DRAFT LONE WORKING POLICY

Document Control	
Prepared by:	Corporate Health and Safety
Title	Lone Working Policy
Status	Draft
Author	Claire Dodd
File Name	Z:\ehcg\Project Work\Lone Working
Document Owner	Nesta Henshaw
Keywords	Lone Working, Identicom, Potentially Violent Persons
Date of Review	10/12/2014

Revision History			
Version	**Date**	**By**	**Summary of Change**
1.0	16/12/2013	C.Dodd	Creation
1.0	02/01/2014	C.Dodd	Comments from CHSC incorporated

Approval Signature			
Name: Claire Dodd		Date	
Name: Nesta Henshaw		Date	

1. Introduction

1.1 The council recognises that it has a responsibility to provide a safe and healthy working environment and acknowledges that this includes dealing with the risks associated with lone working.

1.2 The council will endeavour to comply with the relevant legal requirements, as contained within the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and other applicable legislation and with the specific guidance note (INDG73) issued by the HSE.

2. Application

2.1 This policy is applicable to all employees who undertake lone working as part of their role and their supervisors.

2.2 A Lone worker is defined as "persons who works by themselves without close or direct supervision".

They may be found in a wide range of situations such as*:

- Officers undertaking site visits to places other than their normal place of employment e.g. pest control workers, environmental health, planners, housing officers and similar professionals visiting domestic and commercial premises

- Officers working separately from others, e.g. in isolated workspaces, park wardens

- Officers working outside normal hours, e.g. out of hours staff, maintenance or repair staff.

*This is not an exhaustive list

3. Legal Responsibilities

3.1 Working alone is not in itself against the law, and it will normally be safe to do so.

3.2 However, the law requires employers and others to think about and deal with any health and safety risks for those members of staff who are required to work alone.

3.3 Employers have responsibility for the health, safety and welfare at work of all of their employees. It is therefore the employer's duty to assess risks to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control risks where necessary.

3.4 Employees have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work activities and to co-operate with their employers in meeting their legal obligations.

3.5 This Policy is subject to the requirements laid out in the Legal Responsibilities which lays out the Councils duties under the Data Protection Act.

4 Risk Assessment

4.1 Employers need to investigate the potential hazards faced by lone workers and assess the risks involved both to the lone worker and to any person who may be affected by their work. Employers should ensure that measures are in place to control or avoid such risks.

4.2 Risk assessments of lone working activities are to be undertaken, recorded and monitored on Target 100. A global risk assessment has been created in Target 100 for lone working, this can be used as a starting point for service specific risk assessments, and a copy is attached as Appendix 1. This details the control measures that are currently utilised by Council and Managers can determine the appropriateness of these for their staff's particular activities such control measures will include at least some of the following:-.

- Signing in/out system
- Mobile Telephones
- Homeworkers- maintaining contact with their office
- Emergency systems / arrangements in place
- Specific training
- Potentially Violent Persons Database (ref 5)
- Personal Protective Equipment
- First Aid Provision
- Out of Office Hours Arrangements
- Identicom Device (ref 6)
- Lone Worker best practice guidance (ref Appendix 2)

5 Potentially violent persons

5.1 Database of potentially violent persons/premises is held by the Corporate Health and Safety Officer and circulated to visiting officers. Officers are required to check this prior to visiting any of these premises, and contact the Corporate Health and Safety Officer for further details prior to visiting.

5.2 Report any incident of verbal abuse, violence or aggression utilising the form on Target 100 or intranet health and safety pages.

6 Identicom

6.1 Where the individual risk assessment has identified that additional control measures are required through the provision and use of a personal protection device, the Council chosen system is the 'Identicom' lone worker protection device, which is supported by 'Guardian 24' Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC).

6.2 An Identicom is a specialist Lone Worker Device. It is uniquely designed as an identity card holder.

6.3 It allows the employee to discreetly raise an alert by pressing the panic button on the back of the device. This opens an audio channel to the ARC in the event of verbal abuse, attack or if the employee feels that their safety is about to be compromised.

