

OPEN

Council

14 May 2025

Approval of Absence from Council Meetings

Report of: Janet Witkowski, Acting Governance, Compliance and Monitoring Officer

Report Reference No: C/3/25-26

Ward(s) Affected: Knutsford

For Decision

Purpose of Report

- 1 This report seeks the approval of Council in respect of Councillor Peter Coan's absence from Council meetings for a period over six months, due to reasons of ill-health.

Executive Summary

- 2 If a Council member fails to attend a meeting of the authority in a period of six consecutive months, they cease to be a member of the authority, unless approval for the absence is given by full Council. This report provides an opportunity for Council to approve any absence which might be required by the date of the Council meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Council is asked to approve Councillor Peter Coan's absence from Council meetings for a period of over six months, due to reasons of ill-health; such approval to apply for a period of a further six months.

Background

- 3 By the date of the Annual Council meeting Councillor Peter Coan will have been absent from Council meetings for over five months, due to reasons of ill health
- 4 Legislation states that, if a Council Member fails to attend council meetings throughout a period of six consecutive months, they shall cease to become a member of the authority in question, unless such failure was due to some reason approved by the authority before the expiry of the six-month period.
- 5 This report asks Council to formally approve Councillor Coan's absence from all Council meetings due to reasons of ill health, and to agree that such approval will continue to have effect for a further period of six months. This will ensure that Councillor Coan's membership of the Council will continue for an appropriate period of time, if he continues to find himself unable to attend Council meetings.

Consultation and Engagement

- 6 Not applicable.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 7 The authority of the Council is required to ensure that an individual's membership of the authority does not inadvertently cease, in circumstances where they find themselves unable to attend a meeting for the period in question due to a reason beyond the individual's control.

Other Options Considered

- 8 To do nothing – an individual's membership of the local authority would cease, as no approval would be in place to extend the six-month attendance period.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

- 9 Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 states that, if a member of a local authority fails, throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of their last attendance, to attend any meeting of the authority, they shall, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the authority before the expiry of that period, cease to be a member of the authority. If necessary, the authority may grant further approvals if the reason for non-attendance continues beyond the initially approved period.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

10 No implications have been identified.

Policy

11 There are no direct implications for policy

Commitment 3: An effective and enabling council

Effective and responsive governance, compliance and evidence-based decision making

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

12 There are no direct implications.

Human Resources

13 There are no direct implications for Human Resources.

Risk Management

14 There are no direct risk management implications.

Rural Communities

15 There are no direct implications for rural communities.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

16 There are no direct implications for children and young people.

Public Health

17 There are no direct implications for public health.

Climate Change

18 There are no direct implications for climate change.

Access to Information

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Appendices:	None
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Background Papers:	None
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