POLICY REVIEW RECORD

LONE WORKING POLICY	
Background	The Lone Working Policy was introduced in 2007 to detail the roles and responsibilities of managers and staff in controlling and minimising the risks from hazards associated with lone working. All employees of Moray Council, regardless of position or grade, are covered by the requirements of the Policy. In addition all agency, contract, volunteers and those working on placement are expected to adhere to them. Research and benchmarking has been undertaken against NHS, other Local Authorities and professional bodies outlining best practice from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Services (ACAS) and Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The Council's current policy meets all the standards and requirements in terms of both the legislation and is in line with the policies of other organisations. However, more work was required around the red flag/warning flag position and the arrangements for out of hours working/contacts. Whilst there is reference to both in the current Policy, consideration needed to be given as to whether a corporate position may be required in terms of the operation of both of these elements, which would apply across services. There also needed to be cross reference to service specific policies and arrangements that were already in place. For example, Health and Social Care Moray have in place a Policy which is a mirror of the Policy that is in place for NHS. However, consideration needed to be given as to whether this appropriately reflected what may be required to ensure the health and safety of lone workers in the parts of the service were there for Council employees.
Findings	Issues around lone working tend to be around the application of the policy in practice rather than issues with the policy per se. Given the diverse nature of Council services, roles and responsibilities, the main elements of the policy may have needed to be implemented in different ways according to the needs of the service, the way work is carried out and the systems and procedures that are already in place. There was unlikely to be a one size fits all solution to the range of issues that are encountered by lone workers. The particular issue of a "red flag/warning flag" system had been raised at Central Health and Safety Committee and is something that needed to be given further consideration in the context of lone working. There is reference in the current Policy to this matter, however, this section required to be updated and consideration given as to the specific parameters around how such a system could operate in practice. There are links with the work being carried out on the Standby/OOHS issues and any requirements in relation to lone workers needed to be taken

	account of.
	It was therefore recommended that a low level review of the Lone Working Policy was completed and that further work is undertaken to ensure the practical application and implementation of the Policy as appropriate across services.
	<u>Suggestions for improvement included:</u>
	Policy content:
	Update and refresh wording, update examples of lone workers, refer to further detailed guidance and training required.
	Structure:
	Short Policy Statement – generic and applies to all services More detailed procedures – generic where applicable and signposting to other relevant procedures where appropriate and more specific, tailored procedures are agreed, e.g. HSCM (which mirrors NHS Policy) and Education.
	Refresh guidance for managers and employees
	Further considerations:
	It was considered that the Policy fundamentally remained fit for purpose, with a few amendments to bring it up to date. However, there are issues with ensuring that the Policy commitments are following through into practice on the ground and an outline action plan has been drafted to ensure that there is appropriate implementation of the Policy. This will involve auditing the current position, and enhancing practical guidance to managers and employees as well as ensuring appropriate training provision. In addition, the particular arrangements around a red flag/warning flag system required further detailed work and the out of hours issues required to be picked up in the review of out of hours provision across services.
	A short survey monkey survey of managers of lone workers was being considered to provide some base information for the audit of the current position.
Implications	The suggested changes will refresh the current Policy and ensure that appropriate protocols and safe systems of work are not only in place but are applied and implemented across services to ensure the health and safety of lone workers.