



Carn Brea Parish Council

Lone Working Policy

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1. Policy Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to minimise risks for staff working alone and volunteers working with Carn Brea Parish Council.
- 1.2 Where employees have to undertake lone working, personal safety will be of paramount importance.
- 1.3 Lone working must not be viewed in isolation, other relevant policies already adopted will also apply.
- 1.4 The policy is not intended to raise anxiety unnecessarily, but to give a framework for managing potentially risky situations.
- 1.5 The following details are provided to reinforce the need for everyone to take lone working and their safety seriously at all times.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 it is the employer's duty to assess risks to lone workers and to take steps to avoid or control risk where necessary. Employees have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work and to co-operate with their employers in meeting their legal obligation.
- 2.2 Some staff work outside office hours and/or alone due to flexible working patterns and/or to undertake their job role. The Council aims to support lone workers by:
 - 2.2.1 A commitment to supporting staff and managers both in establishing and maintaining safe working practices.
 - 2.2.2 Recognising and reducing risk.
 - 2.2.3 A commitment to the provision of appropriate support for staff.
 - 2.2.4 A clear understanding of responsibilities.
 - 2.2.5 The priority placed on the safety of the individual over property.
 - 2.2.6 A commitment to providing appropriate training for staff.
 - 2.2.7 Ensuring equipment such as telephones/mobile phones will be made available as appropriate.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all employees, volunteers working on behalf of Carn Brea Parish Council and Members of Carn Brea Parish Council.
- 3.2 Volunteers would not normally be expected to work alone.
- 3.3 This policy is to be used in conjunction with the Council's Risk Management Policy, Risk Assessments, Health & Safety Policy, Health & Safety Handbook, Equal Opportunities Policy, Complaints Policy and Grievance Policy.
- 3.4 The Staffing Committee will regularly review this policy and procedures in place to ensure its implementation and to ensure that it is relevant to working practice.

4. Definition

- 4.1 Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. For example:
 - 4.1.1 People in fixed establishments (office or other base).
 - 4.1.2 A staff member working alone in an office or other base.
 - 4.1.3 People working outside normal office hours, e.g. staff working late etc.
 - 4.1.4 Mobile workers working away from their fixed base.
 - 4.1.5 A staff member/volunteer who is required to travel alone to and from a fixed base to another place of work or to meetings etc.

5. Who is at Risk

- 5.1 All employees who, as part of their contracted duties, are required to work alone and without direct supervision.
- 5.2 This policy does not set out to identify all the situations where employees may be at risk from working alone but concentrates on describing the arrangements that must be in place to eliminate or manage the associated risks.
- 5.3 Lone working itself is not necessarily high risk but the activity that is performed may well be. It is important that individuals are made aware of the outcome of the risk assessment and informed of all necessary control measures.

6. Potential Risks

- 6.1 Some of the main risks have been highlighted below, however this list is not meant to be exhaustive:
 - 6.1.1 Accessibility by members of the public, contractors etc e.g. open access/unlocked doors.
 - 6.1.2 Requirement to lock up when leaving a building or when working alone.
 - 6.1.3 Poorly lit entrance/exits.
 - 6.1.4 Isolated and poorly lit car parking facilities.
 - 6.1.5 Being taken ill whilst working alone.
 - 6.1.6 Lack of knowledge regarding Health and Safety Procedure.

7. Assessing the Risk

- 7.1 The Council will, as far as is reasonably practicable, ensure that employees and contractors who are required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time are protected in accordance with current health & safety legislation.
- 7.2 The purpose of assessing the risk of lone working is to establish whether the work can be done safely by a lone worker and what arrangements will ensure that an individual is not exposed to unnecessary and unacceptable risk.
- 7.3 In drawing up and recording an assessment of risk the following issues should be considered, as appropriate to the circumstances:
 - 7.3.1 Identification of hazards from plant, machinery, goods, substances, environment and atmosphere etc.
 - 7.3.2 The likelihood of causing harm and the severity of injury.
 - 7.3.3 The environment – location, security, access, remoteness or isolation of workplace.
 - 7.3.4 The context – nature of the task, any special circumstances; the individuals concerned – indicators of potential or actual risk.
 - 7.3.5 History – any previous incidents in similar situations.
 - 7.3.6 Any other special circumstances.
 - 7.3.7 Any problems of communication.
 - 7.3.8 The possibility of interference, such as violence or criminal activity from other persons.
 - 7.3.9 The nature of injury or damage to health and anticipated “worst case” scenario.
- 7.4 All information should be taken into account and checked or updated as necessary.

