

Stoneleigh & Ashow Health and Safety Policy (including home working policy)

This policy was adopted by the Parish Council on 9th May 2019 and will be reviewed annually.

Introduction

Stoneleigh & Ashow Parish Council recognises its responsibilities as an employer for providing a safe and healthy environment for all its employees, contractors, voluntary helpers and others who may be affected by the activities of the Council.

The Council will make every effort to meet its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and will have regard to health and safety legislation, approved Codes of Practice, Guidance Notes and other relevant information issued by the Health and Safety Executive.

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that Stoneleigh & Ashow Parish Council provides, as far as is reasonably practicable:

- A safe place to work and a safe working environment
- Sufficient information, instruction and training for employees, contractors and voluntary helpers to carry out their work safely
- Care and attention to health, safety and welfare of employees, contractors, voluntary helpers and members of the public who may be affected by the Council's activities

Responsibilities

- The ultimate responsibility for health and safety rests with the Councillors of Stoneleigh & Ashow Parish Council. Day to day responsibility for implementation is delegated to the Clerk. However, all employees have responsibility for health and safety matters during their day to day duties.

Responsibilities of the Clerk

The Clerk will:

- Keep informed of relevant Health and Safety Policy legislation and inform the Council accordingly.
- Ensure sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable all employees to identify and avoid hazards.
- Ensure that regular risk assessments are carried out where required.
- Maintain a record of risk assessments.
- Make effective arrangements to ensure that contractors or voluntary helpers working for the Council comply with all reasonable health and safety at work requirements.
- Maintain a central record of notified accidents.
- Ensure that the workplace and equipment is subjected to regular health and safety checks.
- When an accident or hazardous incident occurs take immediate action to prevent a recurrence or further accident and to complete the necessary accident reporting procedure.

- Any health and safety issues that cannot be addressed adequately should be referred to the Chairman of the Parish Council or if he/she is unavailable to the Vice Chairman.

Responsibilities of Councillors, employees, contractors and voluntary helpers

- Councillors, employees, contractors and voluntary helpers will:
- Cooperate fully with the aims and requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Policy and comply with Codes of Practice or work instructions for health and safety.
- Familiarise themselves and ask for advice (where considered necessary) in relation to health and safety instructions.
- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety, use appropriate personal protective clothing and, where appropriate, ensure the appropriate First Aid materials are available.
- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of other people who may be affected by their activities.
- Not intentionally interfere with or remove safety guards, safety devices or other equipment provided for health and safety.
- Not misuse any plant, equipment, tools or materials so as to cause risks to health and safety.
- Report hazards and defects to the Clerk immediately. If reports are made verbally, they should be followed up by a written report confirming the nature of the problem, its severity and any recommendation for action.
- Report any accidents or hazardous incidents to the Clerk immediately or as soon as is reasonably practicable and to assist with the investigation of such.

Home Working

The business of the Parish Clerk is conducted primarily from home. The law requires employers to consider carefully and deal with any of the Health and Safety risks for employees working from home. The Health and Safety Executive considers office work to be a low risk type of work.

As an employee the clerk has responsibility to take reasonable care of his / her own Health and Safety and the Health and Safety of others affected by what they may do.

It is the clerk's responsibility to report all employment related incidents or hazards to the Parish Council Chair.

As an employer the Parish Council has a duty to report and keep a record of certain accidents, injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences. There is also a duty under social security legislation to record accidents involving personal injury (the Statutory Accident Book requirement).

The Parish Council has overall responsibility for ensuring there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing the risk associated with home working. The Parish Council's Risk Assessment requires the clerk to undertake a risk questionnaire relating to the risks arising of the use of his / her home as an office not less than every four years. The result of the questionnaire is to be reported to the parish council and any issues arising from this are to be reviewed and actioned. If deemed necessary an inspection will be undertaken by a councillor with prior notification and agreement with the clerk. The Office Risk Assessment Questionnaire is based on the template downloaded from the Health and Safety Executive website.

The clerk is encouraged to access to the free leaflets on the HSE website - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/leaflets.html>, in particular relating to Home Working, Manual Handling, Computers / Working with Display Screen Equipment

The council recognises the need of the clerk as a home-based worker to be “kept in the loop”. Regular meetings are scheduled with the chair to discuss work progress, issues etc. and give feedback on performance. The chair is also approachable by phone and email.

The Council will ensure measures are in place preventing the Clerk from being isolated from the rest of his/her professional community. Means are in place as part of the job description for membership of the professional body, the Society of Local Council Clerks. Attendance at appropriate training and events organised by the District and County Councils and WALC is encouraged.

Policy Review

Stoneleigh & Ashow Parish Council will review this Policy as is necessary and appropriate, and at a minimum on an annual basis.