Kirby Muxloe Parish Council

LONE WORKING POLICY

1. Introduction.

The Council recognises that its employees 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 hours. The purpose of this policy is to protect such staff so far as is reasonably practicable from the risks of lone working.

The Council also recognises it has an obligation under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSW Act) and the Management of Health & Safety at Work (MHSW) Regulations 1999, for the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees.

2. Scope of the Policy.

The policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of the Council's employees.

3. Definition of Lone Workers.

The Health and Safety Executive defines lone workers as "those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision". This covers all of the Council's employees: the Clerk, Assistant Clerk and Clerical Assistant, all of whom are required to carry out their duties for all or part of their working day working in isolation.

4. Aims of Policy.

The aim of the policy is to:

(a) increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working;

(b) 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;

(c) ensure that appropriate training is available to all staff in all areas that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone;

(d) ensure that appropriate support is available to staff who have to work alone;

(e) encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.

5. Responsibilities.

5.1 Clerk to the Council

The Clerk on behalf of the Parish Council is 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;

- ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the Council regularly reviews the effectiveness of this policy;
- ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy;
- 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 staff are given appropriate information, instruction and training;
- ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident; and
- managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents.

5.2 Employees

Employees are responsible for:
- taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions;
- co-operating by following rules 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;
- informing their Line Manager of any relevant medical conditions;
- taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy; and,
- reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone.

6. Risk Assessment.

Risk assessment is essential to good risk management.

Assessment will be carried out for and by all staff whose working practice makes them vulnerable. This includes staff that are site based but work in isolation as well as mobile staff whose work takes them out into the community. Recommendations will be made to eliminate or to reduce the risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

A lone workers' checklist will be completed (See Appendix 1). 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 (See Appendix 2).

Risk assessments for site based lone workers will include:
- safe access and exit;
- risk of violence;
- safety of equipment for individual use;
- channels of communication in an emergency;
- site security;
- security arrangements i.e. alarm systems and response to personal alarms; and,
- level and adequacy of on/off site supervision

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. 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".

In order to maintain an appropriate record of incidents involving lone workers it is essential that all incidents be reported to the Clerk who will prioritise each incident and identify any immediate action. Staff should ensure that all incidents where they feel threatened or 'unsafe' (even if this was not a tangible event/experience) are reported. This includes incidents of verbal abuse.

8. Contacting/Involving the Police.

The Council is committed to protecting staff from violence and verbal and physical assault and will support criminal proceedings against those who carry out 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 should inform the Clerk of any incident immediately. The Clerk will thereafter take responsibility for contacting the police to report the details of the incident.

9. Support for Staff.

Employees working for the Council should know that their safety comes first. Staff should be aware of how to deal with situations where they feel they are at risk, or unsafe. Staff should also be able to recognise how their own actions could influence or even trigger an aggressive response. The Clerk will ensure that all lone workers training needs are assessed and that they receive appropriate training.

10. Immediate Support Following a Violent Incident.

In the event of a violent incident involving a lone worker, the Clerk will immediately ensure that the employee receives any necessary medical treatment and/or advice. If an incident occurs out of hours the Chairman of the Council should be contacted.

The Clerk will also consider whether the employee needs specific information or assistance relating to legal or insurance aspects. The Clerk will also ensure appropriate written and verbal reporting of any violent incident.

Revision History

Date of revision: 18th June 2020

Appendix 1

Lone Working Checklist

Checklist completed by:

Date completed: Site:

Main Issues of Concern:

- Do staff work alone?
- Do staff work outside normal office hours?
- Do staff meet with members of the public in an isolated location?
- Is there enough security provision?
- Is there safe access to the building?
- Do staff activities involve working in confined spaces?
- Do staff activities involve handling dangerous substances?
- Do staff carry out work in high-risk locations (i.e. areas with high crime rates)?
- Do staff carry out work in isolated areas?

Control Measures for Consideration:

- Do you provide joint working for high-risk activities (i.e. in confined spaces and with dangerous substances)?
- Do you carry out regular supervisor or colleague checks during activities?
- Do you use entrance security systems (i.e. digital locks or swipe cards)?
- Is there security lighting around access points and parking areas?
- Have you installed panic buttons linked to manned locations?
- Do staff have information and training on basic personal safety?
- Are staff trained in strategies for preventing and managing violence?
- Do staff have access to forms for reporting incidents or near misses and appreciate the need for this procedure?
- Do you provide accompanied visits when there are concerns about safety?
- Do you share risk information with other agencies?
- Are there systems for monitoring staff whereabouts and movements for regularly reporting to base?
- Have you issued mobile phones?
- Have you issued personal attack alarms?
- Do staff carry forms for reporting incidents or near misses and appreciate the need for this procedure?
- Have you assessed lone workers health?

