



24-25 Item 13e

## Working from Home Policy & Procedure

### 1. Purpose of this Policy

Northaw & Cuffley Parish Council recognises that many staff may work from home and is committed to ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of all employees working in this environment. The purpose of this policy is to:

- Outline the council's approach to working from home.
- Identify potential risks associated with homeworking.
- Ensure reasonable precautions are taken to minimise risks.
- Provide support and guidance to staff working from home.
- Encourage the reporting of any issues or incidents related to homeworking.

### 2. Scope of this Policy

This policy applies to all employees of Northaw & Cuffley Parish Council, whether full-time, part-time, or temporary, who undertake work from home. It does not apply to councillors.

### 3. Policy

Northaw & Cuffley Parish Council is committed to supporting employees who work from home. Working from home is not inherently risky, but the council has a responsibility to ensure that any potential risks are identified and minimised, as far as is reasonably practicable.

The council will consider and address health and safety issues arising from homeworking through proper risk assessment and support.

### 4. Definition

A "Homeworker" refers to an employee who carries out their work tasks from their home, rather than from the council office or another designated place of work. This may include:

- Administrative staff working remotely.
- Employees undertaking specific tasks that do not require office presence.

### 5. Responsibilities

#### a) Council Responsibilities

- **Risk Assessment:** Ensure that working from home arrangements are subject to risk assessment to identify potential risks, such as ergonomic or safety issues. Appropriate control measures will be put in place to reduce these risks.



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- **Equipment and Resources:** Ensure that employees are provided with suitable equipment, where necessary, to carry out their duties from home. This may include laptops, phones, or other essential tools.
- **Communication:** Maintain regular contact with staff working from home to monitor their well-being and provide support.
- **Health and Safety Training:** Provide guidance on maintaining health and safety while working from home, such as ergonomic practices, to minimise the risk of injury.
- **Monitoring and Review:** Regularly review homeworking arrangements and ensure employees are encouraged to report any concerns regarding their homeworking environment.

### b) Employee Responsibilities

- **Self-care:** Employees working from home must take reasonable care of their own health and safety, ensuring that their work environment is safe and suitable for work.
- **Workstation Setup:** Ensure that their home office or workspace is set up ergonomically to avoid strain or injury, particularly with respect to seating, screen height, and lighting.
- **Equipment Maintenance:** Use council-provided equipment responsibly and report any faults or issues promptly.
- **Communication:** Maintain regular communication with their line manager or designated contact, informing them of any changes in their working environment or health that may affect their work.
- **Incident Reporting:** Report any work-related accidents, injuries, or unsafe conditions to the council as soon as possible.

## 6. Risk Assessment and Control Measures

Northaw & Cuffley Parish Council will undertake risk assessments to address the following aspects of homeworking:

- **Workstation Ergonomics:** Ensure that employees have access to suitable furniture and equipment to maintain a safe and ergonomic work environment.
- **Electrical Safety:** Ensure that any council-provided electrical equipment used at home is properly maintained and used safely.
- **Fire Safety:** Employees should be aware of fire safety procedures within their home, and ensure that they are working in a safe, clutter-free environment.
- **Mental Health and Well-being:** Monitor the well-being of employees working from home and ensure they have access to mental health support if needed.

## 7. Health and Well-being

The council recognises that working from home can present unique challenges to employees' health and well-being, such as isolation or difficulty maintaining a work-life balance. To address this, the council will:

- Encourage regular breaks and a clear separation between work and personal life.



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- Support flexible working arrangements where possible to accommodate individual needs.
- Provide access to mental health resources and support.
- Monitor employee well-being through regular check-ins and meetings.

## 8. Reporting Incidents

Employees are encouraged to report any incidents or issues encountered while working from home, including:

- Accidents or injuries.
- Health and safety concerns (e.g., equipment issues, poor ergonomics).
- Work-related stress or mental health concerns.

All incidents should be recorded and reviewed to identify any necessary actions or adjustments to the homeworking environment.

## 9. Emergency Procedures

In case of an emergency, such as sudden illness or an accident while working from home, employees should:

- Call the emergency services if needed.
- Notify their line manager or a designated colleague as soon as possible.
- If the employee is unable to do so, ask a family member or friend to make contact on their behalf.

In non-emergency situations, such as a domestic emergency or feeling unwell, employees should inform their line manager if they need to alter their work plans.

## 10. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Employees working from home must continue to follow all data protection policies and procedures, ensuring that confidential information remains secure. This includes:

- Using secure council systems for storing and transferring information.
- Ensuring that documents containing sensitive information are kept secure and not left in open areas of the home.
- Reporting any potential breaches of confidentiality to the council.

## 11. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains effective and relevant to the needs of Northaw & Cuffley Parish Council staff. Any changes will be communicated to employees in a timely manner.

This policy is non-contractual and will be reviewed as necessary to ensure it remains fit for purpose.