

Adopted: 8/4/24

Review Date: January 2026



WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL

9 High Street, West Malling, Kent ME19 6QH

Telephone: 01732 870872

Email: clerk@westmallingspc.org

Website: www.westmallingspc.org

Clerk to the Parish Council: Mrs Claire Christmas

LONE WORKING POLICY

West Malling Parish Council recognises that its employees 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 hours. This policy is to protect staff from the risks associated with lone working.

West Malling Parish Council also has an obligation under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 for the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees.

The policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of the Council's employees. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Lone Working Risk Assessment.

Definition of Lone Workers

The Health & Safety Executive defines lone workers as 'those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision'. This policy covers all employees of West Malling Parish Council that work by themselves without close or direct supervision for any period of time.

The aim of the policy is to:

- Increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working
- 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 reasonably practicable
- 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
- Ensure that appropriate support is available to staff who must work alone
- Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.

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Responsibilities

The 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 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.

The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy.
- 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 systems 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 groups and individuals 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.
- Ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident.
- Providing a mobile phone, and other personal safety equipment, where this is felt to be desirable.

Employees

- Employees are responsible for taking reasonable care of themselves whilst working and make sure they follow rules and procedures to ensure safe working.
- Make sure any incidents that affect health and safety are reported as well as any dangers or potential dangers in respect of lone working are reported.
- Employees are also required to take part in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment will be carried out regularly by the Parish Clerk for all staff whose working practice makes them vulnerable. This includes mobile staff whose work takes them out into the community. Recommendations will be made to eliminate or to reduce the risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

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Risk Assessments for site based lone workers will include:

- Site security
- Communication in an emergency
- Checking the working environment for trip hazards
- Safe access and exit

Risk Assessments for mobile lone workers will, additionally, include:

- Travelling between sites
- Reporting and recording arrangements
- Communication and traceability
- Personal safety/security

Incident reporting

A record of any incidents will be reported to the Clerk or to the Councillors and recorded in case any action is required to prevent further incidents from occurring.

Any serious incidents/accidents will be reported to the appropriate emergency services

Good practice for lone working

- During their working hours, all staff leaving the workplace (or home) should report their whereabouts to other staff
- If, during a trip away from the office, plans change significantly, this should be communicated back to the office.
- Telephone contact between the lone worker and a colleague, may also be advisable.
- Staff should avoid being left on their own with a client in their workplace, or leaving a colleague in this situation.
- Staff should not remain in the office alone following an evening meeting.
- Staff should avoid meeting clients alone at the workplace
- Lone workers should have access to adequate first-aid facilities
- Enquiries should be made into purchasing lone worker devices.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or before if a change of circumstances.

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