

Lone Worker Policy

1. Introduction

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council has a legal obligation 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
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Equality Act 2010.

Employees may be required to work by themselves. For the purpose of this policy, lone workers are defined as those employees who, at any time, work in isolation in the office, at Council premises or at other locations away from the office, without the presence of, or interaction with, colleagues.

2. Aims

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 the time and thus are especially vulnerable to risk. The purpose of this policy is to reduce the risks of lone working as far as is reasonable possible and practicable. The policy aims to:

- increase Councillor and employee 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
- ensure full reporting and recording of any incidents relating to lone working
- ensure that appropriate support is available to those who must work alone.

3. Responsibilities

As the employer, Hatfield Peverel Parish Council will:

- have overall responsibility for the lone working arrangements of its employees
- be responsible for this policy and regularly review it.

As the Proper Officer, the Clerk is responsible for:

- the day-to-day implementation of this policy by identifying, evaluating and managing the risks associated with lone work
- raising any concerns with the Council and 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

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- putting procedures and safe systems into 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 others affected by their actions
- following the rules and procedures outlined in this policy
- keeping the Clerk up to date regarding their 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.

4. Risk Assessments

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.

Risk assessments for lone workers would include:

- safe access and exit points
- risk of violence
- safety of equipment for individual use
- channels of communication in case of emergency
- site security
- security arrangements (i.e. alarm systems)
- level and adequacy of on/off site supervision
- travelling between sites
- reporting and recording arrangements (where and when working)
- communication and traceability (what method of communication and with whom)
- personal safety/security
- any health issues/concerns.

Following the risk assessment, recommendations will be made to eliminate or to reduce the risk to the lowest reasonably practicable. The risk assessment will be retained on file by the Clerk.

5. 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'.

All incidents must be reported to the Clerk who will record them in the Incident Report Log and identify any required action. All incidents where lone workers feel threatened or unsafe (even if this was not a tangible event/experience) should be reported. This includes incidents of verbal abuse.

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All employees are encouraged to report violent incidents to the police and dial 999 if they need emergency assistance whilst out and about. For non-emergency cases, employees should inform the Clerk immediately following an incident and the Clerk will thereafter take responsibility for contacting the police.

Signed:

Date: 9th May 2022

Chairman

Reviewed: 12th May 2025