West Mersea Town Council

Adopted: 28 November 2019
Reviewed: 13 August 2026
Next Review: August 2027

LONE WORKING POLICY

West Mersea Town Council recognises that its employees are sometimes required to work by themselves without close or direct supervision in the community, in isolated work areas and out of office hours. Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, West Mersea Town Council has a duty of care to advise and assess risk for workers when they work by themselves in these circumstances.
However, employees also 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 obligations.

Lone workers are people who work on their own with little or no supervision. Thus in the event of an emergency there is no one to give assistance or summon help. There is no time limit attached to working alone. It may be for the whole work period or only for several minutes. This can take place in a variety of situations.

A risk assessment is required under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, which examines how the job is done and identify work hazards, assess the risks involved and ensure that adequate measures are put in place to avoid the person carrying out the work being harmed.

Aims
The aim of this policy is to:
a) increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working.
b) ensure that the risk of lone working is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way, and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practicable.
c) ensure that appropriate training is available to all staff in all areas that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone.
d) ensure that appropriate support is available to staff who must work alone.
e) encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.

Responsibilities
Councillors and the Clerk are responsible for:
- ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy;
- taking all possible steps to ensure that lone workers are at no greater risk than other employees;
- 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;
- putting procedures and safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone;
- ensuring that staff identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training, including training at induction, updating and refreshing this training as necessary;
- managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents;
- ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident; and
- providing a mobile phone and other personal safety equipment, if and where this is felt to be desirable

Employees are responsible for:

- taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions
- following guidance and procedures designed for safe working;
- reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate and complete an accident form;
- taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy;
- reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone; and
- always maintain good communication to minimise risk.

Lone working affects the following staff in West Mersea Council:

- Maintenance Staff
- Office Staff

Procedures for safe lone working

Office Staff

1. Telephone contact with other staff and councillors.
2. First Aid Kit available and up to date.
3. Escape routes identified.
4. When working alone, ensure that door is kept locked.
5. At least one other person to be present when locking up after an evening meeting.
6. If in any doubt, do not start or continue the work.
7. Always ensure a Councillor or a member of staff knows you are working alone.

Maintenance Staff

1. Telephone contact by mobile direct to office.
2. Protective Clothing and equipment used if necessary.
3. First Aid Kit on all vehicles and yard.
4. Maintaining contact with office or councillor.
5. Escape routes identified.
6. If in any doubt, do not start or continue with the work.
7. Always ensure a Councillor or a member of staff knows you are working alone.