

**HEYBRIDGE BASIN PARISH COUNCIL**

**Homeworking Policy**

**Policy**

The Parish Council recognises the benefits and responsibilities of home-based working for its employees. This policy outlines the procedures, expectations, and requirements for home-based work to ensure a safe, efficient, and professional working environment.

The Parish Council Clerk is primarily required to work from home.

**Health and Safety**

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA) applies to all employees, including home-workers. The Parish Council is committed to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of its home-based employees. Relevant regulations include:

* The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR).
* The Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992.
* The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992.
* The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER).
* The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended) (COSHH).

**Risk Assessments**

* Employees must complete and submit a Home-Based Workers Risk Assessment and a Workstation Risk Assessment to the Personnel Committee. These assessments identify hazards and ensure proper control measures are in place.
* Risk assessments must be updated annually or when circumstances change (e.g., new equipment or changes to the workspace).
* Key considerations include:
	+ A dedicated work area, separate from living spaces, free from distractions.
	+ Adequate space, lighting, and storage for safe and comfortable work.
	+ Safe arrangement of equipment and cables to avoid trip hazards.
* The Council reserves the right to inspect the home workspace for health and safety purposes with prior notice.

**Facilities and equipment**

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

* Office chair
* Filing cabinet (which will be lockable for those staff who hold personal data)
* Printer/photocopier
* Laptop computer
* Laminating machine
* Mobile telephone

It is your duty to ensure that proper care is taken of the equipment provided to you and to let the Personnel Committee know of any need to maintain or replace the equipment. Should the risk assessment identify any further equipment that is necessary, please discuss this with the Personnel Committee.

Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) must be conducted annually on all Council provided electronic equipment.

All equipment will belong to the 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.

**Hours of work**

Employees’ working hours are specified in their contract of employment and must be communicated to the Chair of the Personnel Committee if changes occur.

You must be mindful to take adequate rest breaks which should be, as a minimum:

* At least 20 minutes during a working day exceeding six hours.
* A daily rest break of 11 continuous hours between workdays.
* At least one full day off each week.

**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 all documents and information secure, including locking filing cabinets and setting strong passwords.
* Save work documents to the Council’s server rather than local devices.
* Ensure confidentiality during phone calls and other communications.

**Visits to work premises**

On occasions we may need to attend council offices for training, performance assessment meetings, team briefings etc. This will normally not be frequent, and the dates and times of such visits will be agreed in advance.

**Insurance, mortgage or rental agreements**

Whilst our Employer’s Liability Insurance extends to home-based staff, and any council equipment installed in your home will also be covered, you should ensure that any agreement with your landlord or mortgage lender allows you to work from home, and that your house buildings and contents insurance will not be invalidated by you working from home.

**Monitoring and Review**

The Parish Council will annually review risks and hazards associated with homeworking as part of its overall risk assessment policy.

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| **Reviewed and approved:** | **Minute:** |
| Tuesday 11th February 2025 | 24/170 c |