

WHICHAM PARISH COUNCIL

LONE WORKING POLICY

Responsibilities:

All staff have a responsibility for their own health and safety. The Parish Council's responsibilities are as follows:

1. Clerk

- Will seek 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 must be formally risk assessed. This should identify the risk to lone workers; any control measures necessary to minimise those risks; provision of appropriate PPE and emergency procedures;
- Arrangements for lone working must be made clear to staff and the details of what can and cannot be done while working alone explained;
- Lone workers must be informed of the hazards and understand the necessary control measures that need to be put in place and have the opportunity to the risk assessment;
- Must raise an alarm if staff cannot be contacted or do not return as anticipated
- Must ensure that all staff are aware of this lone working policy and procedure and provide appropriate levels of training and guidance on lone working.

2. Lone Workers

- Take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their work and to make full use of any PPE provided for use whilst working.
- To follow any instructions given by management or the Council.
- Raise with the Clerk any concerns they have in relation to lone working.
- To not to work alone where there is inadequate information to undertake a risk assessment.
- Inform the Clerk at the earliest opportunity in the event of an accident, incident of violence, aggression whilst working alone, see section on Reporting Incidents.

3. Health and Well-Being

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 the chair or specific councillors. This includes 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

4. Risk Assessments

The Chair must complete (or ensure the completion of) a Lone Working Risk Assessment prior to every lone working activity and updated 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
- Faulty equipment
- Travelling alone
- Remote locations
- Abuse from members of the public
- Attack from animals

Ways in which lone working risks can be reduced

Every lone working environment and situation is different, and therefore it is not possible to implement a 'one size fits all' approach. Where there is regular or anticipated lone working, the council will devise and implement a lone working plan that meets the needs and risks of their particular circumstances. The plan should be proportionate to any risks that are identified from the risk assessment. This should be written down and communicated to all relevant staff and where appropriate, councillors.

5. Reporting incidents

Any incidents or perceived risks encountered while lone working should be recorded in the Whicham Parish council Accident Book located in the Clerk's home, by the lone worker and if incapacitated, by any agent acting on behalf of the Lone Worker.

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 should be captured, 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, this might also include recording 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 us to review our 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 Chair or councillor to let them know (or ask someone to do so on your behalf). Call you're the Chair if your plans change because you feel unwell or if you have a domestic emergency when working alone.