



TODMORDEN TOWN COUNCIL

Call-Out Policy (Out-Of-Hours Emergencies)

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For review by Full Council: April 2028

Applies to: Council Officers

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Locations Covered: All Council premises and Council business undertaken outside agreed working hours (including but not limited to the Pavilion and Bandstand)

1. Purpose

This policy establishes a clear framework for responding to all call-outs relating to Council business outside of agreed working hours, including but not limited to emergencies at Council-managed facilities (such as the Pavilion and Bandstand). It ensures that officers are aware of when call-outs are considered and how they will be compensated.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Town Council officers who may be contacted outside of standard working hours. Call-outs include:

- Emergencies at Council premises
- Urgent issues relating to Council services or operations

- Any other Council business requiring out-of-hours response

Main Office Hours: 09:00–16:00, Monday to Friday.

A call-out is defined as any contact with an officer outside their contracted hours, not limited to standard office hours.

3. Role of Key Holder Service

The Council employs a contracted key holder service responsible for:

- Responding to alarm activations
- Attending site out-of-hours
- Assessing incidents
- Taking reasonable steps to secure the building

The key holder service is the primary responder to out-of-hours incidents.

Officers will only be contacted by the key holder service where:

- The incident is beyond the contractor’s capability to resolve
- The building cannot be secured
- There is a significant emergency requiring Council decision-making
- Further instruction or authorisation is required

4. Definition of an Emergency

An emergency is defined as an unforeseen situation requiring immediate action to:

- Protect life, health, or safety
- Prevent significant property damage
- Secure Council assets
- Respond to criminal activity or serious incidents

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Fire, flood, or structural damage
- Break-ins, vandalism, or attempted theft
- Major utility failures (e.g. gas leak, electrical hazard)
- Situations involving public safety risks

Non-urgent issues (e.g. minor maintenance, routine enquiries) do not constitute emergencies and should be addressed during normal working hours.

5. Out-of-Hours Contact

- Officers are not formally on-call outside standard working hours
- Officers will typically only be contacted out-of-hours by the key holder service
- If contacted, officers are not obligated to respond, but may do so at their discretion

Contact Hierarchy (Escalation Order): The key holder service should contact officers in the following order, progressing to the next role if there is no response within a reasonable timeframe:

1. Town Clerk
2. Deputy Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)
3. Administration and Development Officer
4. Community Support Officer

Where none of the above officers can be contacted, the key holder service should take all reasonable steps within their remit to secure the site and, where necessary, contact emergency services.

6. Officer Response

Where an officer is contacted by the key holder service and chooses to respond:

- They should seek full details of the situation before taking action
- Attendance on-site should only occur where necessary

- Officers may:
 - Provide instructions remotely
 - Authorise emergency works
 - Attend site if required
- Officers must prioritise personal safety and defer to emergency services where appropriate

7. Payment for Call-Outs

Where an officer undertakes work outside normal hours in response to a call-out from the key holder service:

- Minimum Call-Out Payment:
A minimum payment equivalent to 2 hours at the officer's standard hourly rate
- Call-Out Start Time:
Paid time begins from the moment the call is received, not from arrival on site
- Additional Time:
Any time worked beyond the 2-hour minimum will be paid at the officer's standard hourly rate
- Out-of-Hours Enhancements:
No enhanced or premium rates apply for out-of-hours working
- Travel Time:
Travel to and from the site is included as part of paid time (where attendance is required)
- Record Keeping:
Officers must record:
 - Time of call received
 - Source of contact (key holder service)
 - Nature of emergency
 - Actions taken
 - Time spent

Claims must be submitted in accordance with payroll procedures.

8. Use of Contractors

Officers may:

- Authorise additional contractors where required
- Instruct the key holder service to arrange emergency works (within delegated authority limits)

All actions must be recorded and reported.

9. Reporting Requirements

Following any out-of-hours incident:

- A brief incident report must be completed on the next working day
- The report should include:
 - Nature of the emergency
 - Actions taken by the key holder service and officer
 - Any follow-up required
 - Costs incurred

10. Health and Safety

- Officers must not put themselves at risk when responding to incidents
- The key holder service should manage initial site risks
- Emergency services should always be contacted where there is danger to life or serious property risk

11. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if operational needs change.