

Newton Abbot Town Council



Lone Working Policy

Date of adoption at Full Council	27 th September 2017. Minute 17/10(188e)
Reviewed	13 th September 2017, 30 th October 2019, 22 nd July 2020, 27 th October 2021, 25 th October 2023,
Next Review Date	Bi-annual review unless there is legislative change or an incident.
Reviewed by	Policy & Resources Committee

SAFE WORKING PRACTICES NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL

No person shall operate any machine, or carry out any operation unless fully instructed in the hazards to be avoided, the precautions to be observed, holds any relevant license or competence certificate and: -

- a) has received sufficient training and the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment, or
- b) is under adequate supervision by a person who has appropriate knowledge and experience.

Policy

The Health and Safety Executive defines lone workers as “those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision”. This covers all Council employees, who are required to carry out their duties for all or part of their working day working in isolation. This may be within the office or outside the office.

Newton Abbot Town Council is responsible for the Health and Safety at Work of its employees and those affected by its work operations. It therefore has a duty to organise and control the work activities of its lone workers in a safe and healthy manner. This is to be achieved by risk assessment. **The Council has the same health and safety responsibilities for homeworkers and the same liability for accident or injury as for any other workers.**

It must be emphasised that when lone workers find themselves in a situation, which in their opinion, may be stressful or hazardous, they should withdraw from that situation without fear of prejudice and request assistance where necessary. The work operation should be reassessed as to its suitability for lone work.

Building Procedures

Line Managers and their employees must ensure that:

- Appropriate steps should be taken to control access to the building, and that emergency exits are accessible.
- Alarm systems are tested regularly.
- External doors are locked to avoid unwanted visitors if working alone.
- When working alone staff are familiar with exits and alarms.
- There must be access to a telephone and first aid equipment for staff working alone.

- If applicable, key codes for access should be changed from time to time and when a member of staff or sub-contractor that knows the code leaves and as a matter of course if a breach of security is suspected.
- If there is any indication that the building has been broken into, they call for assistance before entering.
- Where required, employees must ensure that they sign in and out of building registers.

Operative Responsibilities – Personal Safety.

- 1 If you are asked to work alone and have a medical condition which may make you an unsuitable person for this type of work you must inform your supervisor who will seek medical advice.
- 2 If you are working alone, you should make sure that you are fully aware of the hazards and risks of the job you are undertaking and are fully trained and or experienced in order to take any necessary precautions and correctly respond to emergencies.
- 3 If you are presented with unusual and or hazardous circumstances beyond the scope of your training and or experience you should avoid this operation until you can contact your supervisor for instructions.
- 4 If you are asked to phone in or contact your supervisor or nominated person at given periods or after completing normal or late working, you must comply with this request.
- 5 Staff should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety.

Supervisor's Employer's Responsibilities

- 1 Supervisors Employer's must ensure that lone workers are fully trained for the work undertaken and are aware of any emergency procedures.
- 2 Supervisors Employer's must also ensure that solitary workers have access to first aid facilities.
- 3 Provision must also be made for regular visits to be made to lone workers, the frequency of the visit should be aligned with the experience of the operative and the risks involved in the work being carried out (remember training does not imply experience, therefore a newly trained operative may require greater supervision).
- 4 Where staff work alone for extended periods and/on a regular basis, managers must make provision for regular contact, to monitor and to counter the effect of working in isolation.

General Recommendations

Where operatives are working alone out side of normal working hours arrangements should be made to notify an appointed person that the work has been completed safely e.g., by arranging for the operative to contact a nominated person on completion of work (by text to supervisor's mobile telephone or a direct telephone call, email is not advised).

Guidance

Although the Council as your employer must implement procedures for personal safety of their employees, you should remember that personal safety is a shared responsibility between employer and employee.

Hazards can exist in many forms, with the risk from those hazards increasing due to being undertaken alone. Employees carrying out work with what can be considered dangerous machinery (where serious injury or entanglement is likely (*see list below*)), or in a hazardous area, must **never** be permitted to work alone.

