



# For Information

## Lone Working Policy

Adopted: 22 October 2025

Chair: Cllr. R. Walker

Committee: Staffing

Minute Ref: 251022/7

The policy is administered by the Town Clerk and will be reviewed in October 2026.

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### Mission Statement

Endeavour through foresight and leadership, to enhance quality of life for residents and visitors. Working to enrich and nurture opportunity to protect and improve the built and natural environment and improve community pride.

## 1. Introduction

Longridge Town Council recognises that some employees may be required to work alone in the course of their duties. This policy outlines the Council's commitment to ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of lone workers, in line with standard UK health and safety practices. It aims to identify risks associated with lone working, assign responsibilities, and establish procedures to minimise those risks.

The Council acknowledges that lone working is not inherently illegal but must be managed to comply with legal duties. This policy applies to all Council employees, contractors, and volunteers who may work alone, whether in Council premises, remotely, at home, or in the community.

## 2. Definition of Lone Working

A lone worker is defined as an employee who works by themselves without close or direct supervision. This includes:

- Staff working alone in Council offices or facilities (e.g., outside normal hours).
- Mobile workers, such as those conducting site visits, maintenance, or community engagement.
- Homeworkers or those isolated from colleagues, even if not physically alone (e.g., the only Council employee in a group setting).

Lone working can increase risks, such as lack of immediate assistance in emergencies, accidents, illness, or incidents of violence.

## 3. Legislation and Responsibilities

### 3.1 Relevant Legislation

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Council has a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and welfare of employees, including lone workers. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires risk assessments for all activities, including lone working. There is no specific lone working legislation, but the Council must assess and mitigate risks accordingly.

### 3.2 Responsibilities of the Council/Town Clerk

- Identify all roles involving lone working.
- Conduct and regularly review risk assessments for lone working activities.
- Implement control measures to reduce risks to as low a level as reasonably practicable.
- Provide necessary training, equipment, and support (e.g., communication devices).
- Ensure lone workers have no medical conditions that make them unsuitable for such work.
- Monitor compliance and review the policy annually or after incidents.

- Report significant risks to the relevant committee (e.g., Staffing or Estate Committee).
- Ensure staff are aware of this policy and local procedures.
- Oversee risk assessments and safe systems of work.
- Provide debriefs after incidents and update assessments as needed.
- Arrange training on personal safety and emergency procedures.

### **3.4 Responsibilities of Employees**

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others affected by their work.
- Comply with this policy, risk assessments, and training.
- Report hazards, incidents, near-misses, or concerns to the appropriate Council member.
- Use provided equipment correctly and not misuse it.
- Inform Council of any medical conditions that may affect lone working suitability.

## **4. Risk Assessment**

Risk assessments must be conducted for all lone working activities by competent persons, involving the employee where possible. Assessments should consider:

- The environment (e.g., location, access, security, lighting).
- The task (e.g., nature, duration, potential for violence or emergencies).
- The individual (e.g., experience, medical fitness, vulnerability).
- Historical incidents or special circumstances.

Key questions include:

- Is the workplace safe for one person (e.g., safe entry/exit, risk of violence)?
- Can emergencies (e.g., fire, illness, accident) be handled alone?
- Is there access to first aid, communication, and emergency services?
- Are transport and parking arrangements adequate?

Assessments should be documented, reviewed regularly (at least annually), and updated after incidents. If risks cannot be adequately controlled, lone working should not proceed—alternative arrangements (e.g., buddy system) must be made.

## **5. Control Measures and Procedures**

### **5.1 General Procedures**

- Maintain access to a working telephone, first aid kit, and alarm systems.
- Avoid high-risk activities alone (e.g., handling hazardous substances, operating dangerous machinery).

## 5.2 Personal Safety

- Be aware of surroundings: Know exits, alarms, and potential hazards.
- Use body language and communication to de-escalate situations.
- For home working: Ensure a safe setup, maintain confidentiality of personal details, and report in regularly.

## 5.3 Emergency Procedures

- In an emergency, prioritise personal safety: Leave the area if possible and contact emergency services (999).
- Report incidents immediately using the Council's incident reporting procedure.
- Debrief with Clerk/Chair of the Staffing Committee after any incident to review and improve measures.

## 5.4 Special Considerations

- Pregnant workers or those with medical conditions: Additional assessments and adjustments.
- Young or inexperienced workers: Enhanced supervision or restrictions.
- High-risk areas (e.g., isolated or high-crime locations): Use paired working or avoid if possible.

## 6. Training and Support

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

The Council will provide training to lone workers on:

- Risk awareness and personal safety techniques.
- Emergency response and de-escalation.
- Use of safety equipment (e.g., lone worker devices or apps, if provided).
- Training needs will be identified via risk assessments and reviewed periodically.

Staff can request debriefs after challenging incidents.

## 7. Monitoring and Review

- Incidents will be recorded, investigated, and used to improve the policy.
- The policy will be reviewed annually, after legislative changes, or following incidents.
- Compliance will be monitored through audits and staff feedback.

## **8. 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. If an incident occurs out of office hours the Council Chairman should be contacted. The Clerk will also consider whether the employee needs specific information or assistance relating to legal or insurance aspects. The Clerk will also ensure appropriate written and verbal reporting of any violent incident.

## **9. Lone Working for the Clerk**

Where the items above relate directly to the Clerk as a staff member the appropriate controls will be exercised by the Staffing Committee or, in emergency situations, by the Chair of the Staffing Committee.

## **10. Contacting or Involving the Police**

The Council is committed to protecting staff from violence and assault and will support criminal proceedings against those who carry out assault. All staff 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.