

BLUNDESTON & FLIXTON PARISH COUNCIL

LONE WORKING POLICY

PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

This policy is intended to minimise risks, as far as is reasonably practicable, for the following groups:-

- Parish Clerk working alone at home, as is the nature of the role
- Parish Clerk or Councillors visiting parishioners or attending meetings
- volunteers assisting with council projects and activities

Other examples of lone working include, but are not limited to:-

- Inspecting play equipment
- Meeting with contractors on site
- Changing information on parish noticeboards

LEGAL BACKGROUND

Under the Health & Safety Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 it is the duty of the Parish Council to assess risks to the above groups and to take steps to avoid or control risk where necessary. The groups mentioned above also have a responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work and to co-operate with the council in meeting their legal obligations.

RISKS

Potential Risks to Lone Workers

- Open access and unlocked doors resulting in accessibility to the public
- Becoming ill or having an accident
- Lack of training regarding Health & Safety procedures
- Faulty equipment
- Travelling alone to meetings
- Working in remote areas and/or areas with no/poor mobile phone signal
- Parking in poorly lit areas or entering buildings which are inadequately lit
- Aggressive and/or abusive members of the public

Risk Assessments

The following should be taken into consideration to minimise risk:

- Risk assessment in line with council policies on risk management, and wherever possible to encourage working in pairs in order to minimise the risk to individuals. Where work is undertaken by one person, then that person must advise someone of the place of activity and the time of the activity. Persons must always carry a mobile phone with battery charged.
- Where the environment is isolated and access is difficult the person should always advise someone of where they are going and the time they expect to be there and return.
- Employees working from home should not invite members of the public into their home unless the person is known and the meeting is pre-arranged.
- Where there is potential for difficulty then arrangements should be made for another individual – chairman or councillor – to attend at the same time. This meeting should not be at the clerk's home but in a public building with a telephone.

RESPONSIBILITY

Employees Responsibility & Personal Safety:

- To take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- Always maintain a line of communication on a regular basis with members of the council to identify and minimise risk(s).
- The clerk is responsible for writing and implementing this policy. This is undertaken under the direction of the council.

Employers Responsibility:

- To take reasonable care for the health & safety of staff by identifying and assessing potential risks to ensure that staff are safe at all times.
- Always maintain a line of communication on a regular basis with staff to identify and minimise risk(s).
- Ensure staff receive all relevant training and information available.

REPORTING INCIDENTS

Any incidents or perceived risks encountered while lone working should be recorded, reviewed and acted upon. The report should include:

- A brief note of what happened, when, and who was involved,
- For any work-related aggression (verbal or physical) including threatening behaviour, all details of the incident and the perpetrator should be captured, which could then be used if the police take any formal prosecution action. This might be particularly important for more serious incidents of work-related violence, and,
- In either instance, this might also include recording details of any circumstances you think might have contributed to the incident, e.g. the context of the interaction, perceptions about the condition of the perpetrator, or any environmental circumstances. This information would then support us to review our risk assessment process and see if any additional measures are needed.

If you feel unsafe, unwell, or become injured call the emergency services if you need immediate assistance. If possible, call the Chairman or Vice-Chairman to let them know (or ask someone to do so on your behalf).

This policy was adopted by the council at its meeting held on 14 April 2025
Date of next review – April 2026

Reviewed April 2026
Next Review April 2027