6.4 Guardian24 (G24) operate the ARC which receives and responds to the alarms raised with the Identicom unit.

6.5 Guidance on the use of the Identicom device is provided in Appendix 3.

6.6 Escalation procedures

The ARC will respond appropriately to an alarm received and the activity that they hear. This could include calling the Police or other emergency services.

6.6.1 Role of the Respondent

If you are contacted by the ARC, this will be as a result of them being unable to contact the Lone Worker on the telephone numbers that they provided. Your role is to provide support for the ARC whether this be by completing actions listed in Appendix 4 and 5 or whether you request that they contact the Emergency Services on behalf of the Council.

6.6.2 Call to the lone worker (if not calling the Police).

ARC will call the lone worker on mobile number provided to talk to the lone worker at the situation or enable stand down of alarm.

6.6.3 Normal Office Hours

If the Lone Worker cannot be contacted via their Contact Details (Work and Personal) then the escalation procedure listed below will be activated, calls will be made until a respondent from the Council can be contacted.

- Call 1 – Line/Business Manager
- Call 2 – Head of Service
- Call 3 – Corporate Health & Safety Officer
- Call 4 – Head of Environmental Services

If the lone worker cannot be located/contacted using the above process, the person receiving the call will contact the Executive Director to inform them that the police are to be alerted.

6.6.4   Out of Office Hours

If the Lone Worker cannot be contacted via their Contact Details (Work and Personal) then the escalation procedure listed below will be activated, calls will be made until a respondent from the Council can be contacted.

- Call 1 – Out of Office Hours On Call staff, i.e. other staff on the rota (through Cannock)
- Call 2 – Director on Call (through Cannock)
- Call 3 – Any other Director/Chief Executive

6.6.5   Contacting the Emergency Services

ARC to only contact the police –

- if advised by the Council Respondent to do so, or
- if the user has pressed the alarm and there is evidence of an emergency situation taking place

Note – If panic activation is raised and is a genuine emergency, ARC to perform GPS check if available, contact the police and inform the Council.

6.6.6   GPS checks will only be undertaken for Health & Safety purposes i.e. to trace a potentially missing officer or in response to an alarm call.

*****************6.6.7 to be potentially moved to Appendix 4 and 5*********************

6.6.7   Upon receiving a call the responding officer should follow the advice given by the ARC whilst considering undertaking some of the actions listed below

- log on to Guardian 24 portal to review incident recordings and the last GPS signal recorded
- provide further details on the address of the location the officer was last visiting
- contact the premises that the lone worker was last known to be at
- review of the signing in and out register
- review the electronic calendar of the lone worker
- contact the other team members to determine if they have had contact with the officer
- IF SAFE TO DO SO deploy two team members to the last known location of the officer
- Inform the Executive Director that the police have been called

Please also refer to Appendix 4 and Appendix 5 for Respondent Action Cards.

7. **Responsibility of Employees**

7.1 Employees have a responsibility to protect the health, safety and welfare of themselves and others.

7.2 Employees should familiarise themselves with the Lone Working Policy and associated documents and ensure that they adhere to the requirements of the Policy and service specific Risk Assessment

7.3 If an employee has been provided with an Identicom device (whether this be an individual device or a pooled device), it must be used at all times when undertaking a role.

7.4 Homeworkers are not exempt from the requirement to comply with this policy.

7.5 A good practice guide for lone worker safety is detailed in Appendix 3 – ensure that the practices are incorporated into the lone working practices risk assessments.

7.6 Lone workers should be mindful that there is an increasing risk of allegations made by Members of the Public about the behaviour/conduct of officers of the Council. Officers are advised that they should familiarise themselves with section 16 of the Code of Conduct. If whilst carrying out duties as a Lone Worker, employees feel that a complaint or allegation could be made against them, they should record the details of the incident as soon as possible and report this to their line manager.

