

Lone Working Policy

Purpose of this policy

The following policy and procedure have been written in order to minimise risks for staff working alone at home and working away from their fixed base, for members visiting or attending meetings, for volunteers assisting with Council projects and activities.

Legal background

Under the health & safety act 1974 and the management of health and safety at work regulations 1999 it is the duty of the Parish Council to assess risks to lone workers, members and volunteers and take steps to avoid or control risk where necessary. Employees of the Council 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.

Lone working

These are the people who work by themselves without close or direct supervision:

Employees - working at home, in the office or parish on their own, travelling on their own to attend meetings, training and appointments with contractors and other organisations.

Members - these are individuals who visit parishioners or travel on their own to attend meetings, training and appointments with contractors and other organisations.

Volunteers - these are individuals who take part in voluntary activities organised by the Council.

(I) Potential Risks to Lone Workers

- A) Open access and unlocked doors – accessible to the public
- B) Being taken ill whilst at work
- C) Lack of training regarding health & safety procedures
- D) Hazards in areas of activity
- E) Working in remote areas, and areas with no signal
- F) Parking in car parks which are poorly lit and going into buildings which are inadequately lit
- G) Aggressive and abusive members of the public
- H) Unlocking and locking public buildings, when alone

(II) Assessing the Risk

Before drawing up and recording the assessment of risk, it must be established:

- A) Whether the work can be done by a lone worker
- B) What arrangements will be in place to ensure an individual is not exposed to unnecessary and unacceptable risk?

(III) Risk Assessments

The following should be taken into consideration to minimise risk:

- A) Risk assessment on all activities will be undertaken and wherever possible will minimise risk to individuals by encouraging working in pairs.
- B) Where work or training is undertaken by one person, then that person must advise someone of the place of activity and the time of the activity.

- C) Persons must wear their Council lanyard and hi-viz when undertaking Council work, and always carry a mobile phone with a charged battery. If there is no mobile phone reception, another means of communication such as a Walkie Talkie should be considered.
- D) Where the environment is isolated, and access is difficult the person should always advise someone of where they are going and the time they expect to be there and return. Online tracking could also be considered as helpful way to ensure staff are safe.
- E) Employees working from home should not invite members of the public into their home unless the person is known, and the meeting is pre-arranged.
- F) Where there is potential for difficulty, employees should always arrange for another individual; colleague, Chairman or Councillor to attend at the same time. Workplace meetings should not be at the Clerk's home but in a public building with a telephone.
- G) For the safety of office members that are lone working when the office is open to the public, a panic alarm has been installed under the Clerk's desk. However, additional measures such as a video doorbell or video intercom system could also be considered.
- H) Consideration should be given for night-time meetings and in the absence of two staff members, prior to the meeting concluding, it should be agreed which pair of individuals will be responsible for locking the Annexe building.
- I) When meetings are organised with contractors, ensure colleagues or another individual are aware of the individuals whereabouts, and inform them when the appointment has finished.

Responsibility for Personal Safety

(I) Members / Employees Responsibility:

- A) To take reasonable care for the health and safety of him/herself and of other persons who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions at work.
- B) Always maintain a line of communication on a regular basis with members of the Council or colleagues to identify and minimise risk(s).
- C) Always inform a Councillor or Officer as to when you are leaving the fixed base to perform Council tasks including when you are expecting to return to your fixed base after the relevant task completed.
- E) Wear Council identification (LPC hi-viz and lanyard)

(II) Employers Responsibility:

- A) To take reasonable care for the health & safety of staff by identifying and assessing potential risks to ensure that staff are safe at all times.
- B) Always maintain a line of communication on a regular basis with staff to identify and minimise risk(s).
- D) Ensure staff receive all relevant training and information available.
- E) Wear Council identification (LPC hi-viz and lanyard)

This policy was adopted by Loddon Parish Council at its meeting held on 09 February 2022.

Signed:

Dated:

Date for next review: February 2025 (reviewed every three years).