



BOUGHTON UNDER BLEAN PARISH COUNCIL

Lone Worker Policy

Adopted: 14 March 2023

Next review: March 2025

INTRODUCTION

Staff working alone are often at increased risk of harm from the normal hazards associated with their work. They are also at an increased risk should they suffer an injury, particularly if they become incapacitated or otherwise unable to summon assistance themselves. Boughton under Blean Parish Council recognises that some staff are required to work by themselves in the community without close or direct supervision, sometimes in isolated work areas or out of office hours

There is no specific law dealing with lone working but the Parish Council has a general duty to its staff under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and a specific duty to carry out risk assessments under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

SCOPE

This policy applies to employees, councillors, contractors or self employed people carrying out work for the Parish Council, and for the purposes of this policy, lone working is defined as anyone who works in isolation for any period without close or direct contact with another individual or supervision.

PURPOSE

1. To increase awareness of safety issues relating to lone working and protect employees who are required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time.
2. The risks to employee's health and safety are identified by suitable and sufficient risk assessments of the work activities, and where appropriate, introduce control measures to reduce the risk to an acceptable level or within statutory requirements.
3. Give employees information, instruction and/or training if appropriate before being expected to work alone. The degree of information will be dependent on the risk assessment.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Council and Clerk are responsible for ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working. The Council and the Clerk will also investigate any potential hazards faced by lone workers and assess the risks involved both to the lone worker and to any person who may be affected by their work and then ensure that measures are in place to control or avoid such risk.

The Council and the Clerk will involve staff when undertaking the required risk assessment process, take steps to check control measures are in place and review risk assessments annually or when there has been a significant change in working practice.

When carrying out the risk assessment particular consideration should be given to:

1. The remoteness or isolation of the workplace
2. Any problems of communication
3. Adverse weather
4. Knowledge of the location and/or person
5. The nature of potential injury or damage to health
6. Previous incidents/accidents in relation to lone workers and their work activities.

7. The level of experience and knowledge of individuals.
8. The availability of first aid facilities.

In relation to First Aid, the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 place a general responsibility on employers to provide first aid facilities. Lone workers are also reminded of their own responsibility to be aware of where they can obtain medical assistance from.

Employees are responsible for:

1. Taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions
2. Following guidance and procedures designed for safe working
3. Reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate
4. Reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone

REPORTING INCIDENTS

Any incidents or perceived risks encountered while lone working should be recorded, reviewed and acted upon. 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, 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, 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 the parish council to review its risk assessment process and see if any additional measures are needed.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BEST PRACTICE

1. Lone workers should have access to adequate first aid facilities
2. Lone workers should ensure they carry a mobile phone (with an emergency contact saved) at all times
3. Keeping office diaries up to date with meeting, visits, training courses and lone working details
4. Letting family members and/or relevant colleagues know where you are going, your method of travel, when you are expected to return and who family members and/or relevant colleagues should contact in the event you do not return as expected
5. If you feel unsafe, unwell or become injured, call the emergency services if you need immediate assistance.

PERSONAL ASSESSMENT

Employees should carry out their own 'Personal Assessment' before undertaking any activity which involves working alone.

1. Trust your intuition and always think of your personal safety

2. What is the best time of day to visit; assess the situation, are you familiar with the property locations? Consider the weather/visibility; seasons – will you be driving in the dark?
3. Where is the most appropriate place to see this person?
4. Do I need to take a colleague with me?
5. Ensure that someone knows where you are at all times; do not make last minute/unplanned visits.

Before starting work employees should be advised that, if they have a feeling that something is wrong, that they should rely on their senses/professional judgement. They must not commence the task, but report to the Parish Council to seek clarification or advice.