

Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen Community Council



LONE WORKER POLICY 2023

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Policy Statement

Where the conditions of service delivery or its associated tasks require staff/volunteers to work alone, both the individual staff member and the council have a duty to assess and reduce the risks which lone working presents.

Purpose

This policy is designed to alert staff to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation, and to describe procedures which will minimise such risks. It is not intended to raise anxiety unnecessarily, but to give staff a framework for managing potentially risky situations.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers who may be working alone, at any time, in any of the situations described in the definition below.

Context

Some staff and volunteers work alone due to the nature of the work being undertaken. Bedwas, Trethomas and Machen Community Council's principles for supporting lone workers include :

- a commitment to supporting staff and volunteers both in establishing and maintaining safe working practices
- recognising and reducing risk
- a commitment to the provision of appropriate support for staff
- a clear understanding of responsibilities
- the priority placed on the safety of the individual over property
- a commitment to providing appropriate training for staff

Definition

Within this document, 'lone working' refers to situations where staff in the course of their duties work alone or are physically isolated from colleagues and without access to immediate assistance. This last situation may also arise where there are other staff in the building but the nature of the building itself may essentially create isolated areas.

Building Procedures

All staff must ensure that:-

- a. All appropriate steps are taken to control access to the building and that emergency exits are accessible.
- b. Alarm systems are tested regularly – both fire and intruder.
- c. When working alone they are familiar with exits and alarms.
- d. There is access to a telephone and first aid kit.

- e. If there is any indication that the building has been broken into, they call for assistance before entering.
- f. External doors are locked to avoid unwanted visitors if working alone.
- g. They are familiar with the no-smoking rules and procedures.
- h. Whenever possible that they park in a well-lit and busy area.
- i. Ensure sign-in and sign-out procedures are followed.

Personal Safety

- a. Staff should avoid working alone if not necessary and where possible the final two people should leave together
- b. Staff must not assume that having a mobile phone and a back-up plan is a sufficient safeguard in itself. The first priority is to plan for a reduction of risk
- c. Staff should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances
- d. Before working alone, an assessment of the risks involved should be made
- e. 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 using emergency contact information if necessary.
- f. Ideally all staff working alone should ensure that they have access to a mobile phone at all times.

Assessment of Risk

In drawing up and recording an assessment of risk the following issues should be considered, as appropriate to the circumstances:

- a. The environment – location, security, access.
- b. The context – nature of the task, any special circumstances.
- c. The individuals concerned – indicators of potential or actual risk.
- d. History – any previous incidents in similar situations.
- e. Any other special circumstances.

All available information should be taken into account and checked or updated as necessary. Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone worker in a given situation, consideration should be given to sending a second person or making other arrangements to complete the task.