Where lone working is considered to be low risk, a system is to exist where contact with the lone worker is made on a regular basis through the working day. Failure to make contact should instigate investigation as to why this has occurred.

All employees working alone until completion of the working day and intend to proceed to their home directly are to comply with a system identified where they register completion of work and the leaving of the work area.

Managers/Supervisors are to provide information on any **unusual risks** which may affect employees when embarking on lone working activities.

Employees also have a responsibility to keep themselves safe.

If working on your own away from your usual place of work follow the principles, as far as reasonably practicable, as laid out below: -

DO's

1. Make sure your supervisor or colleagues know where you are **and** tell your supervisor or colleagues if you change your plans.
2. Make sure you can be contacted at regular intervals or arrange to make contact at predetermined times.
3. Remember to park your vehicle in a safe place.
4. Only operate equipment or machinery that you are competent to use.
5. Keep your mobile phone handy in case you need it in an emergency.
6. Report **all** violence, threats or accidents which occur, as per the Council's policy.
7. Walk away from **any** situation that has the potential of becoming stressful or aggressive.

DON'Ts

1. Visit any work area without informing your supervisor or colleagues first.
2. Rearrange your planned work without informing your supervisor or colleagues.
3. Attempt any dangerous or hazardous tasks.
4. Use any equipment or machinery that is defective in any way (i.e. guards missing).
5. Use any equipment or machinery you have not been trained to use or do not hold the relevant license or certificate of competence.
6. Enter any non-council or residential premises if the person you are to meet is not there.
7. Respond angrily to someone who is trying to provoke you.

List of Plant and Equipment where use of when Lone Working is Prohibited (unless has successfully completed current specialist training for specific handling and use of equipment. Supervisor must be aware and in agreement that trained staff may use alone).

1. Chainsaws & Polesaws (the Council's insurance policy prohibits the use of Chainsaws and Polesaws at all times).
2. Steel bladed Brush-cutters.
3. ~~Application of harmful chemicals in remote areas.~~
4. Ladders or where activities involve working at height (over 2 metres).
5. Shredders and Chippers
6. Hedge Trimmers
7. Any Plant or Equipment that cannot be sufficiently guarded, has open mechanically moving parts which can cause serious injury.

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

Lone Working - Risk Assessment

Activity		Lone Working			
Risk assessment completed by (name & position)		Linda McGuirk, Principal Administrator			
Risk assessment completed on (date)		October 2023	Review date (annually)	October 2024	
Risk assessment verified by (name & position)		Phil Rowe, Town Clerk.			
What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control this risk?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Who needs to action these further controls?	Risk Level H/M/L
<p>Lone working Risk of accident or injury due to high-risk activity</p>	<p>Staff required to work alone on high-risk activities have an increased risk of harm owing to lack of appropriate support.</p>	<p>In these situations, lone working is either not appropriate, additional precautions may be necessary, or other measures need to be put into place, such as the work being completed with another member of staff present.</p> <p>Lone workers take responsibility of their own safety, and the safety of others, and should reasonably assess the risk before deciding whether lone working is appropriate.</p> <p>Activity Specific Risk Assessments, some equipment has been identified as carried out by two persons: Hedge cutting, Foamstream, installation of Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) and Strimming.</p>	<p>Point of Work Risk assessment.</p> <p>Lone workers are first aid trained.</p>	<p>Employee</p>	<p>Remote x Major = 4 LOW</p>

