

# **Brinton and Sharrington Parish Council**

## **Working from Home Policy**

Parish Council employees are primarily required to work from home. This policy sets out the procedures the Parish Council use to manage and prevent unacceptable risks arising through the use of unapproved or unsafe home working facilities. It states the Parish Council (referred to as the Council), the Parish Clerk and employees responsibilities and duties regarding working from home.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA) places duties on employers, self-employed people and employees. Under HSWA, employers have a duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees, including home-workers.

Most of the Regulations made under the HSWA apply to home-office-workers as well as to employees working at an employer's workplace. These include, but not limited to for example, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR), the Display Screen Equipment Regulations (DSE) 1992, Manual Handling at Work Regulations, with also consideration of the risks around Slips, Trips and Falls and fire safety. (Employees should download, read, ask questions of the Council for any clarity and adhere to the relevant regulations from [hse.gov.uk](https://www.hse.gov.uk)).

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, employers are required to do a risk assessment of the work activities carried out by home-workers. Completing a risk assessment involves identifying the hazards relating to the home-workers' work activities and deciding whether enough steps have been taken to prevent harm to them or to anyone else who may be affected by their work. A risk is the chance, great or small, that someone may be harmed by a hazard. A hazard is anything which has the potential to cause harm. An employee should carry out a self-assessment of their workplace and equipment when working from home and submit this to the Parish Clerk and the Council.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES**

It is the responsibility of the employee to maintain their home working environment and take care of their own health and safety, together with that of others who may be harmed by their actions whilst working.

### **Responsibilities of employees**

Home-working employees must:

- Attend appropriate training and meetings at the Council's request at a different location from their home;
- Co-operate with the risk assessment process, report any problems, carry out regular checks of equipment and the workplace, and report faults to the Council without delay;
- Stop using any faulty equipment immediately and disconnect from any electrical source, if safe to do so;
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised access to the work or work equipment;

- Report any accidents which occur during the agreed working hours to the Council;
- Employees have a responsibility to take reasonable care of their own health and safety at work. Anyone working from home should keep in regular contact with the Chair. They should report any health problems or safety risks which may be attributed to, or aggravated by, their working arrangements. Employees and the Chair should communicate regularly and work together to find solutions.
- Adhere to risk assessments.
- The employee shall comply with the Council policies on Data Protection and Information Security, together with all legal requirements under the General Data Protection Regulations 2018. (Employees should download, read, ask questions of the Council for any clarity and adhere to the relevant regulations from <https://www.gov.uk/data-protection>);
- Employees should take responsibility to check that home working is allowed by their mortgage provider, landlord or any other relevant interested parties.
- Employees who use their own vehicle, for any work-related travel, must ensure that they have appropriate business insurance, up-to-date MOT (if relevant) and an in-date legal driving licence for the UK. They must ensure that they drive at all times within the UK law, when on Council business. They should, at all times, take into account road conditions and take suitable breaks when planning to travel on Council business.

### **Parish Council responsibilities**

It is the Council's responsibility that suitable risk assessments are carried out, that employees are prevented from working in circumstances which present an unacceptable risk, that suitable training is provided, if required, for the work to be undertaken and employees adhere to health and safety arrangements.

The Parish Clerk on behalf of the Council will:

- Make all necessary enquiries to ensure that there are no health and safety issues which could result in risk to the employee in working alone;
- Where a safety concern arises seek appropriate advice;
- Complete the necessary risk assessments, reviewing risks and hazards associated with the workplace as part of the annual risk assessment policy of the Council (or sooner should circumstances change. e.g. the home worker moves house).
- Ensure that the employee establishes safe systems of work;
- Ensure employees are clear as to their duties and have received the appropriate training where necessary;
- Ensure that a suitable workstation is set up with appropriate equipment, including telephone, computer, lighting, furniture and privacy;
- Establish procedures to be followed in an emergency, for example immediate evacuation in the event of a fire;
- Retain copies of all relevant documents, e.g. risk assessments, training certificates, all subject to GDPR.

## **EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES**

The Parish Council will consider which equipment is required for the employee to carry out their duties safely. The Parish Clerk will be responsible for arranging appropriate servicing of this equipment. The employee will ensure that it is maintained in good order. This equipment should be used solely for the business purpose of the Parish Council.

## **HOURS OF WORK**

The hours of work are specified in the Contract of Employment together with the expected pattern of working hours where relevant.

## **ANNUAL LEAVE/SICK LEAVE**

The Parish Clerk, on behalf of the Council, will maintain an adequate system of record keeping for requesting and the taking of holiday, to ensure that employees take their full entitlement of statutory leave. The Parish Clerk will liaise with the Chair regarding this.

The Parish Clerk on behalf of the Council will ensure that an adequate system for reporting sickness is in place to enable the Council to monitor the home-worker's well-being; The Parish Clerk will liaise with the Chair regarding this.

## **INSURANCE**

The Parish Clerk, on behalf of the Council, will ensure that all equipment supplied to a home-worker is covered by the employer's insurance policy.

## **POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed every three years or more frequently should regulatory or legislative changes necessitate a review.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Parish Clerk will ensure that all of the above points are in place for all employees, including themselves, and any relevant copies of documents are retained, subject to GDPR.

The Parish Clerk will add any review dates to the Council diary and ensure that these are Agenda items.

The Parish Clerk will review any necessary Health and Safety training required by Council employees and submit such a request to the Council.