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## Adverse Weather Policy

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### 1 Introduction

This policy defines the way in which the Town council approaches adverse weather conditions. Adverse weather conditions include any condition such as high winds, heatwaves, snow, ice, fog, floods etc which render work activities or journeys by public transport and private transport hazardous. As a guide, but not limited to, these conditions would be such in which the Police and motoring organisations advise people not to make unnecessary journeys or travel at all.

### 2 Scope of Policy

The policy applies to Town Council owned or managed land, individual landowners are responsible for dealing with their own property and Norfolk County Council are responsible for highways, pavements, schools etc.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the responsibilities of all members of staff when considering attendance at work during adverse weather conditions, and to outline the appropriate procedures. This policy will be implementable as far as is possible but noting adverse weather may affect communication.

### 3 Responsibility of Staff

Staff are reminded of their duty to take reasonable care for their own health, safety and welfare and that of others who may be affected by their actions. This includes taking extra care when travelling to and from, as well as during work in adverse weather conditions.

The Town Council recognises that individual members of staff may have personal circumstances which will affect their ability to attend work during periods of adverse weather.

If it is unavoidable for staff to be absent from work, with the agreement of the Clerk and subject to operational needs and other relevant factors, the Clerk, in discussion with the member of staff may agree one of the following options:

- Work from home, if practicable and phone/broadband supply has not been disrupted for adverse weather.
- Take annual leave (the Council may at its discretion grant discretionary leave should circumstances warrant)
- Take TOIL
- Take unpaid leave
- Make up the lost time at a later date
- A combination of the options above

Adverse weather conditions are usually anticipated and communicated by weather forecasts. In such circumstances and if practicable, the Town Council expects staff to prepare in advance for the prospect of working from home by taking home necessary equipment.

#### **4 Responsibilities of the Clerk & Councillors**

The Clerk must ensure that all members of staff & Councillors have been made aware of this policy and any reporting procedures.

There are a range of factors which should be taken into consideration when agreeing the appropriate action to take, these include:

- The employee's safety
- The operational requirements of the Town Council
- Distance travelled to work
- The weather conditions and expected duration
- Guidance from the police and/or relevant motoring organisations
- Modes of transport available to the member of staff
- The effort to attend work exercised by staff
- The attempts to make alternative travel arrangements by staff
- The ability to work from home
- The caring or childcare responsibilities of staff (short notice school closures etc)
- The health of staff
- Other factors relevant at the time

If the member of staff has made every effort to attend work on time and arrives late, they will not be expected to make up the time if the lateness is no more than half the staff member's normal working day.

Special consideration must be given when applying this policy where it is known that a member of staff has mobility problems or a health condition which may be exacerbated by adverse weather conditions.

Members of staff who are on annual leave, maternity or paternity leave, or sickness absence will not be entitled to any time off in lieu in the event of the closure of their usual place of work.

The Clerk should decide whether it is appropriate for a member of staff to leave early.

#### **5 Actions**

The Clerk will identify and undertake the following actions:

1. Assess the risk regarding severe weather and the impact this will have by obtaining information from the Meteorological Office, The Environment Agency and Norfolk County Council's website. The Chairman or Vice Chairman will assist the Town Clerk with assessing the risk of severe weather.
2. High winds – winds above force 9 (47mph-54mph) are defined as high winds.
3. Flooding – flood warnings will be monitored. The Environment Agency may be contacted to advise the Town Council.
4. Snow and ice – weather warnings will be monitored.
5. Inform Councillors and staff of the current situation regarding the severe weather.
6. Staff will endeavour to keep the website continually updated if the office is closed.

The groundsmen will be asked to undertake the following activities depending on weather conditions and associated risks:

1. High winds – following periods of high wind, the following sites will be visually inspected for damage:
  - a) Goggs Mill.
  - b) Peckover Cemetery, Creake Road and Queens Road Cemeteries.
  - c) Aldiss Park.
  - d) Millennium Park.
  - e) Railway Cutting
  - f) Trap Lane Field, Depot and Pavilion.
  - g) Greenway Lane, Grove Lane, Rudham Stile Lane Allotment sites.
  - h) Hayes Lane Playing Field
  - i) Whitelands Park

j) St Peters Churchyard and Memorial Garden

2. Flooding – during and following periods of flooding any damage will be reported and any debris removed.
3. Heavy snow and ice – grit will be spread if possible, around the market place especially if market day will be affected. The stock of grit/salt held by the Town Council will be checked annually by the groundsmen. Any additional supplies will be ordered by the Office.
4. Heat Waves – work patterns and tasks may be altered to avoid outside work during heatwaves.
5. Equipment, signs, personal protective equipment and materials will be checked at least every six months, prior to use, after severe weather and in preparation for it.

In extreme weather conditions where transport is difficult or dangerous it may not be possible to treat/inspect Town Council owned land as staff may have difficulty in reaching some sites.

Town Council staff will endeavour to pass on reports about severe weather problems outside of the scope of this policy to the appropriate body, i.e. North Norfolk District Council and Norfolk County Council.

## **6 Closure of Premises**

The decision to close any of the Town Council premises due to adverse weather conditions will be made by the Town Clerk. Members of the Town Council shall be notified of the decision and measures taken to inform the public.

In the event of the closure of a premises, members of staff must follow instructions by the Clerk and must not enter any premises which are closed, except with the express permission of the Clerk. In the circumstances whereby the Town Council premises, facility or department is closed due to adverse weather conditions, staff will be paid their normal contracted hours for the affected day/s.

## **7 Misuse of the Policy**

Any misuse of this policy will be treated as a disciplinary matter which may, in certain circumstances, constitute gross misconduct.

*Reviewed at P&R Committee 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025*

*Ratified at Full Council 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025 Due for review 2028*