

CALL OUT & STANDBY POLICY

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

The Council is committed to providing services according to the needs of the people of Caerphilly County Borough. This means that at times it is necessary for staff to be called upon to carry out work at times outside their normal working pattern. The Council meets the need for these services by:

- Having suitably trained staff on duty to take calls and to decide upon the relevant course of action.
- Having a suitably trained workforce on standby and able to be called out at short notice to respond to emergency work
- By rewarding the above staff at suitable rates that recognise the inconvenience and disruption that this work causes.

2.0 ON DUTY

2.1 On duty is defined as a period of time when an officer is on duty outside of their normal hours of work for a specific period of time and is available to respond to calls from residents, emergency services, etc. During the period on duty the Officer will:-

- Decide upon the appropriate course of action to take following a call,
- Authorise the carrying out of the emergency work and
- Direct the appropriate staff to carry out this work or contact the relevant officer(s) that can authorise this work.

2.2 Decisions regarding the appropriateness of having officers on duty at specific times within services will depend on a risk assessment. For any risk assessment it will be necessary to consider the impact and the likelihood of that risk.

2.3 During the period that the officer is on duty they must be:

- Contactable by landline, mobile or pager as appropriate
- Available to attend work or other location as required
- Able to carry out any duties in accordance with the normal rules, disciplines and conventions of attending work, including being in a fit and sober condition.

2.4 On duty will form part of the contract of employment for the relevant officers.

2.5 While on duty rotas will generally be set up in advance. There will still need to be flexibility to deal with unexpected situations.

2.6 Payment – On Duty

2.6.1 In some cases on duty will form a part of officers' basic salary and their contract of employment will specifically state this. They will not be entitled to any extra payment whilst on duty.

2.6.2 Payment for other officers will be by way of an additional, separately identified payment that will reflect the level of inconvenience and disruption to the officers' normal home life that is incurred. This payment is made as recompense for:

- Any restriction on the employees' location or movement during periods on duty

- The number of hours on duty in any one session
- When on duty takes place i.e. throughout the week, bank holidays

- 2.6.3 On duty payments will be updated annually in line with the annual salary increase agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services.
- 2.6.4 On Duty allowances will include up to 30 minutes “working time” in cases where the employee is not required to physically attend work or a place of work. Following which, the Council’s overtime rates will apply.
- 2.7 Any travelling expenses incurred from the officer’s home to any location to perform tasks relating to the period of on duty will be reimbursed in accordance with the Council’s travelling policy.
- 2.8 Where an officer requires use of communication equipment, for example, a landline, mobile ‘phone or pager in order to be contacted when on duty, the necessary communication equipment will be provided or the entitlement to claim telephone allowance will apply.
- 2.9 On occasions last minute on duty arrangements may need to be put in place e.g. in emergencies. These arrangements will be outside the contractual terms of officers’ posts. The ‘On Duty” payment will apply in these circumstances.

3.0 STANDBY

- 3.1 Standby rotas enable a pool of staff to be established who are able to respond to a variety of service requirements outside their normal office hours at relatively short notice. Compensation packages for standby and call-out will reflect the diversity of these requirements and arrangements.
- 3.2 Standby is defined as a specific period of time that an officer is available for call out outside of their normal hours of work.
- 3.3 There is a requirement for an employee ‘on standby’ to be ‘ready at all times for duty’ outside of their normal office/operational hours for a specific occasion or time, or over a period of time.
- 3.4 During the period that the officer is on standby they must be:
- Contactable by landline, mobile phone or pager as appropriate
 - Available to attend work or other location as required
 - Able to carry out any duties in accordance with the normal rules, disciplines and conventions of attending work and including being in a fit and sober condition.

3.3 Standby will form part of the contract of employment for the relevant officers

3.4 Payment

Payment for officers on standby will be by way of an additional separately identified payment that will reflect the level of inconvenience and disruption to the officers’ normal home life that is incurred. This payment is made as recompense for:

- Any restriction on the employees' location or movement during periods of standby
- The number of hours on standby in any one session
- When standby takes place i.e. throughout the week and bank holidays

Standby payments will be updated annually in line with the annual salary increase agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services.

3.5 Standby allowances will include up to 30 minutes “working time” in cases where the employee is not required to physically attend work or a place of work. Following which, the Council’s overtime rates will apply.

3.5 Where an officer requires use of communication equipment, for example, a landline, mobile 'phone or pager in order to be contacted when on standby, the necessary communication equipment will be provided or the entitlement to claim telephone allowance will apply.

