

Lone Working Policy



Adopted by:	Watton Town Council
Date:	April 2026
Review date:	April 2029

1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 This policy explains how Watton Town Council manages lone working risks. Its purpose is to help protect the health, safety and wellbeing of those who may work alone or without close supervision while carrying out Council duties.

1.2 The Council recognises that lone working can increase the risk of accidents, ill health, delayed assistance, violence, aggression or other difficulties. The Council will take reasonable steps to identify, assess and control those risks.

1.3 This policy applies to employees and, where relevant, to councillors, contractors and volunteers when they are undertaking Council business that involves lone working. It should be read alongside the Council's Health and Safety Policy and, where relevant, the PPE Policy.

1.4 This policy is non-contractual and may be amended by the Council from time to time.

2. What is Lone Working?

2.1 Lone working refers to situations where a person works by themselves without close or direct supervision. This may include working alone on Council land or premises, working outside normal office hours, attending sites or meetings alone, working in public spaces without immediate support, or home working when not in contact with colleagues.

3. Legal Framework

3.1 This policy is informed by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and Health and Safety Executive guidance on lone working.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Watton Town Council will provide leadership and oversight in managing lone working risks, ensure lone working is considered within relevant risk assessments, and provide appropriate resources to implement this policy.

4.2 The Clerk or nominated responsible officer will coordinate lone working arrangements, ensure risk assessments are completed and reviewed, and maintain appropriate records relating to lone working.

4.3 Employees, councillors, contractors and volunteers covered by this policy must take reasonable care of their own health and safety, follow agreed control measures and procedures, and report incidents, near misses or concerns promptly.

5. Risk Assessment

5.1 Lone working activities will be identified through risk assessment. Assessments will consider the nature of the task, the working environment and location, the experience, training and capability of the individual, risks arising from contact with members of the public, access to emergency assistance and any specific vulnerabilities of the individual.

5.2 Risk assessments will be reviewed at least annually, or sooner if there is an incident, a significant change in activity, or reason to believe the controls in place are no longer suitable.

6. Control Measures

6.1 Where lone working cannot be avoided, the Council will put suitable control measures in place. These may include planning tasks in advance, clear work instructions, check-in arrangements, use of a mobile phone or other communication device, restrictions on high-risk tasks being carried out alone, or the use of PPE where identified by risk assessment.

6.2 The level of control will depend on the nature of the work and the level of risk involved. In some cases, the Council may decide that a task should not be undertaken alone.

7. Personal Safety and Emergencies

7.1 Those covered by this policy should take sensible precautions when working alone, including making sure they understand the agreed arrangements, keeping communication devices available where required, and being alert to personal safety risks.

7.2 Where there is a risk of violence, aggression or confrontation, this must be considered in the risk assessment and appropriate arrangements must be put in place. If a person feels unsafe, they should withdraw from the situation where possible and seek assistance.

7.3 Emergency arrangements should be clear and proportionate to the activity. This may include knowing who to contact, where to go for help, and how concerns will be escalated if a scheduled check-in is missed.

8. Reporting Incidents and Concerns

8.1 All incidents, near misses and concerns relating to lone working must be reported to the Clerk or appropriate line manager as soon as reasonably practicable so that the Council can consider whether further action, support or revised controls are needed.

9. Monitoring and Review

9.1 The Council will monitor how this policy operates through health and safety management arrangements, supervision and review of incidents or concerns.

9.2 This policy will be reviewed periodically and may be amended where required by changes in law, guidance, operational practice or Council decision.