NORTON CANES PARISH COUNCIL

LONE WORKING POLICY

Purpose of this policy and procedure
The council recognises that some of our staff work alone, and where this is the case, seeks to ensure the health and safety of all lone workers. This document:

- Raises awareness of the safety issues relating to lone working,
- Identifies and assesses potential risks to an individual working alone,
- Explains the importance of reasonable and practicable precautions to minimise potential risk,
- Provides appropriate support to lone workers, and,
- Encourages reporting of all incidents associated with lone working so that they can be adequately managed and used to help reduce risks and improve working arrangements for the future.

The scope of this policy
It applies to all staff, whether full time, part time or temporary workers. It does not apply to Councillors.

Policy
We will protect staff from the risks of lone working, as far as is reasonably practicable. Working alone is not in itself against the law and it is often safe to do so. However, the Council's policy is to consider carefully and deal with any health and safety risks for those who work alone.

Definition
'Lone Worker' refers to people who work by themselves without work colleagues either during or outside normal working hours. Examples include:

- A Lengthsman tending to green space.
- Office workers who work alone in the premises, and,
- Homeworkers.

Any worker under the age of 18 years, or anyone working in confined spaces is not permitted to work on their own.

Responsibilities
All staff have a responsibility for the health and safety of work colleagues. The key responsibilities are as follows:

Managers

- Ensure that the worker is competent to work alone.

- Ensure that all lone working activities must be formally risk assessed. This should identify the risk to lone workers; any control measures necessary to minimise those risks; and emergency procedures.
- Ensure that the working environment is safe and secure to work alone, this can include limited entry for general public such as a lockable limited entry door and visual camera with 2-way voice option such as Ring.
- Arrangements for lone working must be made clear to staff and the details of what can or cannot be done while working alone explained.
- Lone workers must be informed of the hazards and understand the necessary control measures that need to be put in place and can contribute to the risk assessment.
- Ensuring lone workers such as Lengthsman have the correct equipment that is in good working order, along with protective wear.
- Must raise the alarm if staff cannot be contacted or do not return as anticipated.
- Must ensure that all staff are aware of this lone working policy and procedure and provide appropriate levels of training and guidance on lone working.

Lone workers

- Take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their work.
- To follow any instruction given by management or the council.
- Raise with their line manager or Audit and Governance Committee any concerns they have in relation to lone working.
- Inform their line manager at the earliest opportunity in the event of an accident, incident of violence or aggression whilst working alone.

Staff

- To be aware of colleagues working on their own and alert to unexpected changes of routine, unanticipated periods where there is no communication.

Risk Assessments

Managers must complete (or ensure the completion of) a Lone Working Risk Assessment prior to every lone working activity and updated as appropriate. The risk assessment should be reviewed by the lone worker before undertaking the work and communicated to all relevant staff or councillors.

People who work alone will of course face the same risks in their work as those doing similar roles/tasks. However, they may additionally encounter hazards such as:

- Sudden illness
- Faulty equipment
- Travelling alone
- Remote locations
- Abuse from members of the public
- Animal attacks

Ways in which lone working risks can be reduced.

Every lone working environment and situation is different, and therefore it is not possible to implement a 'one size fits all' approach. Where there is regular or anticipated loan working, the council

will devise and implement a lone working plan that meets the needs and risks of their circumstances. The plan should be proportionate to any risks that are identified from the risk assessment. The plan for a Lengthsman lone working with machinery will be more detailed than an administrator working late in the office. This should be written down and communicated to all relevant staff and where appropriate, councillors.

Below are some example strategies that could be implemented (on their own or combined):

- Electronic (or hard copy) diaries to be kept up to date with meeting/visit/lone working details.
- Agreed times and method of contact.

Health and wellbeing

To ensure your personal safety, it is important that you share any details of any aspects of your health that could lead to increased risk with your manager or specific councillors. This includes pregnancy. You can then jointly plan to mitigate any potential risks caused by your circumstances. This information will be treated on a strict 'need to know' basis with your confidentiality of the utmost importance.

Reporting incidents

Any incidents or perceived risks encountered while lone working should be recorded, reviewed, and acted upon. The report should include:

- A brief note of what happened, when, and who was involved,
- For any work-related aggression (verbal or physical) including threatening behaviour, all the details of the incident and of the perpetrator should be captured, which could then be used if the police take any formal prosecution action. This might be particularly important for more serious incidents of work-related violence, and,
- In either instance, this might also include recording details of any circumstances you think might have contributed to the incident, e.g. the context of the interaction, perceptions about the condition of the perpetrator, or any environmental circumstances. This information would then support us to review our risk assessment process and see if any additional measures are needed.

- If you feel unsafe, unwell, or become injured call the emergency services if you need immediate assistance. If possible, call your manager or councillor or colleague to let them know (or ask someone to do so on your behalf).

- Call your line manager if your plans change because you feel unwell or if you have a domestic emergency when working alone.

It is the obligation of the employee to follow these procedures which will be reviewed from time to time.

Signed... Clapham.....

Dated: 18TH MARCH 2026.

Minute Reference: 2026-23