Are the existing control measures adequate?   Yes/No

If "No" what modifications or additional actions are necessary?

1.

2.

3.

4.

Appendix 2

Lone Working Risk Assessment

Task being undertaken:
Occupations:
Any vulnerable persons particularly at risk:-
Date of assessment:-   **completed by:**
Review date:-

Activity	Potential Hazards	Degree of Risk			Existing Control Measures	Additional Action Required/Comment	Degree of Risk		
		With Existing Control Measures					With Additional Control Measures		
	Specific and real hazards that are reasonably foreseeable	*Score likelihood and severity – significance of specific risks will vary between service areas, locations etc. Score on most probable basis not worst-case scenario.* *(Key page 8)*			*Example control measures that may already be in place. Choose those applicable, add others as necessary and localise.*	*Where risk (total) remains intolerably high consider what further control measures are required and specify.* *These might include more robust procedural or technological means of monitoring lone workers.*	*Re-score based on imposition of further control measures. Controls may influence likelihood (reduce) and/or severity (mitigate).*		
		L'hood	Severity	Total			L'hood	Severity	Total
Driving	Vehicle breakdown Accident Intruder in vehicle when unattended Use of mobile phone Fatigue				• Maintain vehicle properly • Belong to a breakdown organisation • Carry torch, phone etc for emergency • Advise team or partner where you are going • Phone in if plan changes • Avoid risky areas where possible • Plan your route • Ensure adequate fuel in vehicle • Take precautions in adverse weather.				

Movement through public areas e.g. to/from car parks	Attack				• Back down from confrontation • Call for help • Use attack alarm				
Illness or injury/ accident	No immediate access to medication/ assistance				• Alert team members if able to • Ensure access to phone • Alert team members if able • Access to phone • Avoid high risk activities (e.g. working at height) • Provision of first aid equipment • Trained first aider • Electrical safety	Consider back up arrangements where mobile phone coverage is poor if working for prolonged periods in areas of no coverage (rather than merely passing through). Select network provider with appropriate coverage for area.			
Contact with difficult members of the public	Assault Verbal abuse Threats				• Mobile phone • Safer Working Practice • Conflict awareness training • Joint working • Techniques to avoid conflict • Be aware of own responses • sharing information				

Manual handling	Back injury Slip, trip or fall				• Minimise manual handling • Do not attempt alone if beyond capabilities • Wear appropriate footwear • Assess floor conditions (slippery, wet, rugs etc); • Don't lift if in doubt • Manual handling training • Use lifting aids.				
Attack by dog or other animal	Bites Contracting illness Shock				• Avoid contact with animals • Appropriate behaviour near animals – avoid alarming them, e.g. sudden movements				
Working in office/premises alone	Fire:- Burns Smoke inhalation Trapped in building				• Fire detection system • Fire alarm call points • Fire action: safety notices/information • Extinguishers • Fire doors kept shut • Training for staff; • Fire exits kept clear • Hazard reporting and correction • Electrical safety inc PAT testing				
	Intruder:- Attack Verbal abuse Theft of property				• Controlled access to building e.g. through key fobs • On-site security • Challenging unknown visitors where safe or reporting/requesting assistance from security				

	Arson				• Access to phone • Keep valuables locked up • Fire precautions • Post incident support			
Other identified risks								

Key to assessment matrix

Likelihood (L'hood)
1. Very unlikely (5 years or more)
2. Unlikely (1-5 years)
3. Likely (6-12 months)
4. Very likely (1-6 months)
5. Certain (more than 1 per month)

Severity
1. Very minor injury (minor cuts/grazes. Very limited property damage/loss
2. More serious injury <3 days off work/incapacity (sprains, more serious cuts, bruising. Injury needing medical attention. Slight property damage/loss.
3. RIDDOR reportable (to HSE) injury/sickness (except fatality). More than 3 days off school. Significant property damage/loss.
4. RIDDOR reportable (to HSE) injury/sickness affecting more than one person (excluding fatality). Major property damage/loss.
5. Single or multiple staff fatality. Catastrophic property damage/loss.

Risk Ranking

1- 5	Low Risk
6-15	Medium Risk
16-25	High Risk

Severity→

	1	2	3	4	5
1	1	2	3	4	5
2	2	4	6	8	10
3	3	6	9	12	15
4	4	8	12	16	20
5	5	10	15	20	25

↑Likelihood