

OPEN

**Council**

**14 May 2025**

**Approval of Absence from Council Meetings**

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**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.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
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Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	None