BRACKLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Lone Working Policy

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Lone Working Policy V3
Adopted 15.07.19 Minute number 186/19
Reviewed and adopted 17 July 23 Minute number 152/23
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1. Policy Statement

1.1 Brackley Town Council (BTC) takes very seriously the health, safety and welfare of all its staff. It recognises that some staff are required to work by themselves for significant periods of time without close or direct supervision in its offices. The purpose of this policy is to enable BTC to meet its obligation to protect these staff so far as is reasonably practicable from the risks of lone working.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all staff including temporary staff. It forms an integral part of BTC's Health and Safety Policy. The policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of our staff.

3. Definition of a lone worker

3.1 BTC defines lone workers as:

'Staff whose working activities involve situations where they are without any kind of close or direct supervision. Employees whose activities involve a large percentage of their working time operating in situations without the benefit of interaction with other workers.

Lone work is not the chance occurrence of finding oneself on one's own, for example, when somebody arrives first in the office or leaves last, or where an individual has to go unaccompanied to another part of the workplace. Lone work is specifically intended to be unaccompanied work, or work without immediate access to another person for assistance.

4. Policy Aims

4.1 This policy aims to:

- Increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working;
- make sure that the risk of working alone 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;
- make sure that appropriate training is available to staff in all areas, that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone;
- make sure that appropriate support is available to staff who have to work alone;
- encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working; and
- reduce the number of incidents and injuries to staff related to lone working.

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5.   Responsibilities

5.1   Lone working environments present a unique health and safety problem. Although there is no specific legal guidance on working alone, under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992, we must organise and control the health and safety of lone workers.

5.2   The Town Clerk (or their designated Deputy) is responsible for:

- making sure that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working;
- providing resources for putting the policy into practice; and
- making sure that all staff are aware of the policy;
- making sure 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;
- making sure that staff groups and individuals identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training, including training at induction, updates and refresher training as necessary;
- making sure that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident; and
- managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents.

5.2   All staff are responsible for:

- taking reasonable care of themselves and other people who may be affected by their actions;
- cooperating by following rules and procedures designed for safe working;
- reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate;
- taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy; and
- reporting any dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone.

6.   Assessing the risk

6.1   Lone workers should not face any more risks than other staff within the organisation. Setting up safe working arrangements for lone workers is no different to organising the safety of other staff, so we must all follow the general principles of risk assessment. If a risk assessment shows that it is not possible for the work to be done safely by a lone worker, other arrangements must be put in place. Risk assessment should take account of both normal work and foreseeable emergencies such as fire, illness and accidents. The risk assessment process is summarised in Table 1, separated into five distinct stages and action points to support effective assessment of the risks involved in lone working.

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	PROCESS	ACTION
1	Identifying lone workers	Establish and identify lone workers for each work area.
2	Identifying associated hazards	Isolate the range of dangers associated with whole work areas of work and/or work processes. Review a generic risk assessment to make sure you have included these issues.
3	Assessing the degree of risk	Review the generic risk assessments and complete individual or local risk assessments if necessary, then prioritise the level of associated risk.
4	Putting control measures in	Assess how effective the existing control measures are and update them if appropriate. Develop local procedures or action plans if necessary.
5	Evaluating and review	Evaluate and record how effective the control measures are. Review when the assessments of controls are no longer required.

Table 1

6.2   Risk assessments must be carried out in all areas of work where working alone poses an actual or potential risk to staff. The risk assessment will involve identifying all potential dangers and the risks associated with specific work tasks or activities. It should identify who will be affected and how, and the control measures which are needed to get rid of or reduce the risk to the lowest level reasonably possible. Risk assessment should be carried out by competent people and should be recorded and shared with relevant others. Factors to consider when carrying out the risk assessment include the following:

- Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker?

- Can the risks of the job be adequately controlled by one person?

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- Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone?

- What training is needed to make sure the staff member is competent in safety matters?

- Have staff received the training which is necessary to allow them to work alone?

- How will the person be supervised?

- Is there a risk of violence?

- Are people of a particular gender especially at risk if they work alone?

- Are new or inexperienced staff especially at risk if they work alone?

- Are younger workers especially at risk if they work alone?

- What happens if a person becomes ill, has an accident, or if there is an emergency?

- Are there systems in place for contacting and tracing those who work alone?

6.3   Details of the risk assessment should be recorded and should include:

- the extent and nature of the risks;

- factors that contribute to the risk including job content and specific tasks and activities; and

- the safe systems of work to be followed to eliminate or reduce the risk. Information from the risk assessment should be passed to staff. Risk assessments should be reviewed and updated each year (or sooner should circumstances change).

7.   Managing Risk

7.1   The risk which lone workers face should be reduced to the lowest level that is reasonably practicable. Issues to consider in developing safe systems of work include:

- joint working with others for high-risk activities;

- improvements to security arrangements in buildings;

- security lighting in parking areas;

- using checking-in and monitoring systems; and

- using personal protective equipment or mobile phones and personal alarms.

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7.2   Arrangements for managing risk should include:

- guidance for lone workers on assessing risk;

- details of when to stop and get advice; and

- the procedures to be followed in the event of an incident or emergency.

All staff must be familiar with these procedures.

8.   Staff Training

8.1   BTC will provide training where required allowing lone working. The training will be based on the needs identified through local risk assessment.

9.   Reporting & Recording

9.1   Staff should report all incidents (including near misses) to their line manager at the earliest opportunity. These should be reported on an incident form and the line manager should investigate all reports. In order to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy and incident reports should be reviewed regularly.

10.   Monitoring & Reviewing

10.1   The Council will monitor and review this policy to make sure that it is achieving the aims of the policy. The review processes will include:

- collecting and monitoring all reported incidents;

- every year, reviewing this area of the BTC Risk Management Policy; and

- every year, reviewing progress in reducing risk and incidents and, if necessary, making recommendations for improvement for the forthcoming year.

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