HONINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

LONE WORKING POLICY

Policy Adopted: 15 May 2018
Date Revised: 9 February 2022
To be reviewed: February 2025

Purpose of this Policy
The following policy and procedure has been written to ensure that there are adequate systems in place to ensure the health, safety and welfare of lone workers. The impact will be to reduce the risks of lone working as far as is reasonably possible and practicable for staff working alone at home and working away from their fixed base, for councillors visiting or attending meetings, for volunteers assisting with council projects and activities.

Legal Background
Under the Health & Safety Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 it is the duty of the Parish Council to assess risks to lone workers, councillors and volunteers and take steps to avoid or control risk where necessary. Employees of the council have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work and to co-operate with their employers in meeting their legal obligations.

Lone Working
These are the people who work by themselves without close or direct supervision, with examples (although not restricted to these examples):
- Employees – working at home on their own and outside of normal hours; travelling on their own to attend meetings or hosting meetings in their private residence.
- Councillors - these are individuals who represent the Parish Council and may visit parishioners or travel on their own to attend meetings outside of the normal Parish Council meetings.
- Volunteers - these are individuals who take part in voluntary activities organised by the council, or volunteer to carry out tasks on behalf of the council.

Potential Risks to Lone Workers
a) Being taken ill whilst at work
b) Lack of training regarding Health & Safety procedures
c) Provision of inappropriate equipment for the task or equipment which has not been correctly maintained
d) Hazards in areas of activity
e) Working in remote areas, and areas with no mobile signal
f) Parking in car parks which are poorly lit and going into buildings which are inadequately lit
g) Aggressive and abusive members of the public
h) Entering public buildings when alone

Assessing the Risk
It may be useful to consider the following:
a) Whether the work can be done by a lone worker or is it too high risk?
b) What arrangements will be in place to ensure an individual is not exposed to unnecessary and unacceptable risk?

Recommended Actions to Reduce Risk
The following should be taken into consideration to minimise risk:
a) General - Risk assessment on all activities will be undertaken and wherever possible will minimise risk to individuals by encouraging working in pairs. Where work is undertaken by one person then that person must advise the council of the place of activity and the time of the activity. Persons must always carry a mobile phone with battery charged.
b) Environment - Where the environment is isolated and access is difficult the person should always advise someone of where they are going and the time they expect to be there and return.
c) Meetings - Employees working from home should not invite members of the public into their home unless the person is known and the meeting is pre-arranged. Where there is potential for difficulty at a meeting, employees should always arrange for another individual – chairman or councillor – to attend at the same time. This meeting should not be at the clerk's or a councillor's home but in a public building (e.g. village hall).

RESPONSIBILITY

Employees Responsibility & Personal Safety:
a) To take reasonable care for the health and safety of him/herself and of other persons who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions at work.
b) Always maintain a line of communication on a regular basis with members of the council to identify and minimise risk(s).

Employers Responsibility:
a) To take reasonable care for the health & safety of staff by identifying and assessing potential risks to ensure that staff are safe at all times.
b) Always maintain a line of communication on a regular basis with staff to identify and minimise risk(s).
c) Ensure staff receive all relevant training and information available.
d) Ensure appropriate insurance is in place.