Lone Working Policy

Introduction

St Mewan Parish Council recognises that on occasions staff are required to work by themselves without close or direct supervision. Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. St Mewan Parish Council has a duty of care to advise and assess risk for workers when they work by themselves.

Definitions

Lone workers are employees who work by themselves in buildings or at other locations managed by the Council in isolation without close or direct supervision.

Scope

This policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of St Mewan Parish Council and to all employees permanent, temporary or voluntary.

Lone working includes:

1) Those working at their main place of work where
   - Only one person is working on the premises
   - People work separately from each other, eg in different locations
   - People working outside normal office hours.

2) Those working away from their fixed base where:
   - One worker is visiting another agency's premises or meeting venue
   - One worker is making a home visit to an individual
   - One worker is working from their own home.

Personal Responsibility

Section 7 of the Act requires employees to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.

Maintenance Operatives Employees should: -

- Follow guidance and procedures designed for safe working
- Report all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and ask for guidance as appropriate from the Clerk/Deputy Clerk
- Take part in training designed to meet the requirements of this policy
- Report any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone to the Clerk/Deputy Clerk.

(An incident can be defined as an unplanned or uncontrolled event or sequence of events that has the potential to cause injury, ill-health or damage).

- If an employee has a medical condition which would make them unsuitable for working alone, they have a duty to inform the Clerk/Deputy Clerk.
- Where a medical condition is known, a risk assessment must be conducted to enable consideration to be given to routine work and foreseeable emergencies that may impose additional or specific risks.

Clerk and Employees should: -

- Follow guidance and procedures designed for safe working
- Report all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and ask for guidance as appropriate from the Finance, Staffing, General Purposes and Audit Committee
- Take part in training designed to meet the requirements of this policy
- Report any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone to the Finance, Staffing, General Purposes and Audit Committee

(An incident can be defined as an unplanned or uncontrolled event or sequence of events that has the potential to cause injury, ill-health or damage).

- If an employee has a medical condition which would make them unsuitable for working alone they have a duty to inform the Clerk/Deputy Clerk.
- Where a medical condition is known, a risk assessment must be conducted to enable consideration to be given to routine work and foreseeable emergencies that may impose additional or specific risks.

Aims of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that staff who work alone are not exposed to Health & Safety risks and to outline the steps which reduce and improve personal safety to staff who work alone-.

• To increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working

• Ensure that appropriate support and training is available to all staff that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone

• Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working

• Reduce the number of incidents and injuries to staff related to lone working.

Risk Assessments

A risk assessment should be carried out for and by all employees who are going to be working alone. Consideration should be given to: -

Violence and Aggression

Isolated Areas Difficult
Terrain
Sudden illness
Building Conditions
Substances Hazardous to Health
Animals
Vehicle Breakdowns
Weather hazards
The list is not exhaustive and other risks may be identified during the assessment process.

Responsibilities.
The Council and Clerk are responsible for: -

• Ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working

• Ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the effectiveness of this policy is regularly reviewed

• Providing resources for putting the policy into practice

• Ensuring all staff are aware of the policy

• Take 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 a system 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 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

• Provide personal safety equipment, where this is felt to be desirable, and access to First Aid equipment.

• Ensure communication systems are in place (e.g. mobile phones) to enable contact to be made with staff who have failed to make contact or return at the expected time

Good Practice for Lone Workers

• During working and after normal hours: -

I. Maintenance Staff should advise the Clerk/Deputy Clerk of where they are going
II. Ensuring a colleague or councillor accompanies the Clerk/Deputy whilst locking up at the end of an evening meeting
III. Clerk/Deputy Clerk to keep office diaries up to date with meeting, visits, training courses and lone working details
IV. Letting family members and/or relevant colleagues know where you are going, your method of travel, when you are expected to return and who family members and/or relevant colleagues should contact in the event you do not return as expected.
V. Maintenance Staff should advise the Clerk/Deputy Clerk of the estimated time of finish at each separate location and contact the Clerk once they have left the workplace
VI. In "out of normal working hours" phone number for the Clerk will be issued to any member of staff working alone during such a period

VII. If, in the course of working away from the workplace, plans can change significantly, and this should be communicated back to Clerk/Deputy Clerk, in the case of Clerk/Deputy Clerk to any Council Member

VIII. If a job is assessed to have a sufficient risk, arrangements should be made with the Clerk/Deputy Clerk to check that a lone worker has returned. If possible, delay the visit until two members of staff can attend.

IX. Telephone contact between a lone worker and the Clerk/Deputy Clerk may also be advisable.

X. Lone workers should have access to first aid kits suitable for treating minor injuries.

XI. Lone workers should be provided with personal safety equipment where this is necessary.

XII. Occasionally a risk assessment may indicate that lone workers need training in first aid.

XIII. Before making a site visit lone workers must have full knowledge of the hazards, and risk to which they may be exposed to and apply control measures to eliminate or reduce the potential risks.

XIV. Whilst the Clerk and Deputy Clerk's main place of work is their home, this is a private residence and, under no circumstances, should Councillors or Members of the Public attend the premises without prior agreement from the relevant staff member.

Violence at Work

There are five main pieces of Health & Safety legislation which are relevant to violence at work. These are -

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSW Act)
- The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR)
- Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 (s); - and The Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996 9b)

The Health & Safety Executive defines work-related violence as: 'any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work'.

Incident Reporting

An incident is defined as "an unplanned or uncontrolled event or sequence of events that has the potential to cause injury, ill health or damage".

In order to maintain an appropriate record of incidents involving lone workers it is essential that all incidents be reported to the Clerk/Deputy Clerk who will prioritise each incident and identify any immediate action.

Staff should ensure that all incidents where they feel threatened or "unsafe" (even if this was not a tangible event/experience) are reported. This includes incidents of verbal abuse.

Contacting/Involving the Police

The Council is committed to protecting its staff from violence and assault and will support criminal proceedings against those who carry out assault.

All staff are encouraged to report violent incidents to the Police and will be supported by the Council throughout the process.

Except in the cases of emergency, staff should inform the Clerk/Deputy Clerk of any incident immediately.

The Clerk/Deputy Clerk will thereafter take responsibility for contacting the police to report the details of the incident.

Support for Staff

Employees working for the Council should know that their safety comes first. Staff should be aware of how to deal with situations where they feel they are at risk or unsafe.

Reviewed and Adopted 13th May 2026
Minute No: AC26/35q