

Thurton Parish Council

Lone Worker Policy

Purpose of this Policy

The following policy and procedure has been written in order to minimise risks for staff working alone at home and working away from their fixed base, for members visiting or attending meetings and for volunteers assisting with council projects and activities. There are adequate systems in place to ensure the health, safety and welfare of lone workers in order to reduce the risks of lone working as far as is reasonably possible and practicable.

Legal Background

Under the Health & Safety Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 it is the duty of the Parish Council to assess risks to lone workers, members and volunteers and take steps to avoid or control risk where necessary. Employees of the council 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.

Lone Working

These are people who work by themselves without close or direct supervision:

- Employees – working at home on their own; attending meetings on their own and so on
- Councillors – individuals who visit parishioners or attend to activities in the parish on their own
- Volunteers – individuals who take part in voluntary activities organised by the council on their own

Potential Risks to Lone Workers

- Open access and unlocked doors – accessible to the public
- Being taken ill whilst at work
- Lack of training regarding Health & Safety procedures
- Hazards in areas of activity
- Working in remote areas, and areas with no signal
- Parking in car parks which are poorly lit and going into buildings which are inadequately lit
- Aggressive and abusive members of the public
- Entering public buildings, when alone

Assessing the Risk

Before drawing up and recording the assessment of risk, it must be established:

- a) Whether the work can be done by a lone worker
- b) What arrangements will be in place to ensure an individual is not exposed to unnecessary and unacceptable risk?

Risk Assessments

The following should be taken into consideration to minimise risk:

- a) Risk assessment on all activities will be undertaken and wherever possible will minimise risk to individuals by encouraging working in pairs. Where work is undertaken by one person then that

person must advise someone of the place of activity and the time of the activity. Persons must always carry a mobile phone with battery charged

b) Environment. Where the environment is isolated and access is difficult the person should always advise someone of where they are going and the time they expect to be there and return.

c) The Task. Employees working from home should not invite members of the public into their home unless the person is known and the meeting is pre-arranged.

c) History. Where there is potential for difficulty employees should always arrange for another individual – chairman or councillor – to attend at the same time. This meeting should not be at the clerk's home but in a public building with a telephone.

Organisation and Arrangements

Thurton Parish Council is responsible for:

- The health & safety of staff by identifying and assessing potential risks to ensure that staff are safe at all times.
- Always maintain a line of communication on a regular basis with staff to identify and minimise risk(s).
- Ensure staff receive all relevant training and information available.
- Ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working.
- Ensuring compliance with the policy and providing resources for putting the policy into practice
- Making sure that support is given to employees and councillors involved in any incident ☒
- Making sure that employees and councillors are aware of this policy

Employees Responsibility & Personal Safety:

- To take reasonable care for the health and safety of him/herself and of other persons who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions at work.
- Always maintain a line of communication on a regular basis with members of the council to identify and minimise risk(s). Carry a mobile phone with you if you have one.
- Always inform the chair as to when you are leaving the fixed base to perform council tasks including when you are expecting to return to your fixed base after relevant task completed.
- Plan the visit – let someone know time of leaving, where you are going and estimated time of return
- Do not put yourself at undue risk
- Discuss any concerns with someone else
- Try to avoid confrontation
- If violence is threatened, try to withdraw from the situation or call for help
- Employees working from home should not invite members of the public into their home unless the person is known, and the meeting is pre-arranged
- Where there is potential for difficulty, employees should always arrange for another individual – chairman or councillor – to attend at the same time. This meeting should not be at the Clerk's home but in a public building
- The clerk is responsible for writing and implementing this policy. This is undertaken under the direction of the council at the end of a meeting, at least two people should lock up the building and leave together.

