

# HASLINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

## LONE WORKING POLICY

### Introduction

Haslingfield Parish Council recognises that its employees are required to work by themselves for significant periods of time without close or direct supervision in isolated work areas and out of office hours.

Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Haslingfield Parish Council has a duty of care to advise and assess risk for workers when they work by themselves in these circumstances. However, employees have a responsibility 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.

### Scope

This policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of Haslingfield Parish Council staff.

### Definition

The Health & Safety Executive defines lone workers as “those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision”. This covers Haslingfield Parish Council’s employees who are required to carry out their duties for all or part of their working day working in isolation.

### Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working;
- ensure 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 is reasonably practicable;
- 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;
- ensure that appropriate support is available to staff who have to work alone; and
- encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.

### Responsibilities

The Clerk on behalf of the Parish 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; and
- ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the effectiveness of this policy is regularly reviewed.

Councillors and the Clerk are responsible for:

- ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy;
- taking all possible steps to ensure that lone workers are at no greater risk than other employees;
- 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 identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training;
- managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents;
- ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident; and
- providing a mobile phone and other personal safety equipment, if and where this is felt to be desirable.

Employees are responsible for:

- taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions;
- following guidance 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 and complete an accident form;
- 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; and
- maintaining good communication to minimise risk.

### **Guidance for Risk Assessments of Lone Working**

Risk assessment is essential to good risk management. Assessment will be carried out for and on behalf of all staff whose working practice makes them vulnerable. Recommendations will be made to eliminate or reduce the risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable. A risk assessment will be carried out.

Risk assessments for lone workers will include:

- is the person fit and suitable to work alone;
- 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 response to personal alarms; and
- level and adequacy of on/off site supervision.

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

### **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 who will prioritise each incident and identify any immediate action. Staff should ensure that all incidents where they feel threatened or “unsafe” (even if this was not a tangible event/experience) are reported. This includes incidents of verbal abuse.

### **Contacting / Involving the Police**

The Council is committed to protecting its 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, staff should inform the Clerk of any incident immediately. The Clerk will thereafter take responsibility for contacting the police to report the details of the incident.

### **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 will ensure that all lone workers' training needs are assessed and that they receive appropriate training.

### **Immediate Support following a Violent Incident**

In the event of a violent incident involving a lone worker, the Clerk will immediately ensure that the employee receives any necessary medical treatment and/or advice. If an incident occurs out of hours, the Council's Chairman should be contacted. The Clerk will also consider whether the employee needs specific information or assistance relating to legal or insurance aspects. The Clerk will also ensure appropriate written and verbal reporting of any violent incident.

### **Lone Working for the Clerk**

Where the items above relate directly to the Clerk as a staff member, the appropriate controls will be exercised by the Council or, in an emergency, the Chairman of the Council.

### **Good Practice for Lone Workers**

- Lone workers should have access to adequate first aid – to be reported if used.
- Lone workers should be provided with a mobile phone and other personal safety equipment where this is necessary.

Date adopted: February 2025

Date of review: February 2027

Based on South Wingfield's Lone Working policy