- 7.5 Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone worker in a given situation, consideration must be given to sending a second worker or making other arrangements to complete the task or cease undertaking the activity.
- 7.6 While resource implications cannot be ignored, safety must be the prime concern.
- 7.7 If a risk cannot be eliminated completely, action must be taken to reduce the risk to the lowest level practicable.

8. Prohibition of Lone Working

- 8.1 Certain situations require that employees cannot work alone. These include:
 - 8.1.1 Persons under instruction and training on machines should not be left unsupervised/alone.
 - 8.1.2 Certain fumigation activities and other work with substances hazardous to health.
 - 8.1.3 Working at heights is not permitted as a lone worker.
- 8.2 In relation to the handling of cash, you must observe the relevant policies/procedures as set by Financial Regulations.

9. Responsibility and Personal Safety

- 9.1 It is a requirement that the Council comply with their legal duties towards lone workers under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- 9.2 Employers are responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of all their workers. They have a responsibility for the health and safety of any contractors or self-employed people doing work for them.
- 9.3 It is your responsibility to keep yourself safe. Staff should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances.
- 9.4 Keeping track of individual movements is sometimes difficult but it is the responsibility of the staff member and the Clerk to identify potential risks in carrying out the work to minimise these risks, by maintaining regular communication.

- 9.5 Staff working away from the office should ensure that they have access to a mobile phone at all times, whether Council or personal. Where a personal phone is used the Council will reimburse the cost of any calls. Members of staff are responsible for checking that the mobile phone is charged, in working order and with sufficient credit remaining with the relevant provider, where possible.
- 9.6 Staff must not assume that having a mobile phone and a backup plan is sufficient safeguard in itself. The first priority is to plan for a reduction in risk.
- 9.7 Before working alone, an assessment of the risks involved should be made in conjunction with the Clerk, as set out in 9.2 above.
- 9.8 Staff must inform the Clerk/Assistant Clerk or other identified person when they will be working alone, giving accurate details of their location and following an agreed plan to inform that person when the task is completed. This includes occasions when a staff members expects to go home following a visit rather than returning to their base.
- 9.9 If a member of staff does not report in as expected, an agreed plan should be put into operation, initially to check on the situation and then to respond as appropriate.
- 9.10 Where a staff member works alone for extended periods and/or on a regular basis, the Clerk must make provision for regular contact, both to monitor the situation and to counter the effects of working in isolation.
- 9.11 The Clerk is delegated to take such steps as they deem necessary and reasonable to protect staff, members and the public. This may include implementing a new security protocol, spending money (budgeted or unbudgeted) on equipment resources, advice and/or infrastructure and includes the right to instruct staff as they deem fit to ensure a safe working environment.

10. Parking

- 10.1 Park your vehicle in a well-lit area – especially if you intend returning to it after dark. If possible, ask someone you know to accompany you to the vehicle. If this is not possible carry a small torch and personal alarm with you.

11. Buildings/meetings at unfamiliar venues

- 11.1 Report to reception on arrival and always sign in and out of the building.
- 11.2 Ask the receptionist to notify the person you are meeting.

12. Isolated locations/unfamiliar people

- 12.1 Avoid meeting in isolated locations; suggest a public place to meet. If this cannot be arranged, then where possible do not go alone and always notify office-based staff when you arrive and leave.
- 12.2 Avoid walking alone at night.

13. Planning

- 13.1 By thinking things through and planning for the unexpected it will help you remain confident when faced with an emergency.
- 13.2 If you work alone on a regular basis, assess any risk with your line manager and identify any measures needed to ensure your personal safety.

14. Monitoring

14.1 Procedures must be put in place to monitor lone workers as effective means of communication are essential. These may include:

- 14.1.1 The Clerk periodically visiting people working alone, ensuring safety measures are being adhered to.
- 14.1.2 Pre-agreed intervals of regular contact between the lone worker and the Clerk, using phones, radios or email.
- 14.1.3 Implementing robust systems to ensure a lone worker has returned to their base or home once the task is complete.

