public
- Animal attacks.

7. RISK REDUCTION

Below are strategies that can be implemented to reduce risk to lone workers:

- Keeping the office door locked when working alone;
- Ensuring a colleague or councillor accompanies you whilst locking up at the end of an evening meeting;
- Keeping a mobile phone (with an emergency contact saved) on you at all times;
- Keeping office diaries up to date with meeting, visits, training courses and lone working details;
- Letting family members and/or relevant colleagues know where you are going, your method of travel, when you are expected to return and who family members and/or relevant colleagues should contact in the event you do not return as expected; and agreeing a code word with an emergency contact, which can be used if the lone worker needs assistance.

8. HEALTH AND WELLBEING

In order to ensure your personal safety, it is important that you share any details of any aspects of your health that could lead to increased risk with your line manager or, where appropriate, necessary councillors (e.g. pregnancy). You can then jointly plan to mitigate any potential risks caused by your circumstances. This information will be treated on a strict 'need to know' basis with your confidentiality of the utmost importance.

9. REPORTING INCIDENTS

Any incidents or perceived risks encountered while lone working should be recorded, reviewed and acted upon. The report should include:

- A brief note of what happened, when, and who was involved;
- For any work-related aggression (verbal or physical) including threatening behaviour, all of the details of the incident and of the perpetrator, which could then be used if the police take any formal prosecution action. This might be particularly important for more serious incidents of work-related violence; and in either instance, details of any circumstances you think

might have contributed to the incident, e.g. the context of the interaction, perceptions about the condition of the perpetrator, or any environmental circumstances.

- This information would then support the parish council to review its risk assessment process and see if any additional measures are needed.
- If you feel unsafe, unwell or become injured, call the emergency services if you need immediate assistance. If possible, call your manager, buddy or councillor or colleague to let them know (or ask someone to do so on your behalf).
- Call your manager if your plans change because you feel unwell or if you have a domestic emergency when working alone.