Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council
Lone Working Policy

Introduction

Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council recognises that its employees and Councillors can find themselves working for significant periods of time without close or direct supervision either within the parish office, Ash Green Sports Centre, the local community or out of office hours. Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Ash-cum-Ridley 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 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. This policy will apply to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council employees.

Definition of Lone Working

The Health & Safety Executive defines lone workers as "those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision". This covers Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council employees; the Clerk , Deputy Clerk/Finance Officer, Assistant Clerk and Ash Green Sports Centre staff, who are required to carry out their duties for part their working day working in isolation, either within the Ash Green Sports Centre, the Parish office or at home.

Policy Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Increase employee 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 employees 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 employees who have to work alone.
- Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.

Responsibilities

The **Clerk/Proper Officer** and Councillors are 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 effectiveness of this policy is regularly reviewed
- Ensuring that all employees 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 employees identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training, including training at induction, updating and refreshing this training as necessary
- 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

The Council's **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
- Always maintain 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 employees whose working practice makes them vulnerable. This includes employees that are office-based but work in isolation as well as any occasions when work takes employees out into the community.

Recommendations will be made to eliminate or reduce the risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable. A lone workers risk assessment will be completed and retained by the Clerk. This will be used as a tool to identify if the existing control measures are adequate and if not, what modifications or additional actions can be considered necessary to help reduce the risks associated with lone working.

Risk assessments for site based lone workers will include:

- Is the person fit and suitable to work alone;
- Safe access and exit;
- Risk of violence;
- Are women especially at risk if they work alone;
- Safety of equipment for individual use;
- Channels of communication in an emergency;
- Site security;
- Level and adequacy of on/off site supervision.

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

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

Following completion of the Risk Assessment, consideration will be given to any appropriate actions that are 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.

Employees 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 employees from violence and assault and will support criminal proceedings against those who carry out assault.

All employees are encouraged to report violent incidents to the police~~y~~ and will be supported by the Parish Council throughout the process. Except in the cases of emergency, employees should inform the Clerk and Chairman of Council 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. Employees should be aware of how to deal with situations where they feel they are at risk or unsafe. Employees 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 an Incident

In the event of an incident involving a lone worker, the Clerk (or in the event of it involving the Clerk, the Council) 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.

Good Practice for Lone Working

- During their working hours, all employees leaving the workplace should leave ~~written~~ details of where they are going and their estimated time of arrival back.
- If, in the course of a trip away from the office, plans change significantly, this should be communicated back to the office
- If the visit is assessed to have a sufficient risk, arrangements should be made with a colleague or councillor to check that a lone worker has returned to their base on completion of the visit. If possible delay the visit until the employee can be accompanied
- Employees should ensure that Ash Green Sports Centre has a record of their mobile number so that they can be contacted whilst away from the office
- Lone workers should have access to adequate first aid facilities in the office

- Employees securing Ash Green Sports Centre at night, must message the Clerk to confirm that they have left the site.

Date of Policy Adoption	Review Cycle	Date of Next Review
April 2023	Annual	April 2026