



LONE WORKING POLICY AND RISK ASSESSMENT

**Version 1 – adopted by the Council on 14 March 2022
Last Committee (H&S) review: 21 February 2022**

1. Introduction

Helsby Parish Council recognises that its employee(s) are required to work by themselves for significant periods of time without close or direct supervision in the community, in isolated work areas and out of office hours. Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Helsby Parish Council has a duty of care to advise and assess risk for workers when they work by themselves in these circumstances. However, employee(s) also 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.

2. Scope of the Policy

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

3. Definition

The Health & Safety Executive defines lone workers as 'those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision'. This covers Helsby Parish Council's employee(s), namely the Parish Clerk, who is required to carry out their duties for all or part of their working day working in isolation.

4. Aims

The aim of this policy is to:

- a) increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working;
- b) 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;
- c) ensure that appropriate training is available to all staff in all areas that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone;

- d) ensure that appropriate support is available to staff who have to work alone;
and
- e) encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.

5. Responsibilities

5.1. The Clerk, on behalf of the Parish Council, is responsible for:

- ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working;
- providing resources for putting the policy and risk assessment into practice; and
- ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the effectiveness of this policy is regularly reviewed.

5.2. Councillors are responsible for:

- ensuring that staff are aware of the policy and accompanying risk assessment;
- taking all possible steps to ensure that lone workers are at no greater risk than other employees;
- identify situations where people work alone and decide whether a system can be adopted to avoid workers carrying out tasks on their own;
- 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 staff 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; and
- ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident; and
- providing a mobile phone and other personal safety equipment, if and where this is felt to be desirable.

5.3. Employees (i.e. the Clerk) 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; and

- always maintaining good communication to minimise risk.

6. 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 Parish Council Chairman and/or the Chairman of the H&S Committee who will prioritise each incident and identify any immediate action. Staff 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.

7. Contacting/Involving the Police

The Council is committed to protecting its staff from violence and assault and will support criminal proceedings against those who carry out assault. All staff are encouraged to report violent incidents to the police and will be supported by the Council throughout the process. Except in the cases of emergency, staff should inform the Parish Council Chairman and/or the Chairman of the H&S Committee of any incident immediately. The Parish Council Chairman and/or the Chairman of the H&S Committee will thereafter take responsibility for contacting the police to report the details of the incident.

8. Support for Staff

Employees working for the Council should know that their safety comes first. Staff should be aware of how to deal with situations where they feel they are at risk or unsafe. Staff should also be able to recognise how their own actions could influence or even trigger an aggressive response. The Parish Council Chairman and/or the Chairman of the H&S Committee will ensure that all lone workers' training needs are assessed and that they receive appropriate training.

9. Immediate Support following a Violent Incident

In the event of a violent incident involving a lone worker, the Parish Council Chairman and/or the Chairman of the H&S Committee will immediately ensure that the employee receives any necessary medical treatment and/or advice. The Parish Council Chairman and/or the Chairman of the H&S Committee will also consider whether the employee needs specific information or assistance relating to legal or insurance aspects. The Parish Council Chairman and/or the Chairman of the H&S Committee will also ensure appropriate written and verbal reporting of any violent incident.

10. Good Practice for Lone Workers

The following guidance should be considered:

- Trust your intuition and always think of your personal safety;

- What is the best time of the day to visit?
- Are you familiar with the meeting location?
- Consider the weather/visibility/seasons – will you be driving in the dark?
- Where is the most appropriate place to see this person?
- Do you need to take a colleague or Councillor with you?
- If another company is involved, can a joint visit be arranged?
- Ensure that someone knows where you are at all times and do not make last minute/unplanned visits;
- Do you have a personal panic alarm (if applicable) or mobile phone (if applicable)? Check it is charged;
- Know where you are travelling to. Check your route to avoid stopping and asking strangers for directions;
- Park near street lighting or lit areas whenever possible;
- Reverse into parking spaces to ensure a quick getaway;
- Keep all doors locked whilst driving and keep valuables out of sight; and
- If you do not intend to return to the office after your visit, let someone know.

11.Exemptions

Employees and volunteers are exempt from working alone in certain situations:

- Young persons under instruction in a fixed base (example work experience, helping with council tasks etc.); and
- Where activities and work with substances/machinery could be hazardous to health.

This policy will be reviewed annually by Helsby Parish Council to ensure that it is relevant to working practice.

