

COLNEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

- ✉ **Postal Address:** Highfield Park Visitor Centre, Hill End Lane AL4 0RA
- ☎ **Telephone:** (01727) 825 314
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ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY

1. Introduction

This Policy aims to ensure that equal and fair treatment is applied as far as possible to employees who are unable to attend work, or who have to work a shorter day than normal, due to adverse weather conditions. While accepting that employees should not take unreasonable risks in attempting to get to work in difficult conditions, Colney Heath Parish Council believes there should not be any disincentive to employees who make a particular effort. In the event of adverse weather conditions therefore, all employees are expected to make every effort to fulfil their contractual obligation to report for work and attend for their normal contracted hours.

However, in circumstances when:-

- adverse weather conditions are extremely hazardous and hinder or prevent employees from reporting to their normal place of work; or
- weather conditions deteriorate significantly whilst employees are at work, so that delaying travel home until normal leaving time would be unsafe

This Policy and procedures below must be followed. The Parish Council acknowledges that individual circumstances will vary greatly and therefore it is unlikely that this Policy will cover all eventualities. Management discretion may be necessary if there are exceptional circumstances.

2. Definitions

'Adverse weather' covers conditions such as snow, ice, fog, floods which cause extremely hazardous journeys by road, by both public and private transport. 'Extremely hazardous' is defined as those conditions in which the police and/or appropriate motoring organisations advise people not to make unnecessary journeys or indeed travel at all.

3. Scope of Policy

This Policy applies to all Colney Heath Parish Council employees.

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4. Weather preventing travel to work

As explained above when there are adverse weather conditions employees are still expected to make every reasonable effort to get to work, including adapting means of travel if necessary, even if this means arriving late. Local radio advice and local weather forecasts should be used as guidance as to whether it is recommended as safe to travel. If an employee is unable, despite attempting to do so, to get to work because of the adverse weather conditions the Parish Council must be notified within one hour of the usual start time and one of the options in set out below agreed in respect of the lost time. If an employee fails to notify the Parish Council that they are unable to attend work it will be treated as unauthorised absence and therefore be unpaid.

5. Deteriorating weather whilst at work

In the event of a significant deterioration of weather conditions likely to cause unsafe travelling home at normal time and an employee wishes to leave work early because of the adverse weather the Clerk or senior person present, in consultation, if possible, with the Chair and/or Vice Chair of the Council, has the discretion to determine whether or not employees should be allowed to leave work, based upon the circumstances. In the event of the employee leaving work earlier than usual with such permission they will do so without having to make up any time lost and given a normal day's pay.

6. Office/worksite closed due to adverse weather by management

In exceptional circumstances of adverse weather, a decision may be made by the Clerk to close the Parish Council Offices or other work site and to find alternative work or work locations or if this is not possible to then or tell them not to arrive for work. In these circumstances employees will be required to make up lost hours or take paid leave.

7. Management options

The Parish Council will reasonably expect all staff to attempt to arrive at their place of work using the most appropriate means. The Parish Council will pay all employees who made it to work despite adverse weather conditions, irrespective of whether it was open or closed, full normal pay for the day. However, contact should be made with the Parish Council in case alternative work or work locations can be provided.

The following options will be considered when the Parish Council premises are open and employees do not attend or are late for work in all other circumstances

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as a result of adverse weather and agree with the employee which of the following will apply:-

- work at an agreed alternative location;
- make up the lost time or period of absence at a mutually acceptable future date;
- take annual leave equivalent to the lost time or period of absence;
- take unpaid leave equivalent to the lost time or period of absence.

8. Continuing adverse weather

The nature of this Policy is to cater for initial, emergency situations. However, it is recognised that in some instances adverse weather may continue and alternative working arrangements will need to be planned by the Council. In this situation other Parish Council policies may also need to be referred to e.g. the Parish Council family friendly policies if schools are closed and employees need to take time off to look after children. In these circumstances an employee's individual situation should be discussed with the Clerk.

9. Adverse weather preventing a return to work from a holiday destination

If adverse weather prevents an employee from returning to work from holiday, they should make contact at the earliest opportunity with the Clerk and let him know that their return to work is delayed and when the likely return date will be. On return to work the Clerk will discuss how this leave can be best treated and depending on the circumstances one of the options above will be agreed.

10. Recording any absence due to adverse weather

The employee's Parish Council Annual Leave Application Form must be used to record absence due to adverse weather, clearly stating that the reason for absence was because of the weather conditions.

11. Review

This Policy and procedures will be reviewed periodically by the Council to ensure that they are effective and, as appropriate, to reflect any statutory change.

This policy was adopted 27th February 2023 for a period of 2 years or until legislation changes.