

Godshill Parish Council

Lone Worker Policy

Adopted 12th September 2023 Minute 54.23

Introduction

Godshill Parish Council is responsible for the health, safety and welfare of its employees and acknowledges its responsibility to take active steps to protect employees from risk as per its obligations under:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Equality Act 2010

Scope

This policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of the Council's employees and contractors. Whilst lone working is not in itself unsafe, lone workers face unique risks arising from the fact that they are required to work on their own for some or all of the time and thus are especially vulnerable to risk.

Definition

For the purposes of this policy a lone worker is, as defined by the Health and Safety Executive, anyone who is required to work in isolation without close or direct supervision and without the presence of, or interaction with, colleagues.

Aims of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to reduce the risks of lone working as far as is reasonably possible and practicable. The policy aims to:

- Increase councillor and staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working.
- Ensure lone working risk assessments are carried out in a systematic and ongoing way.
- Ensure safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce risk as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Ensure appropriate training is in place for lone workers that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on working alone, including encouragement of incident reports.
- Ensure that appropriate support is available to those who have to work alone.

Identified lone worker occupations

Godshill Parish Council has one employee who is the Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer. Although the Clerk attends meetings and is in regular contact with Councillors and contractors throughout the day, administrative work is carried out alone.

On occasion lone contractors may be employed e.g. for repair work to street furniture.

Responsibilities

The Parish Council is responsible for the lone working arrangements of its employees and for the contents of this policy.

The Clerk is responsible for:

- Implementing the policy by identifying, evaluating and managing the risks associated with lone working.
- Raising any concerns with the Council and for making recommendations for consideration and resolution.

- Ensuring there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the Council regularly reviews the effectiveness of this policy.
- Ensuring all lone workers are aware of this policy.
- Ensuring risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly.
- Putting procedures and safe systems of work in to practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone.
- Ensuring that appropriate support is given to lone workers involved in any incident.
- Managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents.

Lone workers are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and of other people affected by their actions.
- Following the rules and procedures outlined in this policy.
- For reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate.
- Reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is essential to good risk management. Assessment will be carried out for and by all those whose working practices make them vulnerable as lone workers.

Recommendations will be made to eliminate or to reduce the risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

A lone workers checklist will be completed (Appendix 1). This will be used as a tool to compile a comprehensive risk assessment form which will calculate risk, note mitigating controls and recommend additional actions that may be considered necessary. The risk assessment will be retained on file by the Clerk.

Risk assessments for 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 ie alarm systems and response to personal alarms
- Level and adequacy of on/off site supervision
- Travelling between sites
- Reporting and recording arrangements
- Communication and traceability, and personal safety/security
- Potential to cause injury, ill health or damage.

Incident reporting

An incident report log will be held by the Clerk who should report all incidents to the Council and prioritise each incident and identify any required action. All incidents where lone workers feel threatened or unsafe or verbally abused (even if this was not a tangible event/experience) should be reported.

Contacting / involving the police

The Council is committed to protecting staff from violence and 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, contractors should inform the Clerk of any incident immediately and the Clerk will thereafter take responsibility for contacting the police.

Immediate support following a violent incident

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

Appendix A – Lone Working Checklist for Risk Assessment Form

Main issues of concern

Do employees work alone?

Do employees work outside normal office hours?

Do employees meet with members of the public or with contractors in an isolated location? Is there enough security provision?

Do employee or contractor activities involve handling dangerous substances?

Do employees or contractors work in isolated areas?

Is there any fire risk?

Risk assessment form

The Clerk shall complete the risk assessment form under headings as follows:

- Hazard / identified risk
- People at risk
- Mitigating controls in place
- Likelihood of hazard (1-5)
- Potential impact of hazard (1-5)
- Risk category score (likelihood x impact)
- Additional controls required
- Revised likelihood of hazard (1-5)
- Revised impact of hazard (1-5)
- Revised category score