

COLEORTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Clerk: Ms. Fiona M. Palmer

Lone Workers and Home Workers Policy

The Law

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, employers have a legal obligation to look after the health, safety and welfare of their employees and contractors.

Introduction

Councillors and Staff may be required to work by themselves from time to time. Lone workers are those who, at any time, work by themselves in the office, in clients' premises or other locations away from the office.

This may be in Parish Council premises, outside on site or on work related travel. Examples could include opening and closing public amenities, being based in a location away from other colleagues, working late in the office, visiting members of the public or outside contractors. Lone working may present a risk to the employee. Typical risk factors include having an accident, being exposed to violence, drunken or threatening behaviour, indecent exposure or coming across attempted criminal activity, such as a burglary.

Consideration of a Policy

The Parish Council has introduced a policy on Lone Working in order to:

- Increase awareness of safety issues relating to lone working.
- 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.
- Ensure that appropriate training is available so that Councillors and Staff are able to recognise risk and to provide practical advice of safety when working alone; and
- Encourage full reporting and recording of any incidents relating to lone working.

Parish Council Responsibilities

The Parish Council should have overall responsibility 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 they regularly review the effectiveness of the policy.
- ensuring that all employees are aware of this policy;
- ensuring that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly, putting procedures and safe systems into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone;

- managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents.

The Policy encourages Councillors and Staff to take responsibility for:

- taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions;
- co-operating by following rules and procedures designed for safe working;
- keeping the Clerk up to date regarding their meeting times, location and contact details and making any amendments as soon as they occur;
- reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance;
- taking part in any training designed to meet the requirements of the policy;
- reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone.

Risk Assessments

A risk assessment should be carried out for and by all Councillors and Staff who are going to be working alone. Risk Assessments for working alone in a building or a particular site include:

- safe access and exit points;
- risk of violence;
- safety of equipment for individual use;
- channels of communication in case of emergency (for example, mobile telephone or emergency contact details);
- site security; security arrangements i.e. alarm systems.

Risk Assessments for **mobile lone workers** include:

- for office working, café working, cleaning, opening and closing, grounds man duties and lengths man;
- whether there have been any changes to duties/working circumstances;
- travelling between meeting/training/events/general work (e.g. if using a car, what procedure is in place if there is a breakdown; is there a health and safety kit on board?);
- reporting and recording arrangements (e.g. address of meeting, name of person, time of appointment, approximate finish time, contact telephone number);
- communication and traceability (e.g. what method of communication is to be used and who is the lone workers going to communicate with?);
- personal safety/security;
- any health issues/concerns.

Following the risk assessment, consideration is given to any appropriate action required.

Incident reporting

An incident can be defined as an unplanned or uncontrolled event or sequence of events that has the potential to cause injury, ill health or damage. All incidents must be reported to the designated point of contact e.g. the Clerk. Councillors and Staff should ensure that all incidents where they feel threatened or unsafe (even if this is not a tangible event/experience) are reported. This includes incidents of verbal abuse. It is a good idea to remind Councillors and Staff that they should dial 999 if they need emergency assistance whilst out and about.