

# BINGLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Bingley Town Council, Myrtle Place, Bingley, BD16 2LF



## Lone Working Policy

**Date of review: 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**Next review date: June 2024 (or when required)**

The aim of this policy is to assist Bingley Town Council in providing a safe and healthy workplace and working environment for its employees and to alert staff to the risks presented by lone working.

### 1. Policy Statement

1.1 The following policy and procedure has been written in order to minimise risks for staff working alone and others working with Bingley Town Council.

Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Legislation states that: "It shall be the duty of every employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all of his employees", and, "It shall be the duty of every employee while at work to take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself and of other persons who may be affected by his acts or omissions at work; and as regards any duty or requirement imposed on his employer or any other person by or under any of the relevant statutory provisions, to co-operate with him so far as is necessary to enable that duty or requirement to be performed or complied with".

Employers and employees therefore have a duty to themselves and others with regard to safety and there is an increased risk to the health and safety of employees when they work remotely from other colleagues or other persons and/or outside 'normal' working hours.

The definition of a lone worker is: "Those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision".

1.2 The Staffing Committee will regularly review the policy and procedure to ensure its implementation and to ensure that its relevant to working practice.

This policy will be supplemented by further policies, risk assessments and procedures relating to work activities.

## **2. Organisation and Responsibilities**

- 2.1 The Council recognises that some lone working is inevitable; in particular, people working outside of their normal hours.
- 2.2 Mobile phones and personal alarms will be made available as appropriate.
- 2.3 When staff are undertaking lone working, personal safety will be of paramount importance.
- 2.4 Lone working must not be viewed in isolation, other relevant policies already adopted will also apply, such as risk assessment, which will identify the protective and preventative measures necessary for employees to undertake lone working activities.

## **3. Definition of lone working/lone workers**

- 3.1 Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.
- 3.2 Examples are a staff member working alone in an office or other base. People working outside normal office hours. A staff member who is required to travel alone to a meeting etc. Environmental works such as grass cutting, hedge trimming.

## **4. Potential Risks**

- 4.1 Accessibility by members of the public, contractors, e.g. unlocked doors.
- 4.2 Requirement to lock up when leaving a building.
- 4.3 Poorly lit entrances/exits.
- 4.4 Being taken ill whilst working alone when there is no one to call for help or administer first aid.
- 4.5 Lack of knowledge regarding health and safety procedures.
- 4.6 Violence or threat of violence.

## **5. Assessing the Risk**

- 5.1 A risk assessment for lone working will be carried out annually by the Town Clerk/Deputy Clerk.
- 5.2 The purpose of assessing the risk for lone working is to establish:
  - i) Whether the work can be done safely by a lone worker;
  - ii) What arrangements will ensure that an individual is not exposed to unnecessary and unacceptable risk.
- 5.3 In drawing up and recording an assessment of risk the following issues should be considered as appropriate:
  - i) Environment - location, security, access.

- ii) Context - nature of task, individuals concerned, indicators of potential or actual risk.
  - iii) History - any previous incidents or similar situations.
- 5.4 Where there is reasonable doubt about the safety of lone worker, consideration should be given to sending another worker/councillor or making other arrangements to complete the task.

## **6. Prohibition of lone working**

- 6.1 Employees cannot work alone in the following circumstances: young people under instruction and training on machines, certain fumigation activities, unsupported access equipment, e.g ladders.

## **7. Responsibility and Personal Safety**

- 7.1 Staff are responsible for keeping themselves safe.
- 7.2 It is the responsibility of the staff member and line manager to identify potential risks in carrying out work and to minimise these risks by regular communication.
- 7.3 Staff must not assume that having a mobile phone and a backup plan is sufficient safeguard in itself.
- 7.4 Before working alone, an assessment of the risks should be made in conjunction with line manager, as set out in point 5.
- 7.5 Staff must inform their line manager or other identified person when they will be working alone, give accurate details of their location and follow an agreed plan to inform that person when the task is completed. This includes occasions when staff members are going straight home after a meeting or task.
- 7.6 If a staff member does not report in as expected, an agreed plan should be put into action.
- 7.7 Where staff work alone for prolonged periods and/or on a regular basis, managers must make provision for regular contact, both to monitor the situation and to counter the effects of working in isolation.

## **8. Procedures for staff working at fixed bases**

- 8.1 Familiarise yourself with layout of building. Ensure you have keys. Lock doors that allow direct access to the building/office.
- 8.2 Familiarise yourself with fire safety procedures and identify escape routes.
- 8.3 If you're working on your own, use the intercom to identify the visitor, and greet members of the public or contractors etc. in the lobby area of the Hub, take your phone with you, have the main door open and the inner door closed until you feel secure. If in doubt leave the building and call for help by contacting your line manager.
- 8.5 If possible, avoid parking your car in badly lit areas.
- 8.6 Carry a torch and personal alarm if working late.

- 8.7 Should you feel ill whilst working alone, seek help immediately by contacting your line manager.
- 8.9 Undertake a risk assessment for lone working with your line manager. Report any potential hazards, risks etc to your line manager.

### **9. Procedures for mobile workers working away from their fixed base**

- 9.1 Leave details of your movements, give an idea of how long you're going to be away from base and when you're expected back. If plans change, ring and let a contact know.
- 9.2 Details of venues being visited should be provided.

### **10. Parking**

- 10.1 Park your car in a well lit area. Carry a small torch and personal alarm.

### **11. Isolated locations/unfamiliar people**

- 11.1 Avoid meeting in isolated locations.
- 11.2 If possible, take someone with you.

### **12. Reporting an incident**

- 12.1 It is important to report any incident that occurs to you. Reporting of Incident form is located in the Hub with the accident book.

### **13. Working alone procedure**

- 13.1 Verbally inform your line manager, or the Chair of Staffing Committee or Chair of the Council where you will be working and at what times. Give an expected time of return. If you are working late or at a fixed base alone, make sure you're safe. Lock the office door. When you have locked up, text or phone your line manager to inform of this to let them know that you're on the way home.

### **14. What to do if someone does not return at the expected time**

- 14.1 Do not panic. Give them an extra half an hour.
- 14.2 If they have not returned within half an hour, telephone them. Leave a message and ask them to contact you asap.
- 14.3 If they have not returned the call within 20 minutes, leave another message.
- 14.4 If still no response, inform the Town Clerk, the Chair of Staffing Committee, or the Chair of Council, who will decide whether to call the police.

## **15. Emergency services information**

Dial 999 and be ready to give the following information:

- Your name.
- Your telephone number.
- Your address.
- Your exact location on the premises.
- A brief description of the situation.
- The best way to enter the building.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or as required (if a situation occurs which necessitates any amendment).