8. **Responsibility of Line/Business Manager or Head of Service**

8.1 Although lone workers cannot be subject to constant supervision, it is still an employer's duty to ensure they are healthy and safe at work. Supervision can help to ensure that employees understand the risks associated with their work and that the necessary health and safety precautions are carried out.

8.2 The extent of supervision required depends on the risks involved and the ability of the lone worker to identify and handle health and safety issues. Employees new to a job, undergoing training, doing a job that presents special risks, or dealing with new situations may need to be accompanied at first.

8.3 The level of supervision required is a management decision, which should be based on the findings of a risk assessment; the higher the risk, the greater the level of supervision required. It should not be left to individuals to decide whether they require assistance.

8.4 Ensuring that all work-related hazards are identified, suitable and sufficient risk assessment undertaken and appropriate control measures put into place and undertake monitoring and review of risk assessments.

8.5   Prepare and circulate an appropriate rota or service specific rules for the use of pooled devices.

8.6   Procedures must be put in place to monitor lone workers to help keep them healthy and safe. These may include:

- Supervisors periodically visiting and observing people working alone;
- Regular contact between the lone worker and supervisor, using either mobile phones, telephones, radios or e-mail, bearing in mind the worker's understanding of English;
- Identicom devices designed to raise the alarm in an emergency, these can be operated manually or automatically by the absence of activity;
- Warning devices which operate if specific signals are not received periodically from the lone worker, e.g. staff security systems;
- Checks to ensure a lone worker has returned to their base or home once their task is completed.
- Respond to call from ARC when received.
- Update and maintain correct personal details on Guardian 24 web portal.
- Respond and review any incidents or near misses reported by staff.

9   Non-Compliance

9.1   Any infringement of these rules by an employee may result in appropriate disciplinary action, which will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's disciplinary procedure.

10.   Review

10.1   The Council will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and its general compliance within the organisation.

10.2   It is the responsibility of all managers/supervisors to ensure that their staff are aware of the content of the policy and to monitor compliance.

10.3   Any problems or complaints from staff on the operation of the policy should be raised in the first instance with their line manager. If it is not resolved then the Council's grievance procedure should be referred to.

10.4   This policy will be kept up to date and amended accordingly to reflect any changes in response to revised legislation and applicable standards and guidelines. Trade Unions and health and safety representatives will be consulted regarding any substantive changes.

Appendix 1 – Lone Working Risk Assessment Template

Risk Assessment

[31.4.2] © 2008 Business Safety Systems Ltd

Section A1 - Assessment Information

Assessment reference number	Global/003		Assessor	Kate Bartels
Assessment date	13/12/2013		Review date	12/12/2014
Activity / item / area	Lone Working - Officers making site/home visits		Monitoring frequency	Annual
Persons at risk	Lone workers/Visiting Officers		Authorised by	CH&S committee

Section A2 - Hazard Table

Degree Of Risk

High	Med	Low	
			A. Falling
			B. Tripping / slipping
			C. Trapping
			D. Flying particles
			E. Fire / flammable atmosphere*
			F. Oxygen enrichment
			G. Collapse
			H. Overturning
			I. Electric shock
			J. Moving machinery parts*
			K. Moving vehicles
			L. Drowning
			M. Noise
			N. Substances / chemicals / fumes / dusts*
			O. Burns
			P. Bursting / explosion risk
			Q. Vibration
			R. Oxygen depletion
			S. Protruding objects / parts
			T. Asphyxiation

Degree Of Risk

High	Med	Low	
			U. Handling*
			V. Respiratory
			W. Personal Health
			X. Struck by falling objects
X			Y. Lone working
	X		Z. Violence / aggression
	X		AA. Stress*
			BB. Heating / ventilation
			CC. Asbestos*
		X	DD. Lone working at home
	X		EE. Lone working on site
X			FF. Lone working outside of office hours
X			GG. Lone working in enforcement role
			HH.
			II.
			JJ.
			KK.
			LL.
			MM.
			NN.

