



SHEPTON MALLET TOWN COUNCIL

LONE WORKING POLICY

Policy Reference Number: 1909

AUTHOR: Town Clerk

RESPONSIBILITY: Policy and Resources Committee

GRADE: Three – Low

DATE ADOPTED: 11th June 2019

REVIEW DATE: Every three years - 2022

AMENDMENTS:

1.0 **Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to describe the measures that Shepton Mallet Town Council considers necessary to manage the risk presented to employees when they are required to work alone.

2.0 **Review Statement**

2.1 This policy has been prepared considering prevailing legislation and recognised good practice. New legislation requirements or changes in current legislation may necessitate the review of this policy document. The council will continue to review and amend all/part of this policy on a regular basis. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that the copy of the policy being referred to is the most up-to-date version.

3.0 **Equality**

3.1 In putting this policy into practice, no aspect of the strategy will discriminate on the grounds of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, religion, politics, marital status, disability, politics, caste and/or union membership or any other grounds likely to place any particular employee at a disadvantage.

4.0 **Definition**

4.1 Lone working includes members of staff alone in a building and those whose duties involve working outside where there is not close, frequent or regular contact with other colleagues.

5.0 **Policy**

5.1 The council will, as far it is reasonably practicable, ensures that:

- Employees required to work alone are protected from risks to their health, safety and welfare
- Any risks are identified in discussion with the line manager and any action required to mitigate high risks are taken before lone working is undertaken
- Employees take responsibility for their own safety and understand that they must remove themselves immediately from any such situation. Such action and concerns must be reported immediately to the Town Clerk.

6.0 **Legal Responsibilities**

6.1 Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places a duty on every employer to ensure, as far as it is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees. In addition, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 places a duty on the employer to consider all reasonable foreseeable hazards and to take the appropriate action to reduce the possible risk of injury to the lowest level that is practicable to achieve

7.0 **Who is at risk?**

7.1 All employees who, as part of their contracted duties, are required to work alone and without direct supervision.

7.2 This policy does not identify all the situations where employees may be at risk from working along but concentrates on describing the arrangements that must be in place to eliminate or manage the associated risks. Lone working itself is not necessarily high risk but

the activity that is performed may well be. It is important that these individual are made aware of the outcome of the risk assessment and informed of all necessary control measures.

8.0 **Assessing the risk**

8.1 The Town Clerk is responsible for identifying and assessing the risk of lone working in terms of the likelihood of causing harm and also the severity of the injury. Consideration will be given to whether the activity is one that can be safely accomplished by one person or whether the presence of another member of staff would be advisable. If a risk cannot be eliminated completely, action must be taken to reduce the risk to the lowest level practicably achievable.

9.0 **Specific Guidance**

9.1 The Town Clerk and other staff should take account of the following factors when evaluating the risk:

- The degree of isolation
- The type of work activity
- The level of supervision and support
- Contact or proximity with members of the public

9.2 Any person who is recruited for a job likely to involve lone working must declare if they have any medical disability that may put them at risk whilst working alone (eg hearing or visual impairment, diabetes etc). A first aid kit should be readily available at all times in order to render first aid for minor injuries, should they be sustained.

9.3 All lone works will have access to a mobile phone which must be switched on so that they can be contacted or summon help should the need arise.

9.4 Lone workers in the office must lock the internal door to ensure their safety and only invite visitors into the office on lone working days who they are familiar with.

9.5 Lone workers must contact a nominated person in the office before they finish work for the day if they intend to go home directly from their position, without seeing another member of staff. If planning to work out of standard hours, this must be agreed in advance by the Town Clerk.

10.0 **Duties of the Town Clerk**

10.1 In order to fulfil its statutory responsibilities, the council places specific duties on the Town Clerk to ensure:

- All lone working activities are formally identified and appropriate risk assessments undertaken, which identify the risk to lone workers and the control measure necessary to minimise those risks, as far as reasonably practicable.
- Arrangements for lone working are communicated effectively and the detail of what can and cannot be done while working along is explicit
- The lone worker is made aware of the hazards and understand all the necessary control measure that need to be put in place.
- Reasonable enquires are made to ensure that the lone worker is medically fit to undertake lone working

- Adequate supervision, instruction and training is in place and that the lone working is competent. The extent of the supervision is a management decision, which should be established through a risk assessment process.
- Monitoring of lone working practices is in place to ensure that control measures identified in the lone working risk assessments are being adhered to

11.0 **Employees' duties**

11.1 All employees have a responsibility to take care of their own safety and to co-operate with council procedures.

11.2 Employees should not knowingly place themselves in situations which expose them to additional risk by working alone.

11.3 If a person finds that they are placed in a situation which may be considered to be that of lone working, then they should ensure that their line manager is made aware of the circumstances at the earliest opportunity and then assist in the process of identifying the steps needed to either prevent the lone working situation from arising, or if this is not possible, assist in developing the precautions necessary to ensure their own safety.

11.4 Lone workers have a responsibility to inform their line manager if they have any concerns over the effectiveness and efficiency of the agreed arrangements and also if there are any reasons why they would not be able to work alone or continue to work alone in safety.

12.0 **Risk assessment**

12.1 The risk assessment process will be undertaken as a collaborative exercise by the lone worker and the line manager and that the agreed safe working procedures are recorded and communicated to all persons who may be required to work alone and any other employees who have a role in ensuring their safety.

12.2 The following outlines the steps that must be taken for a lone working risk assessment:

- a. Identify the hazard to which the person may be exposed.
- b. The hazards are likely to be the same for a particular activity whether lone working or not.
- c. The assessment of the risks to which a lone worker may be exposed must take into account normal and foreseeable scenarios
- d. The hazards may be such that the risk cannot be controlled sufficiently and therefore lone working is prohibited. Examples of high risk activities where at least one other person will need to be present include:
 - Working on or near water
 - Power tools and machinery
 - Working at height
 - Chemicals which are corrosive, toxic, explosive, flammable or asphyxiant products or reactions.
- e. Identify all persons who may be required to work alone. Consideration must be given to all individuals' ability to carry out their activities safely on their own. Some individuals may be at greater risk than others for example new and expectant mothers

and young person or those who are new to a role. It may be necessary to make reasonable enquiries to ensure that lone workers are medically fit to undertake the work alone

13.0 **Control Measures**

13.1 Assess whether current controls are adequate, and if not, consider what additional or alternative control measure can be put in place. Examples of control measures include:

- Safe system of work
- Two or more people required to work together
- Provide necessary and relevant training
- First aid or emergency first aid at work training for relevant staff
- First aid kits
- Ensure that staff are fully trained for the task
- Provide staff with mobile phones when working alone
- The health of the lone worker: do they have any medical condition or a disability which would make them unsuitable or unsafe for working alone?
- Arrangements for dealing with emergencies
- Arrangements for dealing with threats of violence

14.0 **Record the findings**

14.1 Record the risk assessment finding for any significant risks identified. Ensure that the lone worker is made aware of the findings of the risk assessment.

15.0 **Monitoring and review**

15.1 Arrangements which are implemented to ensure the safety of lone workers need to be subject to a monitoring regime which is commensurate with the risk, by the Town Clerk. Risk assessments are to be reviewed if any significant changes take place, following an accident or incident or following concerns being raised. Any review should make sure existing control measures are adequate and check if any additional controls are needed.