



NewquayCouncil

CorporateService

Name of Policy:

Lone Working

Date of Inception:

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This is a Policy or Procedure document of Newquay Town Council and as such must be fully adhered to by both councillors and employees.

Policy/Procedure File Status			
Version	2.0	Approving Body	Staffing Committee
Date	15/06/2020	Date of Approval	
Responsible Officer	Town Clerk	Minute Reference	
Oversight Committee	Staffing	Review Date	

Version History			
Date	Version	Author/Editor	Comments
30.03.2015	1.0 Draft	Town Clerk	First draft pre committee
26.01.2016	1.1 Draft	Town Clerk	Second draft following member feedback
15.06.2020	2.0		Minimal Review

Review Record				
Date	Type of Review Conducted	Stage Completed	Summary of Actions Taken or Decisions Made	Completed By
15.06.2020	Minimal	15.06.2020		Town Clerk

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1.0 Policy Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to minimise risks for staff working alone and volunteers working with Newquay Town Council.
- 1.2 To enable the Council to comply with its statutory duties with regard to lone working, the Council will, through procedures adopted at all levels avoid the need for lone working wherever possible.
- 1.3 Where employees have to undertake lone working, personal safety will be of paramount importance.
- 1.4 Lone working must not be viewed in isolation, other relevant policies already adopted will also apply, such as the Council's Risk Management Strategy which will identify the protective and preventative measures necessary for employees to undertake lone working activities.
- 1.5 The following details are provided to reinforce the need for everyone to take lone working and their safety seriously at all times.

1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1 Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 it is the employer's duty to assess risks to lone works and to take steps to avoid or control risk where necessary. Employees 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.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees, volunteers working on behalf of Newquay Town Council and Members of Newquay Town Council.
- 2.2 This policy is to be used in conjunction with the Council's Risk Management Strategy, Health and Safety Policies, Equal Opportunities Policy, Complaints Policy and Procedure, and Grievance Procedure.
- 2.3 The Finance & Policy Committee will regularly review this Policy and Procedure to ensure its implementation and to ensure that it is relevant to working practice.

3.0 Principals

- 3.1 Newquay Town Council is a statutory organisation committed to providing a safe environment for all.
- 3.2 The welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount.
- 3.3 All children and vulnerable adults have an equal right to protection from abuse.
- 3.4 Everybody at the Council has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children and vulnerable adults.

4.0 Definition of Lone Working/Lone Workers

- 4.1 Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. For example:
 - 4.1.1 People in fixed establishments (office or other base)
 - 4.1.2 A staff member working alone in an office or other base.
- 4.2 People working outside normal, e.g. staff working late etc.
- 4.3 Mobile workers working away from their fixed base.
 - 4.3.1 A staff member/volunteer who is required to travel alone to and from a fixed base to another place of work or to meetings etc.

5.0 Potential Risks

- 5.1 Some of the main risks have been highlighted below, however, this list is not meant to be exhaustive.
 - 5.1.1 Accessibility by members of the public, contractors etc e.g. open access/unlocked doors.
 - 5.1.2 Requirement to lock up when leaving a building.
 - 5.1.3 Poorly lit entrance/exist
 - 5.1.4 Isolated and poorly lit car parking facilities
 - 5.1.5 Being taken ill whilst working alone
 - 5.1.6 Lack of knowledge regarding Health & Safety procedures.

6.0 Assessing the Risk

- 6.1 The purpose of assessing the risk of lone working is to establish to main facts:
 - 6.1.1 Whether the work can be done safely by a lone worker
 - 6.1.2 What arrangements will ensure than an individual is not exposed to unnecessary and unacceptable risk?
- 6.2 In drawing up and recording an assessment of risk the following issues should be considered, as appropriate to the circumstances:
 - 6.2.1 the environment – location, security, access;
 - 6.2.2 the context – nature of the task, any special circumstances; the individuals concerned – indicators of potential or actual risk;
 - 6.2.3 history – any previous incidents in similar situations;
 - 6.2.4 any other special circumstances
- 6.3 All information should be taken into account and checked or updated as necessary.
- 6.4 Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone worker in a given situation, consideration should be given to sending a second worker or making other arrangements to complete the task.
- 6.5 While resource implications cannot be ignored, safety must be the prime concern.

