



Lone Working Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Council employees, Councillors and volunteers may, from time to time be expected to work alone. These times should be minimal and unusual. Working alone is not necessarily unsafe, but there are circumstances where lone working can increase risks.
- 1.2 There is no general legal prohibition on working alone, however the duties of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 apply. These require identifying hazards of the work, assessing the risks involved and putting measures in place to control the risks.

2. Responsibilities

- 2.1 Employers have responsibilities for the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees and volunteers and the health and safety of those affected by the work, e.g. visitors or contractors. These responsibilities cannot be transferred to people who work alone. It is the employer's duty to assess risks to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control risk where necessary.
- 2.2 Employees and volunteers 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.
- 2.3 Managers and supervisors should discuss responsibilities and agree best practice for their team.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 Consultation with employees on health and safety matters is a legal duty. All staff have the opportunity to review and comment upon this policy.

4. Who are lone workers?

- 4.1 Any employee or volunteer who is either:
 - Working alone
 - Working one to one
 - Out of contact with the office or other workers
 - Working without close or direct supervision

5. Assessing and controlling the risks

- 5.1 Control measures may include offering clear guidance and training to minimise risk. When risk assessments shows that it is not possible for work to be done safely by a lone worker, arrangements for providing help or back-up will be put in place. These measures should be regularly reviewed to ensure they are still adequate.

6. Security

- 6.1 The Sambrook Centre is a public building and should remain accessible. However, when working alone staff may feel vulnerable to abuse or attack. The personal safety of staff is a priority for the Council. To minimise the risk staff should:
- 6.2 Before and after official opening hours
- Keep the front door locked (on lock down)
- 6.3 During Office hours
- Keep the office door locked;
- 6.4 Staff who feel concerned or threatened may take the following action depending on the urgency and level of risk:
- Contact colleagues and ask for support
 - Phone the police using 112
 - If necessary, leave the building. If pursued go to the nearest inhabited building and ask for help.
- 6.5 Staff working outside of the building should wherever possible:
- work in pairs;
 - ensure they have access to a mobile phone, particularly if they are in an area, or attending a property where they have reasonable cause to believe risks to their safety may be higher;
 - leave details of their expected whereabouts, people they are meeting and expected time of return;
 - outside office hours use a buddy system: make an arrangement with a colleague or family member: agree what actions should be taken
 - advise staff in the office if they are going to be more than 30 minutes late returning to work.
 - remain alert to their surroundings and any likely threat;
- 6.6 Instances of abuse or violence, or threats thereof should be reported to the Parish / Deputy Clerk, who should log and investigate incidents and report them to the Personnel Subcommittee in line with current policy.
- 6.7 Office staff should be aware of the location of staff outside the office and be prepared to check that they are safe; if they are late returning to the office for example. Agreement on actions to be taken should be agreed within teams.

7. Fire Safety

- 7.1 In circumstances where a member of staff is alone in the office and they know users are in the building, they should check and clear the building so far as they are able to do so within 3 minutes. All staff working in the building should be aware of the fire safety procedure. Leaders of groups using the building should be aware of their responsibilities for ensuring the safety of group members.
- 7.2 External organisations using the building will be issued with instructions, including the fire safety procedure which they should read to their delegates.
- 7.3 Where staff are working alone in the building it is particularly important that they are aware of any visitors with special mobility, sight or hearing impairments and that any such visitors have completed a personal risk assessment to allow us to help them leave the building safely. These risk assessments should be accessible.

8. In case of illness or accident

- 8.1 If a person working alone is taken ill, or required to leave work unexpectedly in an emergency, they should (if possible)
- check if another staff member can come in to cover for them
 - otherwise, ask all visitors to leave before securing the building and leave.
- 8.2 Lone workers should be capable of responding correctly to emergencies. Risk assessments will be used to identify possible events and where possible alternative arrangements will be made. For example room bookings may be restricted or lower risk tasks allocated.
- 8.3 Some high risk tasks, for example operating heavy electric cutting machinery should only be undertaken when there are at least two people present.
- 8.4 All incidents should be reported to the Parish Clerk/Centre Manager so that risk assessments may be reviewed.
- 8.5 All employees should ensure that their emergency contact details (held in the office) are kept up to date. Family members should be aware of who to contact if they are concerned about your whereabouts.