* May require futher in-depth assessment, e.g. Fire, COSHH, Manual Handling. For guidance, see 'Risk Assessment Techniques' in Background Information

Section M1 - Monitoring Information

Person carrying out monitoring			Department / location	
Monitoring date			Checked by	

Section A3 - Control Measures   Section M2 - Monitoring Scores

Signing in/out system in operation - location and duration recorded and monitoring by line manager.	
Mobile phones provided for employees.	
Home-based officers making visits keep in regular contact with office.	
Emergency systems/arrangements in place for monitoring/follow up by line manager.	
Specific training in dealing with aggression provided for lone workers.	
Potentially violent persons list currently circulated to visiting staff.	
Two officer visits undertaken.	
Violence/bullying/harassment policy in place and adhered to.	
Officers making site visits supplied with appropriate PPE (eg hi-vis jacket, hard hat, safety boots/shoes etc)	
Special first aid provision made & individual first aid kits provided.	
Return to base/homechecks.	
Regular phone contact with lone worker.	
Lone working policy in place and adhered to.	
Good practice guide & risk assessments in place and shared with all relevant staff.	
ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO CONSIDER (SERVICE/ROLE SPECIFIC)	
Lone working is at home/on site/evenings/enforcement (Choose relevant and appropriate risk level)	
Work activities include enforcement/ potentailly conflict situation / advisory visit (delete as appropraite)	
Identicom (personal protective devices) issued to all identified staff.	
Prepare and circulate an appropriate rota or service specific rules for the use of pooled devices.	

Evaluation / score %

Section M3 - Further Actions Required

Appendix 2 – Guidance Note for Lone Workers

What is a Lone Worker?

A Lone Worker is defined as *"persons who works by themselves without close or direct supervision"*

How can I stay safe whilst Lone Working?

In addition to your service specific Risk Assessment, listed below is some further advice on how you can stay safe whilst you are lone working.

Frontline (Office Based Staff)

- Ensure you have a means of communicating with others.
- Ensure that you position yourself so that if needed you can leave the room/area quickly.
- Some form of emergency alarm system should be in place which will enable you to summon assistance if necessary.
- Ensure that if the alarm is raised, colleagues are aware of the response procedure and it is regularly tested.
- Make sure that any cash is kept out of sight.

Visiting Officers

- Refer to the premises file history before you leave, to determine if there are any issues you need to be aware of.
- Where applicable ensure that your Identicom device and mobile telephone are fully charged.
- Ensure that you have completed the signing out register.
- Give some thought before you arrive as to what exit strategies you could use if you felt uncomfortable or threatened.
- Conduct your own (dynamic) risk assessment on the door step before you enter. If you feel at all uncomfortable or unsure, make an excuse and leave. **Trust your instincts**.
- Be mindful of the fact that you are entering someone else's territory. Your presence there may be unwanted and/or pose a threat.
- As you enter, make a note of how the door opens and closes so that you can leave quickly, if necessary.

– Give the client an idea of how long the meeting will take and try to adhere to this.

Driving

– Put together an emergency kit for your car. This might include an extra coat, bottle water, a torch, spare change and an emergency mobile telephone charger.

– If you will be returning after dark, consider what the area will be like then and try to park near street lights.

– When parking in a car park, consider where the entrances and exits are. Try to avoid having to walk across a lonely car park to get to your car. Park away from pillars/barriers. If you can, reverse into your space so you can drive away easily.

– When approaching your car, be aware of your surroundings; have your keys ready and check that no one is inside before entering quickly.

– If you break down, check out your surroundings and only get out of your car when and if you feel it is safe to do so.

– Road rage incidents are rare and can often be avoided by not responding to aggression from other drivers.

– If the driver of another car forces you to stop and then gets out of his/her car, stay in your car, keep the engine running and if you need to, reverse to get away

Using Public Transport

– Obtain timetable and fare information before travelling to prevent you waiting around for long periods at bus stops or stations.

– When waiting for public transport after dark, try to wait in well-lit areas and near emergency alarms and CCTV cameras.