7.0 Prohibition of Lone Working

- 7.1 Certain situations require that employees cannot work alone, these include:
 - 7.1.1 Young persons under instruction and training on machines should not be left unsupervised/alone.
 - 7.1.2 Certain fumigation activities and other work with substances hazardous to health.
 - 7.1.3 Scaffolding and using unsupported access equipment.
- 7.2 In relation to the handling of cash, you must observe the relevant policies/procedures as set by our insurance providers.

8.0 Responsibility & Personal Safety

- 8.1 It is your responsibility to keep yourself safe. Staff should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances.
- 8.2 Keeping track of individual movements is sometimes difficult but it is the responsibility of the staff member and the line manager to identify potential risks in carrying out the work to minimise these risks, by maintaining regular communication.
- 8.3 Staff must not assume that having a mobile phone and a back-up plan is sufficient safeguard in itself. The first priority is to plan for a reduction of risk.
- 8.4 Before working alone, an assessment of the risks involved should be made in conjunction with the line manager, as set out in 8.2 above.
- 8.5 Staff must inform their line manager or other identified person when they will be working alone, giving accurate details of their location and following an agreed plan to inform that person when the task is completed. This includes occasions when a staff member expects to go home following a visit rather than returning to their base.
- 8.6 Managers must ensure that there is a robust system in place for signing in and out, and that staff use it.
- 8.7 If a member of staff does not report in as expected, an agreed plan should be put into operation, initially to check on the situation and then to respond as appropriate.
- 8.8 Where a staff member works alone for extended 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.
- 8.9 The Town Clerk is delegated to take such steps as they deem necessary and reasonable to protect staff, members and the public. This may include implementing a new security protocol, spending money (budgeted or unbudgeted) on equipment, resources, advice and/or infrastructure and includes the right to instruct staff as they deem fit to ensure a safe working environment.

9.0 Procedures for staff working in fixed bases

- 9.1 Staff should always adhere to the following guidelines in order to minimise risks when working alone at any fixed base.
- 9.1.1 Avoid unnecessary 'out of normal office hours' working wherever possible.
 - 9.1.2 Familiarise yourself with the layout of the building/floor. Ensure you have keys. Lock all doors that allow direct access to the building and/or office you are working in.
 - 9.1.3 Familiarise yourself with the Fire Safety Procedures and identify escape routes.
 - 9.1.4 Do not answer the door to unexpected visitors, e.g. in the case of contractors, ask for identification and don't let them in until you have checked it out if you are at all unsure.
 - 9.1.5 Practice setting the alarm system.
 - 9.1.6 Practice the locking up procedures.
 - 9.1.7 Do not use lonely exit routes if there are safer alternatives.
 - 9.1.8 If possible, avoid parking your car in badly lit areas, move it nearer to the place you exit the building if possible.
 - 9.1.9 Carry a torch and a personal alarm if working late.
 - 9.1.10 Notify people at home when you intend leaving work and what time to expect you home.
 - 9.1.11 Leave contact numbers at home so that the Town Council can be contacted if there are concerns for your safety.
 - 9.1.12 Should you feel ill whilst working alone – seek help immediately – dial 999 if necessary.
 - 9.1.13 Undertake a risk assessment for lone working with your line manager. Report any concerns, hazards or potential risks to your line manager immediately.
 - 9.1.14 If there is a Signing out system in operation in your office – use it – leave a note to let people know if and when you can be expected back.

10.0 Procedures for mobile workers away from their fixed base

- 10.1 All staff should leave details of their movements and give an idea of how long they are going to be away from base and when they expect to be back. If plans change the staff member must ring in to let the office-based staff know.
- 10.2 Details of venues being visited, and a contact number should always be provided.
- 10.3 Think about the location of the place you are going. Check out the venue and prepare for the visit beforehand.
- 10.4 Meet unfamiliar people in public areas.

11.0 Parking

- 11.1 Park your car in a well-lit area – especially if you intend returning to it after dark. If possible, ask someone you know to accompany you to the car. If this is not possible carry a small torch and personal alarm with you.

12.0 Buildings/meetings at unfamiliar venues

- 12.1 Report to reception on arrival and always sign in and out of the building.
- 12.2 Ask the receptionist to notify the person you are meeting.

