

PEMBROKE TOWN COUNCIL

LONE WORKING POLICY



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LONE WORKING POLICY

1.PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out specific requirements that apply to the health and safety of an employee or an elected member who is working alone.

2. DEFINITION

Lone workers are those who work by themselves or without direct or close supervision. Working alone is not in itself against the law and is often safe to do so. Pembroke Town Council is aware of the risk to its employees and elected members and are keen to protect them from potentially dangerous situations.

Sometimes Pembroke Town Council employees have to work alone. For example this may mean opening up of the building, setting up and packing away equipment, locking up at the end of a meeting or function and travelling home.

Likewise, elected members sometimes arrange to meet their constituents in their own homes in order to discuss council issues.

Pembroke Town Council does not expect any employee or an elected member to put themselves into a potentially dangerous situation or knowingly put themselves at risk.

3. DUTIES OF THE EMPLOYER (to a MEMBER OF STAFF)

In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the employer has a duty of care to its employees. When an employee is working alone the employer will :

- (a) Carry out a risk assessment of the work before the employee starts work. If any risks are identified consideration will be given to the adjustments that can be made to reduce or eliminate any risks. The employee should take part in carrying out the risk assessment and of any specific action that needs to be taken as a result of the assessment.
- (b) Ensure that risk assessments are reviewed regularly and at least once per year.
- (c) Arrange back-up or change the work if the risk assessment indicates that it is not safe for an employee to be working alone.

- (d) Ensure that the employee is provided with safe and adequate equipment. The employer will ensure that the employee is fully trained in the use of all relevant equipment e.g. building intruder alarm system.
- (e) Ensure that the employee is provided with any personal protective equipment that is required.
- (f) Ensure that the premises are safe (and ensure that the employee is made aware of any potential hazards as identified in the risk assessment).
- (g) Ensure that the employee is aware of the procedures and processes to follow in carrying out the work.
- (h) Ensure that the employee is aware of any legal restrictions relating to the work being undertaken e.g. laws relating to the control of hazardous materials.

4. DUTIES OF THE EMPLOYEE (MEMBER OF STAFF)

In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the employee has a duty of care of his / her own health and safety.

When working alone it is essential that the employee

- (a) Obeys all instructions of the employer that have been given before the work starts.
- (b) Takes note of any risks that have been identified in the risk assessment and carries out any actions that have been agreed with the employer in relation to any hazards.
- (c) Wears any protective personal equipment that has been issued.
- (d) Uses all equipment and tools in accordance with their purpose and in the way that the employee has been trained to use them.
- (e) Notifies the employer immediately of any issues relating to health and safety that occur.

If lone working, an employee should ensure

- (a) A responsible person knows your itinerary and what time you are expected to return home.
- (b) A phone call system is implemented so you can phone or text at planned times to confirm safety.
- (c) When working alone in the building ensure that all entry doors are locked so that no one can enter.
- (d) When working in the evenings park your car in the Town Hall carpark.
- (e) Do not leave bags / laptops or valuables on show in your car.
- (f) If you are in doubt about your safety at any time, do not hesitate to call the police.
- (g) Before locking up the building, ensure that there are no members of the public still on the premises e.g. check toilets, kitchen etc
- (h) Be extra vigilant when locking the carpark gates, especially in the hours of darkness.

5. DUTIES OF AN EMPLOYER (of an ELECTED MEMBER)

- (a) Ensure that the elected member is aware of the potential safeguarding issues when arranging to meet constituents in their own homes.
- (b) Ensure that the elected member needs to make communication arrangements with a responsible person, for example, note the time and location of the meeting, and on completion phone the responsible person to let them know that you are safely away from the meeting location.
- (c) Be aware of a possible escape route if the meeting starts to get out of hand. Position yourself near to a doorway so that a safe exit can be executed.
- (d) Be aware of other people in the meeting location who may try and influence the discussions.
- (e) Do not be afraid to curtail the meeting if you feel that developments seem to be getting out of hand and that safeguarding issues are possible.

NOTE : sections 6,7,8 and 9 refer to information for Staff Members only

6. COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT

Whenever possible an employee (member of staff) should have or have access to a mobile phone. If this is not possible due to hazards or poor reception the employee should make sure that he or she is aware of the nearest landline telephone (Located in Town Clerks Office).

7. SUPERVISION

It is essential that the lone employee has a named person as a supervisor. (Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk). The employee should contact the supervisor regularly to discuss any issues that arise.

8. ACCIDENTS

If the employee is involved in an accident, or a member of the public is injured whilst on the employee's premises, the employee should contact the supervisor / deputy as soon as it is practical.

If the injury requires medical attention, this should be sought before informing the supervisor of the situation.

A first aid kit must be available to the employee (located in the Town Clerk's Office and the kitchen)

All accidents. Incidents and near misses must be recorded in the accident book (located in Town Clerk's office).

9. RESPONDING TO AGGRESSION AND VIOLENCE AT WORK

If employees encounter violence then they should move and get away from the source and if possible summon assistance.

The following precautions should be taken

- (a) Be aware of other people at all times
- (b) Look out for signs of possible violence e.g. body language, loss of control
- (c) Try to diffuse the situation and remain calm
- (d) Avoid confrontation
- (e) Do not accept abuse on the telephone – terminate the call

If an employee finds themselves with someone with challenging behaviour and cannot calm the person, they should not under any circumstances put themselves at risk and should ring 999 or press the panic button for assistance. The panic button is located in the Town Clerk's Office.

10. POLICIES

All employees and elected members should be made aware of the Council's Safe Guarding Policy (appendix 1) and for good practice completed the necessary safe guarding training module.

All employees must be in possession of the Employee Handbook and make reference to relevant policies contained in it.

11. APPENDIX

- (a) Safe Guarding Policy

Adopted by the Council – October 2018

