



FELSTED PARISH COUNCIL LONE WORKING POLICY

Date 5 October 2022

1. Introduction

- i) Felsted Parish Council as an employer is responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees and of those affected by the work. It is the employer's duty to organise and manage lone workers. However, employees have responsibility for taking reasonable care of themselves and of other people affected by their work and for co-operating with the employer in the discharge of their legal obligations.
- ii) The following policy and procedure has been written in order to minimise risks for staff working alone in their fixed base and working away from their fixed base. Under the Health and Safety Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 it is the duty of Felsted Parish Council to assess risks to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control risk where necessary. Employees of the Parish 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.
- iii) The Parish Council has entrusted this day-to-day responsibility to the Parish Clerk. Areas of concern are to be taken to the HR Working Party for consideration.

2. Lone Working

- i) Lone working is a common work situation and while many hazards at work are relatively straightforward to identify and control, other aspects of work-place health and safety such as the risks posed to 'lone workers' are less easy to define.
- ii) The broad duties of Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 include considering lone working in the assessment of the risks associated with service activities as part of the Parish Council's responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of their staff.
- iii) The Parish Council must therefore have a systematic approach to assess the risks that a lone worker may face and take such action where possible to remove or reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

4. Employees also have a duty of care for their own safety, the safety of fellow workers and of any person affected by the Parish Council's work activities.

3. Definition of a Lone Worker

- i) Lone workers are employees who, at any time, work by themselves in the office or at other locations owned by the Parish Council. This could include: working at and/or opening and closing sites and public facilities; working late in the office or visiting Parish Council-owned properties.
- iii) These are people who work by themselves without close or direct supervision at a fixed base:
 - Only one person working on the premises;
 - Working separately from others;
 - Working outside of normal hours.

Away from their fixed base:

- Staff member who is required to travel alone to and from a fixed base to attend meetings at alternative sites.

4. Requirements of Lone Workers

- i) It is important that lone workers are considered for known medical conditions which may make them unsuitable for working alone. Any employee who could be considered as a lone worker has a duty to advise their line manager or the Clerk of any medical condition which may affect them working alone.
- ii) Where a medical condition is known, an assessment will be conducted through an appropriate external adviser. The Parish Council will take into consideration routine work and foreseeable emergencies that may impose additional and/or specific risks.

5. Potential Risks to Lone Workers

- Open access and unlocked doors – accessible to the public, contractors, etc.
- Being taken ill whilst at work
- Lack of training regarding Health and Safety procedures
- Hazards in the workplace
- Remote areas
- Parking arrangements – poorly lit and isolated areas.

6. Risk Assessments

- i) A risk assessment should be carried out for and by all employees who are going to be working alone.

- ii) 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?
- iii) When recording an assessment of risk, the following should be taken into consideration:
- a) environment – location, security, access/egress
 - b) context – nature of the task
 - c) history – have there been any accidents/incidents in the past?

All available information should be taken into account and updated as and when necessary. If there is reason for doubt about the safety of a 'lone worker' in a given situation then consideration should be given for making other arrangements to complete the task.

7. Safety Guidelines

- i) For staff working in a fixed base:
- Familiarise the layout of the building including fire exits and escape routes
 - Doors should be lockable that allow direct access to the office you are working in
 - When a member of staff is working on their own in an office which gives access to the public any door providing access must be lockable.
 - Have contact numbers to hand in order to be able to contact relevant person(s) immediately should you feel ill or have an intruder in the building, etc. If you feel threatened in any way you must contact the Police immediately.
 - It is the responsibility of the lone worker to make sure if practicable that they are satisfied that there is no risk before allowing a visitor to enter the secured area.
 - If possible, you should always advise a relative when you are going out to undertake your duties and give them an idea of the time you should be expected home. In the event that you are not back within a reasonable period after the specified time and you cannot be contacted, they should contact the Police.
 - Where possible, when locking premises, any internal areas to be checked should be done when there is more than one person in the building.
 - A risk assessment be put in place to assess potential risks.
- ii) For staff working away from their fixed base:

- Staff should inform relevant person(s) from the Parish Council of their movements including how long they are going to be away from their base and when they will return, along with any relevant information regarding where and at what time, visits will be made and to whom. Telephone numbers should also be stated.
- Leave details of venues including contact numbers
- Always have a mobile phone with you – ensuring it is always fully charged.
- When meeting contractors, etc. in remote or isolated areas, ensure you take a fully-charged mobile phone with you.

8. Responsibility

i) Employees' Responsibility and 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 of omissions at work
- Always maintain a line of communication on a regular basis with members of the Parish Council to identify and minimise risk(s)
- Where practicable inform a nominated colleague as to when you are leaving the fixed base to perform Parish Council tasks including when you are not returning to your fixed base after the relevant task has been completed
- Always report an accident/incident that occurs to you to the Parish Clerk, or in the case of the Parish Clerk, to the Chair of the HR Working Party. This will allow for a full investigation to take place to assess any further potential risks and identify any additional safety procedures.

ii) Employer's Responsibility:

To take reasonable care for the health and 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 a signing in and out system is put in place
- Ensure staff receive all relevant training
- Equip staff with a mobile phone (if applicable) to ensure a system of maintaining contact.

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Next Review Due: July 2025