

HAWKWELL PARISH COUNCIL

LONE WORKING POLICY

1 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 This Policy sets out the responsibilities of Hawkwell Parish Council (HPC) and its employees in relation to the undertaking of Lone Working activities by staff and includes procedures to satisfy the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

2 DEFINITIONS

- `Lone Worker' The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines Lone Workers as “those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.”
- `Safe completion of work' The completion of a work activity and departure from either Council premises or the safe return of the employee to a vehicle or location where official duties are deemed to have been completed.

3 SCOPE OF POLICY

- 3.1 This Policy applies to all staff undertaking work activities on their own.

In relation to Parish Council staff examples of where Lone Working occurs can include:

- i Office staff: working alone in an office;
- ii Groundsman: working alone from a fixed base, ie. store/workshop premises;
- iii Caretaking staff: working alone outside normal hours.

- 3.2 The purpose of the Lone Working Policy is to raise awareness of the dangers associated with lone working and to provide an adequate safe system of work to address any issues that are raised.

4 NATURE OF NORMAL WORK

- 4.1 Employers should take account of normal work and foreseeable emergencies, eg. fire, illness, accidents, violence and identify control measures to mitigate the risks. The following are examples of factors to consider:

- i Does the workplace present a specific risk to the Lone Worker;
- ii Is there a safe way in and out for a Lone Worker, is there an additional means of entry/exit;
- iii Is there a risk of violence and/or aggression;
- iv Are there any reasons why the individual might be more vulnerable than others and be particularly at risk if they work alone (eg. if they are young, pregnant, disabled or a trainee);
- v If the employee has a medical condition are they able to work alone?

5 RESPONSIBILITIES

Employer Responsibilities

5.1 HPC will take reasonable steps to ensure that:

Employees

- are fully competent and capable of undertaking their tasks in a way that will ensure their safety when working alone;
- are properly trained and understand the importance of taking appropriate steps to ensure that their location is known to others and fully understand any procedure or system that is in place to confirm their safe completion of work;
- are fully trained in the use of any device provided to them either to provide support when working alone or to independently monitor their safe completion of work.

Managers

- are fully aware of their responsibility to assess the work activities of staff under their control and to implement appropriate procedures or arrangements to protect any who have to work alone;
- confirm their safe completion of work at the end of each work period;
- regularly review any Lone Working arrangements to confirm that they are working efficiently and effectively;
- review Lone Working arrangements when there has been a significant change in working practices;
- ensure the maintenance of appropriate `call-out` details which are provided to the supplier of any Lone Worker monitoring system, to include the testing of such systems from time to time;
- ensure that where electronic Lone Worker devices are provided to staff, that they are being used appropriately by the Lone Worker for their personal protection;
- recognise that some tasks may be too difficult or dangerous to be undertaken by a Lone Worker;
- ensure that Lone Workers have access to adequate first-aid facilities.

Employee Responsibilities

- 5.2 All Lone Workers are required by the Health and Safety at Work Act to regard their own safety and must consider the potential risk from such activity. This will include the responsibility to comply with any procedure or arrangement for the monitoring of their whereabouts and/or the verification of their safe completion of work.

- 5.3 If an electronic 'Lone Worker Device' is provided to an employee, they have a duty to make use of it for their personal protection. Should an employee experience any difficulty with such use, they must immediately raise it with their Line Manager in order that any issue can be reviewed. It will be the employee's responsibility to ensure that such device is kept charged to be available for use. Failure to make use of a Lone Worker Device may constitute a disciplinary breach.

6 SUPERVISION AND MONITORING

- 6.1 The extent and level of supervision required depends on the risks involved and the ability of the Lone Worker to identify and handle health and safety issues.
- 6.2 Procedures must be in place to monitor Lone Workers as effective means of communication are essential. Lone Workers should ensure that their intended whereabouts are known by:
- i Pre-agreed intervals of regular contact between the Lone Worker and Line Manager, using phones and/or e-mail;
 - ii Using the Lone Worker Device to monitor the employee's safe completion of work where the employee is working hours when management support is not available;
 - iii In the case of the Groundsman, ensure the Groundsman's emergency contact has suitable contact numbers to raise the alarm in the event he does not return home.

7 INDUCTION AND TRAINING

- 7.1 At the time of employee induction, the Clerk will ensure that any required Lone Working activities are reviewed and, where allocated, that the new employee is supplied with the Lone Worker device provided for the post.
- 7.2 The Clerk will ensure that the employee is instructed in the use of any Lone Worker device and is made aware of the supplier's guidance information and has access to the electronic training guide.

8 POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and a report will be considered by the Personnel Committee. The report will include a review of the use of any Lone Worker devices, to determine both their continuing suitability and whether any additional or reduced provision is appropriate in the light of identified Lone Working activities.

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