



## **LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL**

### **LONE WORKER POLICY**

#### **Introduction**

A lone worker is any member of staff who works by themselves without close or direct supervision. This may be in Town 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, or 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 exposed to violence, drunken or threatening behaviour, indecent exposure or coming across attempted criminal activity in progress, such as a burglary or act of vandalism.

#### **Policy Statement**

Loughton Town Council recognises its legal and moral obligation to effectively manage the risks associated with members of staff working by themselves. The Council is committed to ensuring compliance with the legal requirements as an absolute minimum and will strive to ensure a healthy and safe place of work for its employees.

This document is to be read in conjunction with the Council's main Health and Safety Policy and the Staff Handbook.

#### **Implementation**

The Town Council will:

- 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;

- provide sufficient resources for putting the policy into practice; raise awareness amongst all members of staff of the procedures to be followed to reduce the level of risk associated with working alone.
- ensure that appropriate training is available so that employees can recognise risk.
- provide advice and guidance for all staff on personal safety and security.
- introduce procedures to monitor lone workers to ensure they remain safe; and
- review the effectiveness of preventative measures through a system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents.

When a risk assessment shows that it is not possible for work to be done safely by a lone worker, arrangements for providing help or back-up will be put in place. These include:

- periodic visits by the line manager to observe people working alone;
- regular contact between the lone worker and their line manager or a nominated deputy via telephone or mobile phone;
- use of other devices designed to raise the alarm in the event of an emergency;
- checks that a lone worker has returned to their base or home on completion of a task.

**Employees are expected to take responsibility for:**

- taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions co-operating by following the Council's rules and procedures designed for safe working;
- keeping their line manager up to date regarding their work programme, meeting times, location and contact details and making any amendments as soon as they occur;
- reporting in writing all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance;
- taking part in any training provided and designed to meet the requirements of the policy; and
- reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone.

**Risk Assessments**

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

**For workers working alone in a building or at a particular site this should include:**

- safe access and exit points.
- risk of violence.
- safety of equipment for individual use.
- channels of communication in case of emergency (for example, mobile telephone or emergency contact details).
- site security and access to site information.
- security arrangements i.e. alarm and fire systems.

**For mobile lone workers these should additionally include:**

- whether there have been any changes since the last visit.
- travelling between premises and/or appointments (e.g. if using a car, what procedure is in place if there is a breakdown; is there a health and safety issue and a first aid kit on board).
- reporting and recording arrangements (e.g. address of meeting, name of person, time of appointment, approximate finish time, contact telephone number).
- communication and traceability (e.g. what method of communication is to be used and who is the lone worker going to communicate with?).
- personal safety/security.
- any health issues/concerns.

Following the completion of a risk assessment, consideration should be given to any appropriate action required.

**Review**

This policy will be subject to a biennial review by the Resources and General Services Committee.