

HOOE PARISH COUNCIL

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HOMEWORKING POLICY

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1. Policy

This policy describes the working arrangements and expectations that will apply if you work from home.

2. Safe Working Environment

Health and safety for home-based employees applies in the same way as office-based employees, insofar as is reasonably practicable, that you work in a safe manner and that you follow all health and safety instructions issued by the parish council.

A '**Home Based Workers Risk Assessment**' must be undertaken for home based workers. This is a checklist for you to identify any possible hazards in your home working area. Following completion of the checklist, measures may need to be taken to control any risks identified. This checklist should be completed annually, or more frequently if there are any changes to your arrangements such as new equipment or changes to your home-office space.

The clerk must complete and submit a **Workstation Risk Assessment** and ensure that this remains up-to-date. If the clerk has any questions about the risk assessment, or if the clerk identifies any potential risks when carrying out the assessment, this must be referred to the chairman of the parish council in the first instance.

Some of the most important considerations include:

- If possible, an area should be set aside from the rest of your living space to ensure that you are able to work from home without distractions
- Your home office should have adequate space for you to work safely and comfortably
- Your desk should be large enough to accommodate your equipment and paperwork
- You should have sufficient storage and your workspace should be organised so equipment is close to hand
- Your work area should be well lit, with natural lighting if possible
- Equipment and sockets should be situated to avoid potential trip hazards
- You must also ensure that you visually check the cables of any electronic equipment supplied to you regularly (and at least every 6 months) and report any defects

3. Facilities and Equipment

The parish council will provide you with the following equipment for you to work from home and we will maintain and replace these items when necessary.

- Laptop computer and mouse
- Printer (not used – not adequate)
- Mobile telephone

It is the duty of the clerk to ensure that proper care is taken of the equipment provided and used by the clerk and to let the parish council know of any need to maintain or

replace the equipment. Should the risk assessment identify any further equipment that is necessary, please refer this to the parish council.

All equipment provided by the parish council is for you to work safely and effectively at home and cannot be used for personal use by you or your family.

All equipment will belong to the parish council, and you will be required to return it to us promptly should you leave our employment. If we are unable to make suitable arrangements, we may collect the equipment and any documents before your last day.

4. Hours of Work

As a home based worker, the contract of employment will specify the total hours to be worked but not on set days as the hours worked is work driven. There may be times during the working day when the home based worker is not available, or not officially working so an automated email should be generated to the person contacting you advising them of the situation. The same applies for mobile phone calls, a message must state the position. The chairman should be aware of any formal absence.

The home based worker must take adequate rest breaks which should be as a minimum:

- A break of at least 20 minutes during each working day over 6 hours
- A daily rest break of at least 11 continuous hours, i.e. the time between stopping work one day and beginning work the next day
- At least one complete day each week when no work is done

5. Potential Conflicts of Interest

During the hours of work, the parish council expects the work environment to work effectively and that the home based worker is not distracted by domestic matters. If there is an emergency and the home based worker needs to attend to a non-work matter, then they should notify the chairman of the parish council as soon as possible.

6. Data Protection

As a home-worker you are responsible for keeping all documents and information associated with the council secure at all times. Specifically, homeworkers are under a duty to:

- Keep filing cabinets and drawers locked when they are not being used,
- Keep all documentation belonging to us in the locked filing cabinet at all times except when in use,
- Set up and use a unique password for the laptop computer, and,
- Ensure that documents are saved to the server and not to the laptop computer's hard drive.

Furthermore, the laptop computer and other equipment provided by us must be used only for work-related purposes and must not be used by any other member of the family at any time or for any purpose. A list of all appropriate passwords should be placed in a sealed and the envelope signed by the clerk and given to the chairman of the parish council for safe keeping. The envelope detailing the passwords may only

be opened in the presence of two councillors and only in justifiable circumstances as required by law.

If the home based worker has telephone conversation where confidential work matters are discussed, you must ensure that such calls take place in privacy to avoid inadvertent breach of confidentiality.

7. Insurance, Mortgage or Rental Agreements

Whilst our Employer's Liability Insurance extends to home based employees, and any parish council equipment installed in your home will also be covered, the home based worker should ensure that any agreement with their landlord or mortgage lender allows them to work from home, and that your house buildings and contents insurance will be covered as an employee working from home.