

# **Weston in Gordano Parish Council Homeworking & Lone Working Policy**

This policy sets out the arrangements for homeworking and lone working by the Clerk at Weston in Gordano Parish Council, ensuring that working practices are clear, proportionate, and carried out safely. It recognises that the Clerk is the Council's sole employee and works primarily from home and alone. The policy formalises existing arrangements and has been reviewed to ensure that risks are appropriately identified and managed in a practical way suitable for a small parish council

## **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Support safe and effective homeworking and lone working by the Clerk
- Ensure compliance with health and safety, employment, data protection, and governance requirements
- Provide clarity on responsibilities, allowances, and management arrangements.

## **2. Scope**

This policy applies to the Parish Clerk, who is currently the only employee of the Council. Homeworking and lone working are the normal working arrangements for the role and are not considered discretionary benefits.

## **3. Homeworking and Lone Working Arrangement**

- The Clerk's home is designated as the primary place of work.
- The Council does not operate a permanently staffed office.
- Lone working includes working from home, attending meetings, site visits, and carrying out duties without direct supervision.
- The Clerk will attend Parish Council and Committee meetings, training, WIG Café, and site visits as required
- Any material change to this arrangement will be agreed by the Council.

## **4. Working Hours and Availability**

- The Clerk's contracted hours remain unchanged.
- Working hours are flexible and may include evening meetings.
- The Clerk will be contactable during normal working hours by telephone and email.
- When attending meetings or site visits alone, the Clerk will take reasonable steps to ensure personal safety, including advising a nominated person of their whereabouts where appropriate.

## **5. Equipment, Expenses and Allowances**

### **5.1 Equipment**

- The Council will provide or fund essential equipment required for the role (e.g. laptop, printer, software, and licences).
- All equipment remains the property of Weston in Gordano Parish Council and must be used primarily for Council business.
- The Clerk is responsible for the reasonable care and security of Council equipment.

### **5.2 Homeworking Allowance**

- The Parish Council may pay a homeworking allowance of up to £26 per month, in line with HMRC guidance, where the Clerk works from home on a regular and ongoing basis.
- Where the Clerk holds more than one employment and claims a homeworking allowance elsewhere, the allowance payable by Weston in Gordano Parish Council will be paid on a pro-rata basis, ensuring that the total allowance claimed across all employments does not exceed £26 per month.
- The Clerk must declare whether a homeworking allowance is being claimed from another employer and the amount claimed, to enable the correct pro-rata payment to be calculated.
- Any change in circumstances must be notified to the Council promptly.

### **5.3 Telephone and Internet Allowance**

- The Parish Council will pay a fixed allowance of £5 per month towards the cost of telephone and/or internet use for Council business.
- This allowance does not require the submission of itemised bills and is payable regardless of whether the homeworking allowance is claimed elsewhere.

#### **5.4 Review of Allowances**

Allowances will be reviewed periodically and may be amended or withdrawn if HMRC guidance changes or if working arrangements are altered.

#### **6. Data Protection and Confidentiality**

- The Clerk must comply at all times with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Council's Data Protection Policy.
- Council information and personal data must be stored securely and accessed only on Council-approved devices.
- Paper records should be kept to a minimum and stored securely when required.
- Screens, documents, and conversations must not be accessible to unauthorised persons within the home.

#### **7. Health and Safety**

- The Parish Council recognises its duty of care for the Clerk's health and safety while working from home.
- The Clerk will ensure that their workspace and working practices are safe and suitable.
- A basic homeworking and lone working risk assessment will be completed and reviewed periodically.
- Any work-related accidents, incidents, or safety concerns must be reported to the Employment Committee (or its delegated representative) as soon as reasonably practicable.

#### **8. Insurance**

- The Clerk is responsible for informing their home insurer that part of the property is used for work purposes, where required.
- The Council's insurance arrangements will cover employer's liability and Council-owned equipment as appropriate.

#### **9. Performance and Management**

- Homeworking and lone working do not alter performance expectations or accountability.
- Employment matters, including wellbeing, allowances, and performance management, are overseen by the Employment Committee (or its delegated representative).
- Appraisals and performance reviews will be conducted in line with Council policy and overseen by the Employment Committee.

#### **10. Review**

This policy will be reviewed:

- If there is a significant change in legislation or working arrangements, or
- At least every three to four years.

Version number	Purpose/change	Author	Date
0.1	Initial draft	LS	Dec 2025
0.2	Approved	LS	Jan 2026
0.3			