A copy of this document to be supplied to Helsby Community Sports Club, as leaseholder of the building.

HELBY PARISH COUNCIL

LONE WORKING RISK ASSESSMENT

Version 1 – adopted by Council on 14 March 2022
First Committee review (H&S Committee) 21 February 2022
Next Review Due – February 2023

This risk assessment will be carried out for and on behalf of all staff whose working practice makes them vulnerable. This includes staff that are site based but work in isolation as well as any mobile staff whose work takes them out into the community. Recommendations will be made to eliminate or reduce the risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable. It 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.

IDENTIFIED RISK	POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCE OF RISK	ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT (H/M/L)	LIKELIHOOD OF RISK OCCURRING (H/M/L)	CONTROLS TO MANAGE RISK AND FURTHER ACTION NEEDED IF NECESSARY
Risk of violence from members of the public entering the parish office	Staff at risk of verbal or physical assault	H	M	Wherever possible, staff should not enter the parish office alone unless a member of Helsby Community Sports Club is present within the club's premises. If a member of staff is alone in the building, a councillor should be made aware of this. The office door should be kept locked at all times and the transparent strip along the glass part of the door removed. A doorbell shall be affixed to the outside of the office. A notice outside the parish office will also be displayed with office hours and to say that any appointments must be made in advance.

				<p>Staff should avoid being left on their own with any new contacts – if possible, arrange for a councillor to be present.</p> <p>Staff should know channels of communication in an emergency.</p> <p>If staff have concerns about security or suspect there is an intruder in the building, they must contact the premises manager. They should not confront the intruder, lock the door to the parish office and await the arrival of HCSC staff.</p> <p>Provide staff with conflict resolution training.</p> <p>Staff to report and record all adverse incidents.</p> <p>Opportunity for home working if staff member is feeling vulnerable.</p>
Manual handling	Staff risk injuries or back pain from handling heavy/bulky objects.	H	L	<p>High shelves for light objects only.</p> <p>Staff member to leave any heavy deliveries in a safe place and wait for assistance wherever necessary.</p> <p>Staff to attend a manual handling course.</p>

Slips, trips and falls and other accidents	Staff may be injured if they trip over objects or slip on spillages.	H	L	<p>General good housekeeping.</p> <p>Purchase a fall detector.</p> <p>Keep all areas well-lit and clear from trip hazards (e.g. no trailing leads or cables).</p> <p>Offices cleaned regularly.</p> <p>Regular testing of any electrical equipment.</p> <p>Ensure there is access to first aid equipment.</p> <p>Know local arrangements on how to respond in event of fire or other emergency.</p> <p>Do not work with any hazardous substances.</p>
Working at height – filing on top shelves, putting up decorations etc.	Falls from any height can cause bruising and fractures.	H	L	<p>No working at height is to be carried out whilst lone working.</p> <p>Ladders only to be used if strictly necessary and someone else is present.</p> <p>Sports club staff/contractors only to change lightbulbs, clean internal windows, etc.</p>

<p>Risk of violence from members of the public when out in the community (e.g. when undertaking burial clerk duties, meeting contractors, etc)</p>	<p>Staff at risk of verbal or physical assault</p>	<p>H</p>	<p>M</p>	<p>Staff to inform Chairman/Chairman of H&S where they are going and their estimated time of arrival back.</p> <p>If plans change significantly, this should be communicated back to the Chairman and/or the Chairman of the H&S Committee.</p> <p>If visit is deemed to be high risk, delay the visit until staff can be accompanied.</p> <p>Carry a first aid kit suitable for treating minor injuries.</p> <p>Provide a mobile phone and other personal safety equipment, where this is deemed to be necessary.</p> <p>Before making home visits, the lone worker must have full knowledge of the hazards and risks to which he or she may be exposed to and apply control measures to eliminate or reduce the potential risks. If possible, staff should be accompanied by a councillor.</p>
<p>Unsuitability of staff member to work alone</p>	<p>Have staff any medical conditions and/or disability which would make it unsuitable and/or unsafe for working alone?</p>	<p>H</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>Chairman and/or the Chairman of the H&S Committee to monitor suitability of staff for lone working.</p> <p>Staff to ensure that any medical conditions which might be relevant to their working alone are fully disclosed to Chairman and/or the Chairman of the H&S Committee.</p>

				Individuals with temporarily impaired mobility must not work alone.
--	--	--	--	---