

Stocksbridge Town Council – Lone Working Policy and Procedures

Statement

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations place specific duties on employers to assess and manage any risks that employees may face during the course of their work. These requirements are applicable to all work situations and particular attention must be paid to situations where staff are working alone or away from their normal location.

Stocksbridge Town Council recognises that employees fall into this category and will ensure sufficient assessments and suitable precautions are taken to protect employees, to either eliminate the risk or reduce it so far as is reasonably practicable. Where necessary, this will include the provision of sufficient information, instruction and training.

Compliance

- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations

Arrangements

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines lone workers as:

People in fixed establishments where: only one person works on the premises and/or people work separately from others.

People that work out side normal hours i.e. maintenance, security, overtime etc.

Mobile workers working away from base that are: working at different locations on a regular basis and/or visiting clients at their premises.

Certain places are prohibited by legislation from lone working including

- Work at or near live electrical conductors
- Entry into confined spaces

Lone workers should not be placed at more risk than other employees and extra risk control measures may be required. Precautions should take account of normal work and foreseeable emergencies such as fire, accidents and illness. Particular consideration should be given to staff with known medical conditions (such as epilepsy, heart problems and diabetes to name but a few).

Where a risk to a lone worker is thought to exist, a risk assessment must be carried out and recorded on the *Lone Working Risk Assessment Form*. It may also be the case that merely by working alone, risks are introduced for a non- hazardous work activity, which had not been subject to a formal risk assessment.

When assessing risks to lone workers or staff working away from base, particular consideration should be given to;

- Communication – are sufficient communication facilities available?
- The person – are they sufficiently trained and physically able?
- The workplace – is there safe access to and egress from the area? Does the location present any particular risks?
- Emergencies – are adequate first aid facilities and warning devices available?

All risks identified in the assessment will require suitable control measures. The type of control measures will vary depending on the type of work, location and experience of the worker and may include:

- Providing communication equipment.
- Pre-work inspections.
- Check-in arrangements.
- Suitable information, instruction and training.
- Permits to work.

Stocksbridge Town Council/Line Manager must ensure that all employees are informed of the risks identified and provided with the necessary information, instruction and training for them to work safely.

Employees must adhere to any control measures implemented and to report any difficulties, failure of equipment or general concerns to their Line Manager.

Risk assessments should be reviewed annually or whenever there is reason to believe that they are no longer valid.

Performance: Standards and Record Keeping

Performance Standard	Responsibility of	Frequency	Records required
Ensure lone working risk assessments are carried out where necessary.	Clerk to Council	As necessary	Yes
Ensure lone working risk assessments are reviewed.	Clerk to Council	Annually, or if there are significant changes	Yes
Ensure employees have received appropriate information, instruction and training.	Clerk to Council	As necessary	Yes

Additional Information for Staff/Line Managers

Besides being physically alone, “working alone” can apply when there are no other people present who have knowledge of the work and workplace, and who are available to respond effectively to unusual occurrences or emergencies.

Although there is no overall prohibition on working alone there are some circumstances where there is legal requirement for at least two people to be involved in the work. These include:

- Work at or near electrical conductors
- Entry into confined spaces.

Employees involved in lone working should be made aware of the potential risks. There should be a system for checking on lone workers, and some form of communication should be made available for them.

Personal safety and possessions can more easily be at risk when working away from the office.

When working away, notify colleagues of your whereabouts and when you are expected to return. You should also arrange some means of contact for emergencies.

Many employees have to make visits to clients' premises, meet them at occupied or unoccupied premises, and/or attend meetings or training courses away from their normal place of work.

When meeting people away from the office, the identity of all persons should be verified prior to any meeting taking place. Never attend any appointment if you feel uncomfortable or nervous with the person you are to meet, or if an identification check has not been undertaken.

Whilst the risk to their personal safety is small, the following actions will help minimise the risk:

- If working in a situation where there is potential for harm, please adhere to any information, instructions and training given.
- Where an appointment is made by telephone, always obtain a landline telephone number in order to verify the details. Do not accept a mobile number.
- Make appointments during daylight hours wherever possible.
- Always let a colleague know where you are going and what time you will be back.
- Where a colleague has attended an appointment out of hours ensure that you, or another colleague, makes contact to ensure their safe arrival at home.
- If you feel uncomfortable during a meeting leave immediately.
- Ensure you know what to do in an emergency.
- Ensure you know the alert code, if you have one, and are aware of the procedure that should be followed.
- Carry a mobile phone or personal alarm.

- Travel at times when there are likely to be lots of people about.

Key Points

Meeting people

- If they are unknown to you, meet in a public place. If you are uneasy, stop the meeting and leave.
- If you have to meet someone alone and you are unsure, take a colleague with you.
- Always carry a personal alarm or mobile telephone.

Driving a car

- Travel at times when there are likely to be lots of people around.
- If alone, request the use of a mobile telephone.
- If harassed by another driver, look straight ahead, slow down, stop at a police station or a public place and sound your horn continuously.
- Exercise care and discretion when using multi-storey car parks.
- Never pick up hitchhikers.

Lone office working

There may be times when you are working alone in the office. In the unlikely event that you encounter hostility or threats the following procedures should be adopted:

- If you are physically threatened, feel intimidated, or a parishioner/someone refuses to leave the premises, immediately dial 999 and ask for police assistance.
- Stay calm and do not take a confrontational stance, or make comments likely to inflame the situation.
- If you have called the police and you want to feel safer, and you are able to do so, leave the premises.

Report any incidents that have caused you concern to your Line Manager as soon as possible.

ASSESSMENT OF RISK	Stocksbridge Town Council Contact: The Clerk on 0114 288 7895	Subject of Assessment: Lone working in offices	Date: March 2024 Review date: March 2025
Significant Hazards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unauthorised entry to building - Authorised entry becoming violent or abusive - Medical emergency - Exiting premises after office hours 		Risk Level: Low Low Medium Medium	Who might be harmed? - lone worker
Control measures currently in place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locks on outer doors • Buzzer/intercom • Electric lock release (operated from office) • CCTV – both internal and external • Lone working procedure in place and training given to relevant staff • External lighting • Land line telephone or mobile • Where possible do not remain in building out of office hours when alone 			
Is any further action required to control risk? - none identified			

Risk assessment carried out by _____ signed _____

_____ date _____