<p>Lone working</p> <p>Risk of increased vulnerability of a lone worker due to pregnancy, a medical condition or disability that may place them at increased risk when working alone.</p>	<p>Any staff member with an unidentified risk factor would be at increased risk of harm to them, others for whom they are responsible (and their baby, where relevant), if unable to access support while lone working.</p>	<p>Staff must ensure that any medical conditions which might be relevant to their working alone are fully discussed with the Town Clerk, and their own GP if necessary.</p> <p>Town Clerk to undertake risk assessments on any persons falling within this category. Individuals must not work alone if any such condition is assessed as placing them at increased risk.</p> <p>Any person who requires assistance to exit building in an emergency must not work alone.</p>	<p>All staff must keep the Council informed of any changes which may make them vulnerable.</p>	<p>Employee</p>	<p>Remote x Major = 4 LOW</p>
<p>Lone working</p> <p>Risk of violence through lone worker coming into contact with a vulnerable individual or group, or a person(s) likely to be a risk to them.</p>	<p>Lone worker increased risk of injury/harm from attack.</p>	<p>Avoid circumstances which might open them or the other person to harm or accusations of harm.</p> <p>Access to Newton's Place should be restricted when an employee is lone working in the building.</p>	<p>Ensure staff are aware how to secure the building and to disable the disabled access button.</p>	<p>Employee</p>	<p>Remote x Serious = 3 LOW</p>
<p>Lone working</p> <p>Risk of accident or violence due to the security of the building/ location.</p>	<p>Lone worker increased risk of injury/harm from attack.</p>	<p>Access to Newton's Place should be restricted when an employee is lone working in the building.</p> <p>CCTV is in place.</p>	<p>Ensure staff are aware how to secure the building and to disable the disabled access button.</p>	<p>Employee</p>	<p>Remote x Serious = 3 LOW</p>

<p>Lone working Risk of accident/injury due to no safe means of access/egress for the lone worker (consider lighting and personal security issues and means of escape in an emergency)</p>	<p>Lone worker</p>	<p>Entrances to the site and car park should be well lit. The lone worker should plan how to get to their car/public transport upon leaving, taking account of potential personal safety issues.</p> <p>Newton's Place has up-to-date fire and other safety considerations built into the design.</p>			<p>Remote x Serious = 3 LOW</p>
<p>Lone working Stress, mental health and wellbeing</p>	<p>Lone worker - If contact is poor, workers may feel disconnected, isolated or abandoned.</p>	<p>Procedures are in place that enable direct contact with the lone worker so their manager can recognise signs of stress as early as possible.</p>			<p>Remote x Significant = 2 LOW</p>

Risk Matrix

OVERALL RISK	DESCRIPTION
<p>LOW (1 to 4)</p>	<p>A LOW residual risk is generally considered acceptable to the Council and will require no further action other than continued good management practices and to ensure that the relevant controls are still operating effectively.</p>
<p>MEDIUM (6 to 9)</p>	<p>A MEDIUM residual risk may require the implementation of additional controls/action to be taken, although this depends on the nature of the risk, and the potential cost/benefit of reducing the level of risk further.</p>
<p>HIGH (12 to 16)</p>	<p>A HIGH residual risk requires the implementation of additional controls urgently. This level of residual risk is unacceptable to the Council the Town Clerk will need to be made aware of these risks and involved in decision making around risk actions.</p>

Major	LOW 4	MEDIUM 8	HIGH 12	HIGH 16
Serious	LOW 3	MEDIUM 6	MEDIUM 9	HIGH 12
Significant	LOW 2	LOW 4	MEDIUM 6	MEDIUM 8
Minor	LOW 1	LOW 2	LOW 3	LOW 4
<p>Severity Likelihood</p>	Remote	Unlikely	Likely	Very Likely

Likelihood

Remote – Little or no likelihood

Unlikely – Some likelihood

Likely – Significant likelihood

Very Likely – Near certainty

Severity

Major – Total service failure, high financial losses, possible national and local media criticism, fatalities/ severe injuries.

Serious – Short term service failure or prolonged partial failure, possible media interest, possible financial losses or injuries.

Significant – Short term partial failure, no media interest, limited financial losses or disruption to service provision.

Minor – An annoyance that does not disrupt service provision or has only a localised impact contained within the Council/ service affected. No media or public knowledge of incident.

A HIGH risk urgently requires the implementation of additional controls. This level of residual risk is unacceptable to the Council and the Town Clerk will need to be made aware of these risks and involved in decision making around risk actions.

Risk assessment must be verified by the Town Clerk (or Deputy Town Clerk) and be signed prior to works being undertaken.

Name	Phil Rowe	Signature	
Role	Town Clerk	Date	

I confirm I have read, understood and will comply with all of the processes and safety measures stated in this risk assessment.

Name		Signature	
Role		Date	