



Axminster Town Council



AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL LONE WORKING POLICY

1. Introduction

The 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. The purpose of this policy is to protect these employees so far as is reasonably practicable from the risks of lone working.

This is to comply with the Safety at Work (1974) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, for the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees.

2. Scope of Policy

The policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising from the duties and activities of the Council's employees.

3. Definition of Lone Workers

The Health and Safety Executive defines lone workers as "those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision". This covers all of the Council's employees, who are required to carry out their duties for all or part of their working day in isolation. This may be indoors in any of the Council's premises, or outdoors.

4. Aims of Policy

The aim of the policy is to:

- a) Increase employees' awareness of safety issues relating to lone working
- b) Recognise and reduce risk by ensuring that the issues of lone working are 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
- c) Ensure that appropriate training is available to employees to equip them to recognise risk and provide practical advice on safety when working alone
- d) Ensure that appropriate support is available to employees who have to work alone
- e) Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Town Clerk

The Town Clerk on behalf of the Town Council is responsible for:

- a) Ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working
- b) Providing resources for putting the policy into practice
- c) Ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the Council regularly reviews the effectiveness of this policy
- d) Ensuring that appropriate support is given to employees involved in any incident
- e) Ensuring that all employees are aware of the policy
- f) Ensuring that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly
- g) Putting procedures and safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone
- h) Ensuring that employees are given appropriate information, instruction and training
- i) Regularly review preventative measures through an effective system of

recording, investigating and reporting incidents.

5.2 Employees

Employees are responsible for:

- a) Taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions
- b) Co-operating by following rules and procedures designed for safe working
- c) Reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate
- d) Taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy
- e) Reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify, or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone

6. Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is essential to good risk management. Assessment will be carried out for and by all employees whose working practice makes them vulnerable. This includes employees that are site based but work in isolation as well as mobile employees 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.

6.1 A Lone Workers' Checklist will be completed (See Appendix 1).

This will be used as a risk assessment for site-based lone workers will include:

- a) Safe access and exit
- b) Risk of violence
- c) Safety of equipment for individual use
- d) Channels of communication in an emergency
- e) Site security
- f) Security arrangements i.e. alarm systems and mobile telephones
- g) Level and adequacy of on/off site supervision.

6.2 Risk assessments for mobile lone workers will, additionally, include:

- a) Travelling between sites
- b) Arrangements for reporting and recording
- c) Communication and traceability
- d) Personal safety/security

6.3 Following completion of the Risk Assessment, consideration will be given to any appropriate action that is required.

7. Mandatory Procedures

7.1 Buildings Security

- a) Appropriate steps should be taken to ensure that access to a building is controlled and restricted as appropriate.
- b) All emergency exits should be accessible and operational
- c) Alarm systems will have been tested regularly (obtain certification if in doubt)
- d) Employees working alone must ensure they are familiar with the exits and alarms
- e) There must be access to a telephone and first aid equipment for employees working alone
- f) If there is any indication that the building has been broken into, employees must not enter alone, but must wait for back up from at least one other but preferably two other employees, or Councillors, or the Police.
- g) If the alarm is sounding, eg. in the event of a fire, employees working alone must not enter a building.

7.2 Personal Safety

Employees should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety.

To ensure personal safety

- a) Employees must not assume that having a mobile phone and a backup plan is sufficient. The first priority is to plan for a reduction of risk
- b) Before working alone, assessment of the risks involved should be made in conjunction with the line manager, the Clerk, or in the case of the Clerk – with the Chair of the Employment Committee
- c) Employees must inform their line manager or other identified person when they will be working alone, giving details of their location and following a plan agreed in advance
- d) If an employee does not report as expected, an agreed plan should be put into operation, initially to check on the situation and then to respond as appropriate
- e) Where employees work alone for extended periods and/or a regular basis, line managers must make provision for regular contact, to monitor and to counter the effect of working in isolation.

8. 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 who will prioritise each incident and identify any immediate action. All employees are provided with the Clerk’s contact details. All employees should ensure that all incidents where they feel threatened or “unsafe” are reported. This includes incidents of verbal abuse.

9. Contacting/Involving the Police

The Council is committed to protecting employees from violence and assault and will support criminal proceedings against those who carry out assault. All employees are encouraged to report violent incidents to the police and will be supported by the Council throughout the process. Except in cases of emergency, employees should inform the Clerk of any incident immediately. The Clerk will thereafter take responsibility for contacting the police to report the details of the incident. The Clerk should report to the Chair of the Employment Committee.

10. Support for employees

Employees working for the Council should know that their safety comes first. Employees should be aware of how to deal with situations where they feel they are at risk, or unsafe. Employees should also be able to recognise how their own actions could influence or even trigger an aggressive response. The Clerk will ensure that training needs are assessed for all lone workers and that they receive the appropriate training.

11. Immediate Support Following a Violent Incident

In the event of a violent incident involving a lone worker, the Clerk will immediately ensure that the employee receives any necessary medical treatment and/or advice. In the case of the Clerk, this will be done by the Chair of the Employment Committee. The Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor must be notified as soon as is practically possible and in any event on the same day.

The Clerk and / or Chair of the Employment Committee will ensure appropriate written and verbal reporting of the incident. The Clerk and / or Chair of the Employment Committee will also consider whether the employee needs specific information or assistance relating to any legal or insurance matters.

Axminster Town Council (date)

To be reviewed: (date)

Subject to changes in legislation, recommended practice, operations

Lone working Policy approved by EC for adoption by FTC 8.3.21



Axminster Town Council



AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL LONE WORKERS' CHECKLIST

Checklist completed by: (Employee)

Date completed:

Location: (Highlight to identify location)

- Guildhall
- Old Courthouse
- Old Courthouse Garden
- Cemetery
- Cemetery Chapel / Workshop
- Allotment (Specify)
- Around Axminster
- Other

Main Issues of Concern

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Do employees work alone? | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Do employees work outside normal office hours? | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Do employees meet with members of the public in an isolated location? | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Is there enough security provision? | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Is there safe access to the building? | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Do employees' activities involve working in confined spaces? | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Do employees' activities involve handling dangerous substances or equipment? | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. Do employees carry out work in high-risk locations? | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. Do employees carry out work in isolated areas? | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |

Control Measures for Consideration

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Does the Council provide joint working for high risk activities? | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Does the Council carry out regular supervisor or colleague checks during activities? | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |

3. Does the Council use entrance security systems? (i.e. digital locks) Yes No
4. Is there security lighting around access points and parking areas? Yes No
5. Has the Council installed panic buttons linked to manned locations? Yes No
6. Do employees have information and training on basic personal safety? Yes No
7. Are employees trained in strategies for preventing and managing violence? Yes No
8. Do employees have access to forms for reporting incidents or near misses and appreciate the need for this procedure? Yes No
9. Does the Council provide accompanied visits when there are concerns about safety? Yes No
10. Does the Council share risk information with other agencies? Yes No
11. Are there systems for monitoring employee whereabouts and movements for regularly reporting to base? Yes No
12. Has the Council issued mobile phones? Yes No
13. Has the Council issued personal attack alarms? Yes No
- 14 a) Do employees carry forms for reporting incidents or near misses and appreciate the need for this procedure? Yes No
- 14 b) Are these immediately reported to the Clerk and documented? Yes No
15. Are the existing control measures adequate? Yes No

If "no", what modifications or additional actions are necessary?

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Additional issues / notes

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