

HOCKLEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

Lone Working Policy

Purpose: The following policy and procedure has been written in order to minimise risks for staff working alone at home, working alone in the Pavilion, visiting or attending meetings and for volunteers assisting with Parish Council activities.

The Law: Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, employers have a legal obligation to look after the health, safety and welfare of their employees and contractors.

Lone Workers: Lone workers are those employees who, at any time, work by themselves in the office, in clients' premises, their own home or other locations away from the office or home. This may be in Parish Council premises, outside on site or on work related travel. Examples could include opening and closing public amenities, being based in a location away from other colleagues, working late in the office, visiting members of the public or outside contractors. Lone working may present a risk to the employee. Typical risk factors include having an accident, being taken ill whilst at work, hazards in areas of activity, parking in car parks that are poorly lit, locking buildings and car parks late at night, being exposed to violence, drunken or threatening behaviour, indecent exposure or coming across attempted criminal activity, such as a burglary.

Hockley Heath Parish Council Responsibilities:

- ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working
- providing resources for putting the lone workers policy into practice
- ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that they regularly review the effectiveness of the policy
- ensuring that all employees are aware of this policy
- ensuring that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly, putting procedures and safe systems into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone
- managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents

Employee Responsibilities:

- taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions
- co-operating by following rules and procedures designed for safe working
- keeping the Chair, Vice Chair or Councillors up to date regarding meeting times, location and contact details and making any amendments as soon as they occur
- ensuring a mobile phone is carried and has sufficient charge for use
- reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance
- taking part in any 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
- requesting to be accompanied when holding meetings with residents, stakeholders, contractors etc not held in a public place, or when it is dark, or when the employee feels additional support is required
- holding meetings in the Pavilion and not in their place of residence

The Clerk, as the Proper Officer, is responsible for:

- the day-to-day implementation of this policy by identifying, evaluating and managing the risks associated with lone working
- raising any concerns with the council and making recommendations for consideration and resolution
- ensuring there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the council regularly reviews the effectiveness of this policy
- ensuring all lone workers are aware of this policy
- ensuring risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly
- putting procedures and safe systems into practice, which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone
- ensuring that appropriate support is given to lone workers involved in any incident (the Parish Council will adopt this responsibility when the Clerk is the lone worker in question)
- managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents

Incident Reporting: An incident can be defined as an unplanned or uncontrolled event or sequence of events that has the potential to cause injury, ill health or damage. All incidents must be reported to the designated point of contact e.g. the Clerk, Chairman. Employees should ensure that all incidents where they feel threatened or unsafe (even if this is not a tangible event/experience) are reported. This includes incidents of verbal abuse. Employees should dial 999 if they need emergency assistance whilst out and about.

Date of Policy: 22nd October 2020

Adopted by Hockley Heath Parish Council on 22nd October 2020, minute reference number: 112.1

Reviewed and adopted by Hockley Heath Parish Council on 18th May 2023, minute reference number: 124/23.2