PINEWOOD

PARISH COUNCIL

LONE WORKING POLICY 2026

Policy Statement

Pinewood Parish Council recognises that, from time to time, councillors, employees, volunteers, contractors and Community Hall staff may be required to work alone without direct supervision. The Parish Council is committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of anyone undertaking lone working activities on behalf of the Council or within the Community Hall.

This policy establishes procedures to identify and manage the risks associated with lone working and to ensure suitable arrangements are in place to protect individuals.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect individuals who work alone.
- Identify and minimise risks associated with lone working.
- Provide guidance on safe working practices.
- Ensure compliance with health and safety responsibilities.
- Establish procedures for responding to emergencies.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- Parish Council employees.
- Parish Councillors undertaking Council business.
- Volunteers.
- Contractors working on behalf of the Parish Council where applicable.

Lone working may occur:

- In the Community Hall and Office.
- In outdoor areas managed by the Council.
- During inspections and site visits.
- During evening meetings and events.
- When travelling on Council business.
- When working from home.

Definition of Lone Working

A lone worker is any person who works by themselves without close or direct supervision and where assistance may not be immediately available in the event of an accident, illness or emergency.

Examples include:

- Opening or closing the Community Hall alone.
- Cleaning or maintenance activities carried out alone.
- Conducting inspections of Council property.
- Working in the Parish Office outside normal hours.
- Home working.
- Attending meetings or appointments alone.

Responsibilities

Parish Council

The Parish Council will:

- Assess the risks associated with lone working.
- Implement suitable control measures.
- Provide information, instruction and training where required.
- Review lone working arrangements regularly.
- Investigate incidents involving lone workers.

Parish Clerk
The Parish Clerk will:

- Ensure lone working risk assessments are completed.
- Monitor compliance with this policy.
- Maintain emergency contact information.
- Ensure appropriate reporting procedures are in place.
- Review incidents and take corrective action where necessary.

Employees, Councillors and Volunteers
Individuals undertaking lone working activities must:

- Take reasonable care of their own safety.
- Follow safe working procedures.
- Report hazards and incidents promptly.
- Participate in risk assessment processes.
- Inform an appropriate person of their whereabouts when required.
- Raise concerns where they believe a task cannot be completed safely.

Risk Assessment
The Parish Council will carry out suitable risk assessments for lone working activities.
Risk assessments should consider:

- The location of work.
- Access and security arrangements.
- Time of day.
- Nature of the activity.
- Potential for violence or aggression.
- Medical conditions.
- Availability of emergency assistance.
- Use of equipment or machinery.
- Environmental conditions.

Assessments will be reviewed:

- Annually.
- Following incidents.
- Following changes in working practices.
- When new activities are introduced.

Safe Working Arrangements
Where lone working is necessary, suitable arrangements should be implemented, including:

- Informing a nominated person of work location and expected return time.
- Maintaining regular contact where appropriate.
- Carrying a charged mobile phone.
- Having access to emergency contact details.
- Ensuring safe arrival and departure procedures.

No individual should undertake lone working where identified risks cannot be adequately controlled.

Community Hall Lone Working
Particular care must be taken if you are working alone in the Hall. It is advised that: -

Caretakers and Office Staff should:

- Ensure all external doors are locked. Be aware of emergency exits.
- Refrain from answering the door or allowing any member of the public to enter the building when alone without prior appointments made.

- Collecting fees or handling cash should be carried out during the daytime in the office when there is more than one member of staff present.
- When locking up the Hall - ensuring all windows and doors are closed, and internals doors are locked.
- Maintenance should be arranged during the daytime working hours when more than one member of staff is present.
- Banking cash for amounts over £1,000 requires two members of staff.

Bar Supervisor and/or Bar Staff should:

- Ensure that at the end of a hire or event the shutters are down and locked before cashing up.
- Ensure the latch on the door to the Bar is kept locked at all times so members cannot open it from the outside.
- Bar Staff are not to leave until dismissed by the Bar Supervisor.
- Avoid locking up the premises alone if possible.
- Ensure staff have made suitable arrangements getting home safely at the end of an event or hire.
- Handling cash over £500 for stock replenishing requires two members of staff.

Personal Safety

Individuals working alone should:

- Remain aware of their surroundings.
- Avoid unnecessary risks.
- Keep valuables secure and out of sight.
- Use well-lit routes and entrances where possible.
- Trust their instincts and remove themselves from situations where they feel unsafe.
- Avoid meeting members of the public alone where concerns have been identified.

Any incident involving threatening, abusive or aggressive behaviour should be reported immediately.

Home Working

Where work is undertaken from home:

- Appropriate display screen and workstation arrangements should be considered.
- Contact details should be maintained.
- The worker should ensure they have a suitable working environment.
- Confidential Council information must be stored securely.

The Council remains committed to supporting the health, safety and wellbeing of those working remotely.

Violence, Aggression and Unacceptable Behaviour

Lone workers should never place themselves at risk.

Where there is a possibility of confrontation:

- Meetings should be arranged in public locations or with another person present.
- Concerns should be discussed with the Parish Clerk beforehand.
- The meeting should be terminated if behaviour becomes threatening or abusive.

The Parish Council operates a zero-tolerance approach to:

- Violence.
- Threats.
- Harassment.
- Intimidation.
- Abusive behaviour towards councillors, staff or volunteers.

Serious incidents may be reported to the Police.

Emergency Procedures
In the event of an emergency, lone workers should:

1. Contact emergency services by calling 999 if immediate assistance is required.
2. Contact their nominated emergency contact.
3. Follow emergency procedures relevant to the situation.
4. Report the incident to the Parish Clerk as soon as practicable.

Emergency contact details should be readily available at all times.

Incident Reporting
All accidents, near misses, security incidents and concerns relating to lone working must be reported promptly.
Incident records should include:

- Date and time.
- Location.
- Persons involved.
- Nature of the incident.
- Actions taken.

The Council will investigate incidents and implement improvements where necessary.

Training and Awareness
The Parish Council will provide appropriate information, guidance and training relating to:

- Lone working procedures.
- Personal safety.
- Emergency arrangements.
- Incident reporting.
- Conflict management where appropriate.

Monitoring and Review
The Parish Council will review this policy every two years, unless:

- Following any serious incident.
- Following significant changes to working arrangements.
- Following relevant legislative or guidance updates.

The Council will monitor lone working arrangements to ensure they remain effective and appropriate.

This policy was approved by the Community Hall Committee on 28 July 2026

This policy was adopted by Pinewood Parish Council on 8 September 2026
Review date: September 2028