4.0 CALL OUT

4.1 An employee will have been ‘called out’ if they are called upon to return to work to undertake any work during a period of standby. This work may be undertaken through:

- Attendance at their normal place of work
- Attendance at an alternative location
- Carrying out work from home (e.g. by giving advice over the telephone or logging in to systems remotely).

4.2 An officer called out will be expected to undertake the normal range of duties commensurate with their post, along with any other duties as necessary and appropriate.

4.3 Carrying out any duties when called out will be in accordance with the normal rules, disciplines and conventions of attending work and includes being in a fit and sober condition.

4.4 For those officers on standby, call out will form part of their contract of employment

4.5 Payment

4.5.1 Payment for being called out will be at the overtime rate (basic pay at time and a half) in accordance with the Council’s rates.

4.5.2 If Officers are called out for less than two hours, they can expect to receive a minimum of two hours pay at the overtime rate stated.

4.5.3 The actual time of the call out will include any travelling time. Call out will commence when the employee leaves home to when they return home.

4.5.4 If officers are called out numerous times during the one period of Stand By, the pay they receive will not exceed what they would have otherwise received had they worked continuously throughout that same period.

4.5.5 Officers who are called out will be subject to the Working Time Regulations and, where appropriate, the relevant regulations for driving vehicles.

4.5.6 Any travelling expenses incurred from the officer’s home to any location will be reimbursed in accordance with the Council’s travelling policy.

5.0 INFORMAL ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 There may be circumstances where it is necessary to call upon officers not on standby to attend work. In such circumstances the officer will inform the officer on duty of where and how they can be contacted should the need arise. However, there will be no expectation that the officer will be ready at all times for duty and it is accepted that they may be unavailable if contacted.

- 5.2 Under these arrangements if contacted an officer will therefore decide whether:
- He/she is able to carry out any duties in accordance with the normal rules, disciplines and conventions of attending work including being in a fit and sober condition.
 - To accept the offer and attend work or other location to carry out duties
- 5.3 These informal arrangements are non-contractual. Officers will be paid for the period of time they are called-out and required to work in accordance with paragraph 4.5.

6.0 CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 6.1 Standby arrangements may be contractual or voluntary. However, where statutory obligations are being fulfilled or emergency situations responded to the principle should generally be that relevant employees are contractually required to participate in appropriate periods of standby duty. This would apply to:
- Social Workers
 - Building Control Officers
 - Highways employees re Winter Maintenance
 - Emergency Planning Officers
 - Homelessness Officers
 - Environmental Health Officers
 - Animal Health Officers
- 6.2 Contractual status will be implemented for all new employees and for existing employees where it is already a contractual requirement. Where standby duties are currently undertaken on a voluntary basis, this will only change to be contractual if the employee agrees. Otherwise it will remain as a voluntary arrangement.
- 6.3 Consideration should be given for changes in personal circumstances, which may affect an employee's ability to carry out standby duties.
- 6.4 Establishing Contractual Status (note Appendix One)

7.0 REST PERIODS

- 7.1 The Working Time Regulations 1998 include limits on maximum hours worked and specify minimum rest periods following a period of duty. Rest periods for staff, which are called out, must conform to the guidelines of the Working Time Regulations and accord with effective Health and Safety practice.

APPENDIX ONE

CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS

The employing department will specify which category the duties fall into.

CONTRACTUAL STATUS (in direct relevance to Standby)		
REF	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES
Mutually binding	<p>The employee is contracted to provide set amounts of standby provision, and the Council is contracted to (always) provide payment for these standby duties.</p> <p>STAND BY - PAID (in full) WHEN OFF-SICK OR ON –LEAVE</p>	<p>Where there is a statutory obligation to offer 'out of hours provision' throughout the year.</p> <p>Where emergency situations are a general expectation of the Service being provided.</p>
Unilaterally binding	<p>Where the employee is contracted to participate in standby arrangements as/when the employer REQUIRES them to do so, i.e. under the general circumstances referred to in the appointment letter or contract of employment.</p> <p>STAND BY - PAID (in full) WHEN OFF-SICK OR ON –LEAVE</p>	<p>Areas where the council is obliged to provide statutory services outside their normal work hours, (e.g. highways workers who are required to standby for winter maintenance activities or social services employees who are required to standby in order to attend to clients' needs).</p>
Mutually voluntary	<p>Where the Council can seek volunteers for standby duty, and employees are permitted to volunteer their services.</p> <p>NOT PAID WHEN OFF-SICK OR ON –LEAVE</p>	<p>Either party can withdraw from the arrangements by giving reasonable notice. However, volunteers will normally offer their services for prescribed 'tours of duty', which they will then be expected to complete.</p>