

CROWAN PARISH COUNCIL

Lone Working Policy

Adopted: January 2026

Review Date: January 2028

Introduction

- 1.1. Crowan Parish Council recognises its councillors, volunteers and the Clerk (hereafter “staff”) are sometimes required to work by themselves in the community, without close or direct supervision, in isolated areas and outside normal office hours. The purpose of this policy is to protect staff as far as it is reasonably practicable from the risks posed by lone working.
- 1.2. While there is no specific lone working legislation, the Parish Council has obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999. This policy describes how those obligations are met.
- 1.3. As well as adhering to this policy, councillors undertaking visits to review the sites of planning applications must observe the Planning Visits Protocol.

2. Scope And Limitations Of This Policy

- 2.1. This policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of the Parish Council staff. It does not extend to the employees of contractors commissioned by the council to carry out work on its behalf, who the council expects to be protected by and adhere to the policies of their employers.
- 2.2. The council recognises that there is a distinction between lone working that poses few or no risks that are additional to those normally faced by people in everyday life, and work that because of its nature adds new risks. An example of the first is the Clerk’s monthly duty to put up notices of meetings on the council’s five noticeboards, where the locations are well known and frequently visited, the work can be carried out in office hours, and the locations are in prominent public places. Another is a site planning visit made by a councillor to the property of a parishioner who is known to the councillor where the location and individual pose no known risks. All lone working requires staff to be vigilant and sensible in their approach to understanding the risks and adjusting their behaviour accordingly.
- 2.3. In all cases, there are elements of this policy that should be appropriately applied by staff to ensure that, as far as it is practicable, their health and safety and that of other people are not put at risk.

3. Aims of the Policy

- 3.1. The aim of this policy is to:
 - a) Increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working.
 - b) Ensure the risk of lone working is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way.
 - c) Ensure safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practicable.
 - d) Ensure staff are trained and equipped to recognise risk and receive practical advice on safety and working alone.
 - e) Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1. **Council** will
 - a) Ensure that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing the risks associated with lone working.
 - b) Provide resources for putting this policy into practice.
 - c) Monitor incidents linked to lone working and regularly review the effectiveness of this policy.
 - d) Ensure that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly.

- e) Ensure that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident.
- f) Improve the effectiveness of preventative measures through a system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents.

1.2. Councillors, Volunteers and Employees (“Staff”) are required to

- a) Receive training designed to meet the requirements of the policy.
- b) Act within the law and behave professionally and in a way that does not threaten, intimidate or annoy other people.
- c) Co-operate by following rules and procedures designed for safe working described in this policy.
- d) Take reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions.
- e) Report all incidents and potential incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others.
- f) Report any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone to the Clerk or Chair.

5. Good Practice For Lone Working

5.1. Staff should

- a) Avoid lone working, if possible.
- b) Avoid unnecessary risk, taking advice from the Clerk when required.
- c) Not do work that is beyond their capability, training and role and which would put them at risk.
- d) Understand the hazards, assess the risk and as far as is practicable apply control measures before undertaking the work.
- e) If necessary, make another person (“your contact”) aware when working out of office especially out of normal working hours, saying where you will be and giving an estimated return time.
- f) Carry a mobile phone when working alone and consider whether calls at start and finish of the work to your contact are required.
- g) In cases where assessment identifies a risk that cannot be reasonably mitigated, delay the work until two members of staff can attend.
- h) If the nature of the work requires it, notify the Clerk of any equipment required e.g. first aid kits, personal safety equipment etc.
- i) If witness to or involved in an incident
 - If appropriate, contact the emergency services as soon as is practicable during or following an incident
 - As soon as practicable, report the incident to the Clerk (see paragraph 7 below).

6. Assessing Risk

- 6.1. All staff working alone in a place or at a time that makes them vulnerable should complete a lone worker’s checklist (see Appendix A). The checklist will assist in identifying risks and control measures that are already in place, and what additional actions are required to mitigate the risks.
- 6.2. If the Checklist identifies the need, a risk assessment should be carried out and documented on a risk assessment form. The assessment should consider how staff will manage a range of risks, including but not limited to:
 - a) Violence and aggression inflicted by another person
 - b) Being in an isolated area
 - c) Responding to sudden illness
 - d) The use of equipment

- e) The environment in which the work will be carried out
- f) The ability to be contacted and, if necessary, traced in an emergency

6.3. This list is not exhaustive and other risks may be identified during the assessment process. Following completion of the Risk Assessment, consider what action is required to further mitigate any risks.

7. Incident Reporting

- 7.1. An incident is defined as “an unplanned or uncontrolled event or sequence of events that has the potential to cause injury, ill health or damage”.
- 7.2. All incidents involving lone working must be reported as soon as possible to the Clerk, including those in which staff felt threatened or ‘unsafe’ (even if this was not a tangible event/experience - such as verbal abuse). The Clerk will at the earliest opportunity assess each incident and take any immediate action to maintain the safety of people and property and maintain the reputation of the council. Such incidents will be reported to the next meeting of the council.

8. Contacting/Involving The Police And Emergency Services

- 8.1. The Council is committed to protecting staff from violence and assault and will support criminal proceedings against those who threaten or assault them.
- 8.2. All staff are encouraged to report incidents to the police and will be supported by the council throughout the process. Staff should inform the Clerk of any incident as soon as is practicable after the event and after the police have been informed.
- 8.3. Staff who have sustained an injury should seek appropriate medical care as soon as possible and inform the Clerk when it is safe to do so.
- 8.4. The Clerk will also ensure appropriate written and verbal reporting of any violent incident is made e.g. to the council, the council’s insurers, the local authority etc.

Crowan Parish Council Lone Working Checklist

Checklist completed by:

Date completed:

Main issues of concern:

What is the nature of the work?		
What is the location?		
Do you need to work alone?		Yes/No
Do you feel appropriately trained and equipped to carry out this work?		Yes/No*
Are you going somewhere familiar to you?		Yes/No
Is there safe access to and egress from the site?		Yes/No*
Do you feel safe carrying out this work alone?		Yes/No*
Are there any hazards about the site that you know of?		Yes/No
If "Yes" what are those hazards? (continue overleaf, if necessary)		
What control measures are in place to mitigate those risks? (continue overleaf, if necessary)		
What additional measures are needed? (continue overleaf, if necessary)		

* If you answered these questions with "No", contact the Clerk or Chair for guidance before undertaking the work.