– If you work for an organisation that receives unwelcome attention from the public, try to hide anything that would make you identifiable as an employee the Council

Walking

- Plan ahead. Before you go out, think about how you are going to get home, e.g. what time does the last bus/train leave?
- Avoid danger spots like quiet or badly-lit alleyways, subways or isolated car parks. Walk down the middle of the pavement if the street is deserted.
- Try to use well-lit, busy streets and use the route you know best.
- Try to walk against oncoming traffic to avoid kerb crawlers.

Appendix 3 – Identicom User Guide

Turning your Identicom ON and OFF

Turn on
- Press and hold the status button and the amber alert button (the two small buttons on the back left of the device as in image below).
- The device will vibrate once and the LED will flash.

Turn off
- Press and hold both the status button and the amber alert button for a couple of seconds.
- The device will vibrate twice. The LED will not flash.
- Amber Alert Button

Status Button on the Identicom

- To check the status of your Identicom battery and GPS signal levels press and hold the status button for a few seconds.
- The device will vibrate three times, before first showing the battery status, and then will vibrate once more showing the network status. An LED light will also settle on Green, Amber or Red.

   Note: A regular status check is important to ensure the Identicom has sufficient battery charge and network coverage to operate effectively.

What the LED colours tell you

BATTERY LED
- **Amber** – Greater than 40% charged
- **Red** – Less than 40% charged, place on a charger as soon as possible

NETWORK SIGNAL
- **Green** – Excellent network coverage
- **Amber** – Reasonable network coverage
- **Red** – Poor or No network coverage
- **Note:** Extra caution should be taken when **RED LED** is displayed.

GPS Status Check

After the normal status check has been completed the device will enter GPS status mode

- The LED will flash **blue** whilst the GPS signal is assessed (this can take up to 2 minutes).
- If a GPS fix is found the LED **blue** light will be solid for at least 5 seconds and a satellite will be shown in the LED display.
- If a GPS fix is **not** found the LED **blue** will extinguish.

Call Log

This is when you log a brief verbal statement made by you, stating details of your current or next activity.

Follow these steps to leave an Amber Alert recording:

- Press and hold the Amber Alert button. The unit will vibrate three times and the indicator light will move to steady amber.
- When the amber lights begin to flash, speak clearly into the Identicom stating the details of your activity. Leave relevant information that may help in case of emergency. (I.e. high risk visit, violent behaviour in the past etc.)
- Where possible include the following information:
  - **Your name**
  - **Where you are going i.e. address**
  - **Who you are visiting**
  - **When you expect to be finished**
- When the indicator lights stop flashing and change to display a steady amber colour, you will have ten seconds left to make your recording.
- The recording window lasts for approximately 30 seconds after which the indicator lights will go out.

Raise an Alarm via the Identicom

- Press and hold the panic button (centre button on the back of the device) for a few seconds to raise an alert.
- The device will vibrate 3 times to indicate that the alert has been activated.
- After approximately 15 seconds your respondent will be alerted and will be listening in live.
- Where possible give as much information about your situation to help your respondent react with the appropriate response.

   Note: If the unit does not vibrate 3 times there may be a problem with network coverage – try again until you feel a vibration

Important Points to Note

- − Charge your Identicom daily as you would a mobile phone.
- − You cannot activate a panic alert while the Identicom is on charge.

Minimising False Alerts
- − If you raise a false alert, speak your name into mobile phone and say 'This is a false alert.' It is essential that you also call your respondent to confirm that you are safe.
- − If you are travelling to an area with poor network coverage please mention this in your waypoint.
- − Ensure your device is switched off when you are not lone working.

Discreet methods to convey relevant information to you responder
- − In the event you need emergency assistance and you have not logged an activity try to speak details of where you are. Even the clients name may be useful to check against company records.
- − Do not hold your Identicom to your face. The microphone will pick up any background noise when close you.
- − Where possible have your Identicom accessible to raise an alert discretely.

Appendix 4 -   Council Respondent's Action Card

To be completed

Appendix 5 – Director on Call Action Card

To be Completed