



HASLEMERE TOWN COUNCIL

Town Hall Officers Lone Working Policy

Adopted November 2023

1 Introduction:

Lone working refers to situations where staff in the course of their duties work alone in the community, in their own home or may be the only staff member present in an office or other establishment maintained by the Council. They will be physically isolated from colleagues, and without access to immediate assistance.

This policy is designed to alert staff to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation, and to describe procedures which will minimise such risks.

2 Legislation:

Employers have a general duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees, including the provision and maintenance of a safe working environment, safe access and egress, safe systems of work and provision of suitable information, instruction, training and supervision.

There is nothing specific in general legislation that prohibits a person from working alone, however Section 19 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 requires the employer to undertake a risk assessment to determine whether or not an employee may work alone.

Therefore, in general, an employer must assess whether an employee is at a significantly higher risk when working alone.

3 Roles and Responsibilities:

The Town Clerk must:

- Identify all staff who undertake lone working.
- Inform staff of their responsibilities under the lone working policy.
- Make the policy readily available to all staff members on induction and ensuring local procedures are in place.
- Ensure that risk assessments regarding the personal safety of staff, including those working alone, are undertaken by competent persons.
- Ensure that lone workers have no medical condition that may make them unsuitable for working alone.
- Assist in the development and implementation of safe systems of work to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all staff.
- Review lone working risk assessments on a regular basis, taking into consideration information provided by staff members regarding hazards relating to activities, environments and individuals.
- Ensure that staff members have access to appropriate training opportunities to enable them to keep safe when performing their role.
- Take all reasonable steps to minimise risks identified and report any substantial risks to the Staffing Committee.

Officers must:

- Take reasonable care to look after their own safety and health.
- Safeguard the safety and health of other people affected by their work.
- Co-operate with their employer's health and safety procedures.
- Use tools and other equipment properly, in accordance with any relevant safety instructions and training they have been given.
- Not misuse equipment provided for their safety and health.
- Report all accidents, injuries, near-misses and other dangerous occurrences, including updating the accident book where necessary.

4 General provisions:

Before working alone, an assessment of the risks involved should be made in conjunction with the Town Clerk (see Appendix 1).

Staff should avoid being left on their own with someone in their workplace or leaving a colleague alone, unless absolutely necessary.

Staff must not assume that having a mobile phone and a back-up plan is a sufficient safeguard in itself. The first priority is to plan for a reduction of risk and staff should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances.

Where staff are meeting people on their own, for instance to show an allotment plot, the appointment must be saved in the shared office Google calendar giving accurate details of the time, date, location and who they are meeting.

Staff working alone in a building must ensure they are familiar with the exits and alarms.

There must be access to a telephone and first aid equipment for staff working alone.

5 Good Practice for Lone Workers

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 to check that a lone worker has returned to their base of home on completion of the visit. If possible delay the visit until two members of staff can attend.

Staff should never transport a child on their own and should always ensure, having first completed a risk assessment, that any transported passengers are carried in the rear of their vehicle only

6 Risk assessment

A risk assessment should take place before staff are authorised to work alone (see Appendix 1).

Below are some factors which should be taken into account, however this list is not exhaustive.

Guidance for Risk Assessments of Lone Working

- Is the person fit and suitable to work alone?
- Are there adequate channels of communications in an emergency?
- Does the workplace or task present a special risk to the lone worker?
- Is there a risk of violence?
- Have reporting and recording arrangements been made where appropriate?
- Can the whereabouts of the lone worker be traced?

Risk assessment – Haslemere Staff Lone Working

Company name: Haslemere Town Council, Assessment carried out by: Lisa O’Sullivan, 31/10/2023

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	Needed by	Date Done
Officer on their own in the office during working hours	Officers could be harmed in a number of ways but most likely: Attack from visitors to the office / Accident or medical emergency	Front door can be locked when staff are in the office on their own. Video entry system in place.	Staff should not be left alone in the office unless absolutely necessary when the office is open. If staff are going to be left alone in the office the door must be closed and video entry system used to vet visitors. Staff are under no obligation to allow anyone to access the office.	LOS to brief all staff.	As soon as policy is agreed by Council	
Officer on their own in the office non-working hours	Officers could be harmed in a number of ways but most likely: Accident or medical emergency / Attack from visitors to the office	Front door is locked when staff are in the office on their own and the office is closed. Video entry system in place.	First aid provision on site to be checked. All staff have a work mobile for use during office hours, plus there is a telephone in each office which can be used to summon help.	Martin Wellen to check first aid provision. LOS to brief all staff.	10 th November 2023. As soon as policy is agreed by Council	
Working from home	All officers. Stress and poor mental health Using equipment like computers and laptops safely Working environment	Work from home is limited. Those officers who work from home on a regular basis have a council issued laptop	HSE assessment needs to be done for each staff member who routinely split their time between their workplace and home	LOS to lead	End November 2023	

APPENDIX 1 – RISK ASSESSMENT

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	Needed by	Date Done
<p>Officer attending outside council premises on their own (allotments, open spaces etc).</p>	<p>Officers could be harmed in a number of ways but most likely:</p> <p>Accident or medical emergency</p> <p>Attack from member of the public</p>	<p>Work outside the office is shown in the Google calendar so that other staff and line management are aware of where they are.</p>	<p>Google calendar entries must be used for meetings / work off site. Details of where and estimated duration of work to be shown. Where someone outside the organisation is being met, officers should give consideration to the potential and where appropriate go in pairs. The name and contact details of anyone being met should also be included on the Google calendar.</p> <p>Mobile phones must be carried at all times. Equipment must not be used unless officers are proficient in using it and it is deemed safe to do so.</p>	<p>All officers</p>	<p>As soon as policy is agreed by Council</p>	
<p>Other occasions when officers are on their own</p>	<p>Officers could be harmed in a number of ways but most likely:</p> <p>Accident or medical emergency</p> <p>Attack from member of the public</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<p>For each event not covered above, the officer needs to speak to their line manager in advance. A separate risk assessment may need to be done. In any case the officer needs to provide:</p> <p>Details of the work Where, when and for how long Details of anyone they are meeting with.</p> <p>It may be appropriate for the officer and their line manager to agree that the officer contacts/sends a message when they are back in the office or at another safe location.</p>	<p>All officers</p>	<p>As soon as policy is agreed by Council</p>	