

# Markfield Parish Council

## Health and Safety Policy

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NOTE: This policy has been prepared with acknowledgement to the following legislation:

Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, The Management of Health & Safety At Work (Amendment) Regulations 2006, Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, The Personal Protective Equipment At Work Regulations 1992, The Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002, The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1992, The Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992, The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002, The Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997, The Health & Safety (Young Persons) Regulations 1997

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### 1. General Statement

1.1 This policy was adopted by the Council on 11 May 2021

1.2 Our policy is to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all our employees, and to provide such information, instruction, training and supervision as they need for this purpose.

1.3 Our policy is to ensure the safety of members of the public by doing regular checks on the assets owned by the council.

1.4 The allocation of duties for safety matters and the particular arrangements that we will make to implement the policy are set out below.

1.5 The policy will be kept up to date, particularly as the Council's activities change in nature and size. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed every year by the Council.

### 2. Responsibilities

2.1 Overall and final responsibility for health and safety is the Council and for compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Regulations\* made under the Act and the Occupiers Liability Act is that of the Parish Council. The Parish Clerk has been appointed as the Council's Health and Safety representative and is identified on the Council website and they will be responsible for:

- Overseeing the Health and Safety Policy.
- Reviewing its effectiveness.
- Ensuring its correct implementation at all the Council's premises.
- Periodically reviewing the policy.

2.2 All staff are responsible for ensuring a healthy and safe workplace and to take reasonable care of themselves and others.

2.3 Whenever an employee or a Councillor notices a health or safety problem which they are not able to put right, they must tell the Clerk.

2.4 Consultation between the council and employees is provided by immediate day to day discussion with the Clerk.

### **3. Training**

The Council's Parish Clerk has overall responsibility for the provision of the Council's health and safety training and will be allocated a portion of the Council's training budget for these purposes. Policies for particular activities are attached, namely:

Litter Wardens/Caretakers/Play Inspectors/Cemetery Gardener

Working from Home

Lone Working

### **4. Reporting and Recording of Accidents**

Accidents should be reported to the Clerk.

### **5. Lifting and Manual Handling**

The 1992 Regulations apply to lifting, pushing, pulling, carrying and moving by hand or by bodily force. More work injuries are caused through "handling goods" than any other single action.

Manual lifting is included in this and an incorrect technique can cause Hernia (or rupture), torn back muscles, "slipped disc", cuts, bruises, crush injuries to fingers, hands and forearms, crush injuries to toes, cuts and bruises to the legs and feet.

The following basic rules are produced to help reduce these accidents:

- Never attempt to lift anything beyond your capacity. If in doubt get a second person or others to help.
- If mechanical aids are provided, use them.
- If an object is to be lifted manually:
  - Bend the knees and crouch to the object.
  - Get a firm grip using the whole hand and not the fingertips.
  - Keep the back straight.
  - Tuck the chin in.
  - Position the feet so that one is behind the other alongside the object, pointing in the direction of movement after lifting.
  - Push off with the rear foot. Straighten the legs and raising the object, move off in required direction in one smooth movement.
  - Avoid pinching fingers when releasing object.
  - When lifting is done by two or more persons one should be appointed leader to ensure movements are co-ordinated.
  - Protect your toes with safety footwear.
  - Wear protective gloves when handling objects with sharp or jagged edges

### **6. Visual display Unit**

6.1 The information booklet provided by the Health and Safety Executive is available in the office

6.2 Breaks and Changes of Activity -The need for breaks depends on the nature and intensity of the work.

6.3 Eye Tests and the Provision of Spectacles - Eye tests for Parish Council staff will be paid for by the Council.

6.4 Comfort -The equipment should be adjusted to suit individual physical requirements:

#### Getting comfortable

The chair and VDU should be adjusted so that, as a broad guide, forearms should be horizontal and eyes at the same height as the top of the VDU. There should be adequate space for documents to be managed on the top of the desk. A document holder can help the position of the head relative to the VDU and prevent neck discomfort.

6.5 Visual Display Equipment Sunlight or artificial light should not be allowed to bounce off the screen and there should be adequate space beneath the desk to allow free movement of legs. Excess pressure on the back of the knees and legs should be avoided and a footrest used where necessary.

6.6 The Keyboard - Adjust the keyboard and mouse to suit your hand movements. A wrist rest in front of the keyboard may help alleviate strain.

6.7 Breaks - Do not sit in the same position for long periods. The general principle to be followed is short frequent breaks are better than longer, less frequent ones.

6.8 Defective equipment must never be used.

### **7. Litter Wardens/Caretakers/Play Inspectors/Cemetery Gardener**

7.1 Your personal safety and that of others who could be affected by what you do is a joint responsibility. A self-risk assessment should be carried out on all locations every time litter is collected. The Clerk should risk assess the locations once a year unless they are made aware of any changes to the location prior to that.

7.2 Ensure you carry a mobile phone with you should you need to make an emergency call.

7.3 Ensure either the Clerk and/or office staff are aware of the area you are working.

7.4 Provide the clerk with your car registration number and telephone number in case of emergencies.

7.5 The following notes have been written to remind you how you can help. It also details some aspects of your job where things could go wrong.

#### **Clothing**

- Ensure that you wear all relevant safety clothing e.g. gloves, reflective waistcoats.
- Always wear reflective and high viz jackets when working near a highway.
- Wear heavy duty gloves to protect your hands from sharp objects.
- Check that your protective clothing is in good condition and ask for replacements if they get damaged or worn.

