

WARE TOWN COUNCIL

LONE WORKING POLICY

1. Introduction

The Council recognises that its employees are required to work by themselves for significant periods of time without close or direct supervision in the community, in isolated work areas and out of hours. The purpose of this policy is to protect such staff so far as is reasonably practicable from the risks of lone working.

The Council also recognises it has an obligation under Health and Safety at Work (1974) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, for health, safety, and welfare at work of its employees.

2. Scope of Policy

The policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of the Council's employees.

3. Definition of Lone Workers

The Health and Safety Executive defines lone workers as "those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision". This covers all Council's employees, all of whom are required to carry out their duties for all or part of their working day working in isolation. This may be within the office or outside the office.

4. Aims of Policy

The aim of the policy is to:

- a) Increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working.
- b) Recognising and reducing risk by ensuring that the risk of lone working is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way, and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk so far as reasonably practicable.
- c) Ensure that appropriate training is available to all staff in all areas that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone.
- d) Ensure that appropriate support is available to staff who have to work alone.
- e) Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Town Clerk and Line Managers

The Town Clerk on behalf of the Town Council is responsible for:

- Ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating, and managing risk associated with lone working.
- Providing resources for putting the policy into practice.
- Ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the Council regularly reviews the effectiveness of this policy.

5.2 Line Managers

Line Managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy.
- Ensuring that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly.
- Putting procedures and safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone.
- Ensuring that staff are given appropriate information, instruction, and training.
- Ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident.
- Managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating, and recording incidents.

5.3 Employees

Employees are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions.
- Co-operating by following rules and procedures designed for safe working.
- Reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate.
- Taking part in 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.

6. Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is essential to good risk management. Assessment will be carried out for and by all staff whose working practice makes them vulnerable. This includes staff that are site based but work in isolation as well as mobile staff whose work takes out into the community. Recommendations will be made to eliminate or to reduce the risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

A lone workers' checklist will be completed (See Appendix 1). This will be used as a risk assessment for site based lone workers will include:

- Safe access and exit.

- Risk of violence.
- Safety of equipment for individual use.
- Channels of communication in an emergency.
- Site security.
- Security arrangements i.e. alarm systems and mobile telephones.
- Level and adequacy of on/off site supervision.

Risk assessments for mobile lone works will, additionally, include:

- Travelling between sites.
- Reporting and recording arrangements.
- Communication and traceability.
- Personal safety/security.

Following completion of the Risk Assessment, consideration will be given to any appropriate action that is required.

7. Mandatory Procedures

7.1 Security of Buildings

To ensure the security of buildings

- Appropriate steps should be taken to control access to the building, and that emergency exits are accessible.
- Alarm systems must be tested regularly.
- Staff work alone must ensure they are familiar with the exits and alarms.
- There must be access to a telephone and first aid equipment for staff working alone.
- If there is any indication that the building has been broken into, a staff member must not enter alone, but must wait for back up from the appointed security company.

7.2 Personal Safety

To ensure personal safety

- Staff must not assume that having a mobile phone and a backup plans sufficient. The first priority is to plan for a reduction of risk.
- Staff should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety.
- Before working alone, assessment of the risks involved should be made in conjunction with the line manager.
- Staff must inform their line manager or other identified person when they will be working alone, giving details of their location, and following an agreed plan.
- If a member of staff does not report as expected, an agreed plan should be put into operation, initially to check on then situation and then to respond as appropriate.

- Where staff work alone for extended periods and/or a regular basis, managers must make provision for regular contact, to monitor and to counter the effect of working in isolation.

8. 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”.

In order to maintain an appropriate record of incidents involving lone workers it is essential that all incidents be reported to the Clerk or Line Manager who will prioritise each incident and identify any immediate action. All staff are provided with the Clerk’s / Line Managers contact details. Staff should ensure that all incidents where they feel threatened or “unsafe” are reported. This includes incidents of verbal abuse.

9. Contacting/Involving the Police

The Council is committed to protecting the staff from violence and assault and will support criminal proceedings against those who carry out assault. All staff are encouraged to report violent incidents to the police and will be supported by the Council throughout the process.

Except in the cases of emergency, employees should inform the Clerk or Line Manager of any incident immediately. The Clerk or Line Manager will thereafter take responsibility for contact the police to report the details of the incident.

10. Support for Staff

Employees working for the Council should know that their safety comes first. Staff should be aware of how to deal with situations where they feel they are at risk, or unsafe. Staff should also be able to recognise how their own actions could influence or even trigger an aggressive response. The Clerk or Line Manager will ensure that all lone workers training needs are assessed and that they receive the appropriate training.

11. Immediate Support Following a Violent Incident

In the event of a violent incident involving a lone worker, the Clerk or Line Manager will immediately ensure that the employee received any necessary medical treatment and/or advice. If an incident occurs out of hours the Chair of Policy, Resources and Finance Committee should be contacted by the Clerk.

The Clerk or Line Manager will also consider whether the employee needs specific information or assistance relating to any legal or insurance matters. The Clerk or Line Manager will also ensure appropriate written and verbal reporting of any violent incident.

Ware Town Council, 28th September 2020. To be reviewed: September 2023
(subject to changes in legislation, recommended practice, operations)

WARE TOWN COUNCIL

LONE WORKING CHECKLIST

Checklist completed by:

Date completed:

Location: The Priory
Fletchers Lea
Priory Grounds
The Lido
Ware Cemetery
Ware Allotments
Around Ware
(* circle as necessary)

Main Issues of Concern

Do staff work alone?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do staff work outside normal office hours?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do staff meet with members of the public in an isolated location?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Is there enough security provision?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Is there safe access to the building?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do staff activities involve working in confined spaces?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do staff activities involve handling dangerous substances?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do staff carry out work in high-risk locations?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do staff carry out work in isolated areas?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	

Control Measures for Consideration

Do you provide joint working for high risk activities?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you carry out regular supervisor or colleague checks during activities?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	

Do you use entrance security systems? (i.e. digital locks)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Is there security lighting around access points and parking areas?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you installed panic buttons linked to manned locations?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do staff have information and training on basic personal safety?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Is staff trained in strategies for preventing and managing violence?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do staff have access to forms for reporting incidents or near misses and appreciate the need for this procedure?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you provide accompanied visits when there are concerns about safety?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you share risk information with other agencies?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there systems for monitoring staff whereabouts and movements for regularly? reporting to base?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you issued mobile phones?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you issued personal attack alarms?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do staff carry forms for reporting incidents or near misses and appreciate the need for this procedure?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	

Are the existing control measures adequate? Yes No

If "no", what modifications or additional actions are necessary?

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Review Summary:

Date	Update
21 st September 2020	Adopted
25 th September 2023	Re adopted no revision