

# Studley Parish Council

## Lone Worker Policy

### 1. Introduction

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, for volunteers assisting with council projects and activities.

### 2. 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.

### 3. Scope of the Policy

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

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

Employees - working at home on their own and outside of normal hours; travelling on their own to attend meetings and so on.

Councillors - these are individuals who visit parishioners or travel on their own to attend meetings and so on.

Volunteers - these are individuals who take part in voluntary activities organised by the council.

### 4. 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

### 5. Aims of the Policy

The aim of the policy is to:

- Increase 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 reasonably practicable.
- Ensure that appropriate support and training is available to all staff, members and volunteers that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone.

- Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.

## 6. Risk Assessments and Responsibilities

The following should be taken into consideration to minimise risk:

- 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.
- 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.
- Employees and Councillors working from home should not invite members of the public into their home unless the person is known and the meeting is prearranged.
- Where there is potential for difficulty employees and Councillors should always arrange for another individual such as another Councillor to attend at the same time. This meeting should be in a public building with a telephone.
- Employees, Councillors and Volunteers should **Never** transport a child on their own and should assess any risk before transporting a vulnerable adult alone.

Employees Responsibility & Personal Safety:

- To take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others affected by their actions.
- Following guidance and procedures designed for safe working.
- Always maintain a line of communication on a regular basis with members of the council to identify and minimise risk(s).
- To ensure Parish Office is secure and visitors are attended to initially at the hatch. If a private meeting is required use Council Chamber after following risk assessment procedure.
- Always inform a colleague or Councillor 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.
- Report any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have

Employers Responsibility:

- To take reasonable care 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.
- Ensure staff have access to a mobile phone where this is necessary

Having collected all the relevant information you then need to plan your contact:

- Trust your intuition and always think of your personal safety.
- What is the best time of day and most appropriate place to meet?
- Do I need to take a colleague with me?
- If another agency is involved can we undertake a joint visit?
- Ensure that someone knows where you are at all times; do not make last minute or unplanned visits.
- Do you have a charged mobile phone?
- Do you have a panic alarm (if applicable)?
- If visiting off site know where you are travelling and check directions.
- At night park near street lighting or lit areas where possible.
- Reverse into parking spaces.
- Keep all doors locked whilst driving and keep valuables out of sight.
- Arrange with a colleague or Councillor a time when they should expect you to have notified them that you are safe.
- Following evening meetings staff should make arrangements to notify colleague or Councillors that they have arrived home safely.

This policy was approved by the Council at its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2017 and will be reviewed every three years.

Document reviewed 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023