13.0 Isolated locations/unfamiliar people

- 13.1 Avoid meetings in isolated locations; suggest a public place to meet. If this cannot be avoided then where possible do not go alone and always notify office based staff when you arrive and leave.
- 13.2 Avoid walking alone at night.

14.0 Planning

- 14.1 By thinking things through and planning for the unexpected it will help you remain confident when faced with an emergency.
- 14.2 If you work alone on a regular basis, assess any risks with your line manager and identify any measures needed to ensure your personal safety.

15.0 Out of hours call out

15.1 Staff who are called out to alarm activation incidents, out of hours, will follow the alarm call out procedure.

16.0 Communication

16.1 Managers must consider whether communication is adequate, and in particular:

16.1.1 What level of supervision is intended and how is it to be carried out.

16.1.2 Has the lone worker been equipped with a system of maintaining contact, mobile telephone or radio.

16.1.3 Is CCTV available and will it be monitored?

16.2 Do not forget to communicate your whereabouts – this is crucial – tell someone about your plans.

17.0 Reporting an incident

17.1 It is important to report any incident that occurs to you, whether it is in aggression, violence, a transport breakdown or a personal accident, to your line manager. In this way, a full investigation can be made to assess any further potential risks and identify any additional safety procedures needed in order to prevent a similar incident happening to somebody else.

17.2 The Town Clerk will ensure any incidents of a serious nature are investigated and any reasonable actions implemented to prevent or protect staff, members and the public from possible reoccurrences wherever possible.

17.3 The Town Clerk is authorised and expected to submit code of conduct complaints to Cornwall Council and/or Police if an incident involves the possible conduct of a member of the Council.

18.0 Victim Support/Counselling

18.1 Victim support and/or counselling can be made available, if required, in the event of any aggressive action or subsequent post trauma that may have an effect on your work or wellbeing.

19.0 Working Alone – Procedure

- 19.1 If you will be working alone or out of normal hours you will be expected to follow this procedure.
- 19.1.1 Verbally inform your line manager where you will be working and at what times; give an expected time of return.
 - 19.1.2 If a signing out book or wipe board is available write the same information down in the book or on the board.
 - 19.1.3 If you are going on a site visit fill in the book or wipe board and let someone know where you are going and what time you will be back.
 - 19.1.4 If you normally return to the office or fixed base for a break but are unable to do so contact someone, preferably your line manager, and let them know.
 - 19.1.5 If someone does not turn up for a usual break someone, preferably the line manager will contact the person to ensure they are alright.
 - 19.1.6 If you are working late or at your fixed base alone, make sure you are safe. Lock the main entrance door, if you are not expecting any visitors. When you have locked up and left the premises text or phone someone, preferably your line manager to let them know you are on your way home.
 - 19.1.7 If you do not intend to return to the office after a site visit or meeting let your line manager or the office know that you are finished for the day and will be going straight home.
 - 19.1.8 What to do if someone has not returned at the expected time.
 - 19.1.9 Do not panic. Give them an extra half hour, don't forget this is just an estimated time of return. If the person still hasn't returned after the extra half hour – telephone them. If you are unable to contact them straight away – leave a message on their phone and ask them to contact you ASAP.
 - 19.1.10 If they have not returned you call within 20 minutes ring them again and leave another message.
 - 19.1.11 If their anticipated location(s) are close by send someone to go and look for the person.

20.0 General

- 20.1 This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis and updated as necessary.
- 20.2 The Town Council has approved a complaints procedure, details of which can be found on the Town Councils website, www.newquaycouncil.co.uk or obtained from the Town Clerk's Office at Newquay Town Council, Municipal Offices, Marcus Hill, Newquay TR7 1AF or email office@newquay.town
- 20.3 For further information about this policy or the work of Newquay Town Council, please contact the Town Clerk at the above address.

21.0 Alternative Formats

- 21.1 Equality Act 2010 – copies of this document in large print (A3 Format) or larger font size can be made available for those with sight impairment on request from the Council Office or by telephoning 01637 878388 or e-mailing the Town Clerk's Office.

22.0 Freedom of Information

- 22.1 In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this Document will be posted on the Council's Website www.newquaycouncil.co.uk.

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