

## **LONE WORKING POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Burton Green Parish Council (“the Council”) recognises that staff are required to work by themselves in the community without close or direct supervision, sometimes in isolated work areas or out of office hours. Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 the Council has a legal obligation to look after the health, safety and welfare of their employees. Employees also have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work activities and to co-operate with their employers in meeting their legal obligations.

### **SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

This policy covers the Council’s employee(s), namely the Clerk/RFO, who is required to carry out their duties for all or part of their working day working in isolation. It does not apply to Councillors.

The Council will protect staff from the risks of lone working, as far as is reasonably practicable. Working alone is not in itself against the law, and it is often safe to do so. However, the council’s policy is to consider carefully and deal with any health and safety risks for those who work alone.

### **DEFINITION**

‘Lone Worker’ refers to people who work by themselves without work colleagues either during or outside normal working hours. Any worker under the age of 18 years, or anyone working in confined spaces is not permitted to work on their own.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Employers must assess and control the risks in their workplace, and all staff have a responsibility for the health and safety of themselves and work colleagues. The key responsibilities are as follows:

**The Clerk**, on behalf of the Council, is responsible for:

- identify situations where people work alone and decide whether a system can be adopted to avoid workers carrying out tasks on their own,
- ensuring that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly,
- ensuring that staff are aware of the policy and accompanying risk assessment,
- ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the effectiveness of this policy is regularly reviewed,
- managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents.

**Councillors** are responsible for:

- providing resources for putting procedures and safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone,
- ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident,
- providing a mobile phone and other personal safety equipment, if and where this is felt to be desirable.

**Lone Workers** are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their work.
- Raise with the Clerk/Chairman any concerns they have in relation to lone working.
- Not to work alone where there is inadequate information to undertake a risk assessment.
- Inform the Clerk/Chairman at the earliest opportunity in the event of an accident, incident of violence or aggression whilst working alone.

## **RISK ASSESSMENTS**

The Clerk will complete (or ensure the completion of) a Lone Working Risk Assessment prior to every lone working activity and update as appropriate. The risk assessment should be reviewed by the lone worker before undertaking the work and communicated to all relevant staff or councillors.

## **WAYS IN WHICH LONE WORKING RISKS CAN BE REDUCED**

Every lone working environment and situation is different, and therefore it is not possible to implement a 'one size fits all' approach. Where there is regular or anticipated lone working, the council will devise and implement a lone working plan that meets the needs and risks of their particular circumstances. The plan should be proportionate to any risks that are identified from the risk assessment and should be written down and communicated to all relevant staff and where appropriate, Councillors.

## **INCIDENT REPORTING**

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

1. A brief note of what happened, when, and who was involved.
2. For any work-related aggression (verbal or physical) including threatening behaviour, all of the details of the incident and of 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.
3. In either instance, this might also include recording details of any circumstances that may 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 will support Councillors to review the Council's risk assessment process and see if any additional measures are needed.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Council to ensure that it remains relevant to working practice.

Signed (Vice Chair): Cllr Marshall

Date: 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Date for next review: March 2027