15. Reporting an incident

- 15.1 It is important to report any accident, injury, near-misses and dangerous occurrences to the Clerk, whether it is in aggression, violence, a transport breakdown or a personal accident. In this way, a full investigation can be made to assess any further potential risks and identify any additional safety procedures needed in order to prevent a similar incident happening to somebody else.
- 15.2 The Clerk will ensure any incidents of a serious nature are investigated and any reasonable actions implemented to prevent or protect staff, members and the public from possible reoccurrences where possible.
- 15.3 The Clerk is authorised and expected to submit code of conduct complaints to Cornwall Council and/or Police if an incident involves the possible conduct of a member of the Council.

16. Security of buildings

- 16.1 The Clerk and employees must ensure that:
 - 16.1.1 All appropriate steps are taken to control access to the building and that emergency exits are accessible.
 - 16.1.2 Intruder alarm and fire alarms are serviced yearly.
 - 16.1.3 Fire alarms are tested weekly by the Caretaker.
 - 16.1.4 When working alone they are familiar with exits and alarms.
 - 16.1.5 There is access to a telephone and first aid kit.
 - 16.1.6 If there is any indication that the building has been broken into, do not enter the building until assistance has arrived.

17. General Advice for all Lone Workers

- 17.1 When working alone, e.g. in an isolated area of the building with all doors closed, ensure someone is aware of your presence.
- 17.2 Do not put yourself at risk; if you do not feel safe discuss the situation with the Clerk.
- 17.3 Check that work being done has been subject to risk assessment and check the assessment yourself – some work may have been identified as requiring the assistance of a second person.
- 17.4 If finding yourself in a situation, which may be considered to be that of a 'lone worker', then ensure that the Clerk is made aware of the circumstances at the earliest opportunity and then assist in the process of identifying the steps needed to either prevent the lone worker situation from arising, or, if this is not possible, assist in developing the precautions necessary to ensure their own safety.
- 17.5 All staff should leave details of their movements and give an idea of how long they are going to be away from base and when they expect to be back. If plans change the staff member must ring in to let the office-based staff know.
- 17.6 Inform the Clerk if you have any concerns over the effectiveness and efficiency of the agreed arrangements and also if there are any reasons why you would not be able to work alone or to continue to work alone in safety.
- 17.7 Details of venues being visited, and a contact number should always be provided.
- 17.8 Think about the location of the place you are going. Check out the venue and prepare for the visit beforehand.
- 17.9 Meet unfamiliar people in public areas.

18. Procedure for office based staff when working alone

- 18.1 Staff should always adhere to the following guidelines in order to minimise risks when working alone at a fixed base.
 - 18.1.1 Avoid unnecessary 'out of normal office hours' working wherever possible.
 - 18.1.2 When working alone in the office the door to the building should be kept locked at all times unless the hall is being hired or prior arrangements have been made.
 - 18.1.3 You are not expected to open the front door to unexpected visitors.
Enquire how you can help the visitor and in the case of contractors ask for identification.
If you feel at all unsure or uncomfortable do not let anybody in.
 - 18.1.4 If allowing access to an unplanned visitor keep them in the foyer and do not take them into the office.
 - 18.1.5 Familiarise yourself with the layout of the building/floor.
 - 18.1.6 Ensure you have keys. Lock all doors that allow direct access to the building and/or office you are working in.
 - 18.1.7 Familiarise yourself with the Fire Safety Procedures and identify escape routes.
 - 18.1.8 Practice setting the alarm system.
 - 18.1.9 Practice the locking up procedures.
 - 18.1.10 If possible, avoid parking your car in badly lit areas, move it nearer to the place you exit the building if possible.
 - 18.1.11 When leaving late after meetings, ensure you arrange to leave with another member of staff or Councillor.
 - 18.1.12 Leave contact numbers at home or with a close friend or family member, so that the Clerk or Chairman/Vice Chairman of the Council can be contacted if there are concerns for your safety.
 - 18.1.13 Should you feel ill whilst working alone – seek help immediately – dial 999 if necessary.
 - 18.1.14 Undertake a risk assessment for lone working with your line manager. Report any concerns, hazards or potential risks to your line manager immediately.
 - 18.1.15 Repeated instances of not complying with the procedure in place may be subject to disciplinary action.