## 7.6 Personal Safety

- In bad light, fog, heavy rainfall and other conditions where visibility is restricted you must stop litter picking on the highway for both your own safety and the safety of others.
- Do not put yourself or any other road user in unnecessary danger.
- Ensure you look out for traffic and other road users when stepping out onto the highway.
- When litter picking in car parks ensure you keep your eyes and ears open for moving vehicles.
- If you have an accident no matter how minor, report it to the Parish Clerk so it can be recorded in the Accident Book.
- Do not run, no matter how keen you are to finish your work, running increases the risk of falling and hurting yourself.
- Where rubbish presents a risk, it may be necessary to request outside help from another authority such as the Environment Agency or Charnwood Borough Council.

## 7.7 Manual Handling

- Bend your knees not your back.
- If you come across a heavy item ask for help – never risk straining yourself
- Never collect any items which you consider may be hazardous to move e.g. chemicals, asbestos, dead animals, aerosol cans, gas cylinders, hypodermic needles etc....
- If emptying litter bins, place sacks into a barrow or wheeled bin to avoid risk of being cut by sharp objects or hypodermic needles.
- If you must carry sacks and it is for short distances, make sure you keep them away from your body to avoid stick wounds from hypodermic needles or cuts from other sharp objects.
- If you find a hypodermic needle, dispose of it in Sharp Bins provided
- If using any cleansing material ensure you wear proper safety equipment as instructed, i.e. gloves, boots, goggles, face masks.
- Take care when in confined areas, make sure doors and windows are open.
- If there is no air circulation do not use aerosol sprays.
- Ensure all lids are secured and tightened on containers so that chemicals cannot leak.

## 7.8 Sweeping

Take care that you do not raise too much dust, work downwind wherever possible and in enclosed spaces, damp down before starting to sweep and wear a mask if the dust levels are still high.

## 8. Working from Home

8.1 Employees have a responsibility to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and the health and safety of others who may be affected by what they do. For the worker at home this is likely to include visitors to the 'office', e.g. family, friends, etc. It is the employees' responsibility to report all employment related hazards related to their own or others' health.

8.2 Employers are required to carry out a suitable and sufficient Risk Assessment of all work activity under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992. This includes those that work at home.

8.3 The Parish Clerk will be responsible to ensure that a Risk Assessment for employees working from home is completed annually

## **9. Lone Working**

The Parish Council has overall responsibility for:

- Ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working;
- Providing resources for putting the policy into practice including the provision of a basic first aid kit within fixed premises and also mobile option;
- Ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and regularly reviewing the effectiveness of this policy

### **Definition of Lone Worker**

Lone workers are employees, who at any time, work by themselves in the office or at another location owned by the Council, such as parks or on work related travel. This could include: working at and/or opening and closing sites, the Workshop and public facilities, working late in the office, visiting council owned properties and outside contractors and employees who work alone outside normal working hours.

### **Requirements of the Lone Worker**

The Council needs to check that the lone workers have no medical conditions which make them unsuitable for working alone and employees who could be considered as lone workers have a duty to advise their line manager or the Parish Clerk of any medical condition which may affect them working alone.

Where a medical condition is known, an assessment will be conducted through an appropriate external adviser. The Council will take into consideration routine work and foreseeable emergencies that may impose additional and/or specific risks.

The Council will undertake to :-

- Ensure that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working
- Provide any necessary training
- Ensure that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that they are regularly reviewed
- Implement safe systems of working appropriate to each employee's work activities which include effective means of communication and appropriate personal protective equipment
- The Council will provide mobile phones for each employee for emergency contact;
- Ensure that lone workers have access to first aid facilities and that mobile workers carry a first aid kit suitable for treating minor injuries
- Investigate all significant incidents or accidents
- Manage the effectiveness of preventable measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording of incidents

When planning safe working arrangements, the Council should aim to ensure that lone workers are not exposed to significantly more risk than employees who work with others and precautions

relating to issues such as fire, equipment failure, illness, accidents and attention to risk assessments should be taken into account.

All employees new to a particular job or item of equipment, undergoing training, doing a job that presents specific risks, or dealing with new situations, should be accompanied at first.

### **Parish Council Office**

The Parish Council operates within office space located on the ground floor of a Community Centre building. The main office is open to the public and accessed by a reception area. The doors from the office to the public areas are secured. Anyone wishing to see staff can do so at reception or by appointment. The Clerk/and or staff has authority to refuse access to the offices if they are working alone, feel threatened or are unsure of the person requesting access.

It is down to the individual working to access the situation. Under no circumstances must an employee allow access to the offices after standard working hours unless they are aware of the caller and feel safe allowing them entry.

### **Employee Responsibility**

The employee(s) have individual responsibility for:

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions
- Following the rules and procedures put in place by the employer designed for safe lone working
- Reporting to the Clerk all incidents, dangers or potential dangers that may affect the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves or others
- Taking part in any training designed to raise awareness of the risks of lone working
- Taking all reasonable precautions when travelling on Council business or working away from the office environment, including advising a responsible person who, when and where they are visiting and the expected time of return and ensuring their motor insurance policy covers such occasions.

### **Supervision and Training of Lone Workers**

Lone workers must be suitably experienced, receive relevant training and instruction about the risks they are exposed to and the precautions that are needed.

The Council will aim to ensure that adequate supervision is available. The extent of this is a management decision and will depend on the level of risk, type of risk and duration of exposure. Procedures should be in place for the regular contact between lone workers and his/her supervisor.

### **Incident Reporting**

An incident can be defined as an unplanned or uncontrolled event or sequence of events that has the potential to cause injury, ill health or damage. All incidents must be reported to the Clerk as soon as they occur. Employees should ensure that all incidents where they feel threatened or unsafe (even if this is not a tangible event/experience) are reported. This includes incidents of verbal abuse. It is a good idea to remind employees that they should dial 999 if they need emergency assistance whilst out and about.