19. Procedure for the Caretaker/Covering Caretaker

- 19.1 Staff should always adhere to the following guidelines in order to minimise risks when working alone:
 - 19.1.1 Leave contact numbers at home or with a close friend or family member, so that the Clerk or Chairman/Vice Chairman of the council can be contacted if there are concerns for your safety.
 - 19.1.2 Undertake a risk assessment for lone working with your line manager. Report any concerns, hazards or potential risks to your line manager immediately.
 - 19.1.3 The hall door to be kept locked at all times when alone at the hall and only to be opened once hirers arrive.
 - 19.1.4 If called out for an alarm do not enter the building alone. Firstly, inform either the Clerk, Chairman or Vice Chairman and wait until one of them can attend. Telephone the police if needed.
 - 19.1.5 Repeated instances of not complying with the procedure in place may be subject to disciplinary action.

20. Procedure to follow if contacted by Caretakers family upon no return from work:-

- 20.1 Whomever has been contacted to ensure that they do not investigate alone.
- 20.2 Whomever has been contacted to contact a second person to attend the offices to investigate.
- 20.3 If repeated instances of being called out to investigate take place this may be subject to disciplinary action.

21. Out of hours call out

- 21.1 If you are called out due to an alarm activation, ensure you adhere to the following procedure:
- 21.1.1 Ensure you get the details of the person reporting the alarm
 - 21.1.2 Contact the Clerk, Chair or Vice Chairman of the Council to inform them that the alarm has been activated and to arrange a second person to attend with you.
 - 21.1.3 Inspect the outside of the building (doors, windows). If there are any signs of forced entry, call the police and inform them of this.
 - 21.1.4 In the event that forced entry is suspected do not enter the building and wait at a safe distance but within sight of the premises until the police arrive.
 - 21.1.5. If there is no sign of forced entry, both attendees to enter the building and turn off the alarm. Check for any obvious signs that may have caused the alarm (e.g. animal movement or open windows causing curtains to move), deal with as needed and then reset the alarm.
 - 21.1.6 If repeated alarms occur with no obvious cause ask the alarm service company to attend and inspect.
- 21.2 If you are called out due to the fire alarm activation ensure you adhere to the following procedure:
- 21.2.1 Ensure you get the details of the person reporting the Alarm.
 - 21.2.2 Contact the Clerk, Chair or Vice Chairman of the Council to inform them that the alarm has been activated and to arrange a second person to attend with you.
 - 21.2.3 If it is immediately apparent that there is a fire, call the fire Brigade.
 - 21.2.4 If there are no immediate signs of fire, walk the perimeter of the building completing an inspection before entering the building.
 - 21.2.5 If it is established that there is a fault, report this to the office at your earliest convenience.

22. Procedure for the Groundsperson

- 22.1 Staff should always adhere to the following guidelines in order to minimise risks when working alone:
 - 22.1.1 Inform the office when arriving for work at the beginning of the day.
 - 22.1.2 Ensure your mobile is fully charged, on your person and are contactable at all times.
 - 22.1.3 At the beginning of the day liaise with the office regarding your movements for the day.
 - 22.1.4 Isolated working ensure you call the office to notify of arrival, estimated length of stay and on departure. If working on site for an extended period, agree suitable times to make contact with the office.
 - 22.1.5 Once returned to the hall inform the office.
 - 22.1.6 Inform the office when leaving at the end of the day.

23. Procedure to follow if Grounsperson does not check in:-

- 23.1 The Clerk and in the absence of the Clerk the Assistant Clerk must follow the process below if a member of staff does not check in as per procedure:
 - 23.1.1 Telephone member of staff.
 - 23.1.2 If no contact can be made, refer to the vehicle tracker to ` identify location.
 - 23.1.3 Visit location to investigate informing another member of staff or Councillor details of your location to visit.
 - 23.1.4 Note to be kept on file.
 - 23.1.5 Further instances of not complying with the procedure in place may be subject to disciplinary action.