

**Report Title: Meetings Attendance**

**Report To: Council**

**Date: 16 July 2018**

**Ward(s) Affected: All**

**Report By: Catherine Knight, Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services**

**Contact Officer(s)-**

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### **Purpose of Report:**

To grant a dispensation to allow Councillor Andy Loraine's ill health to be approved as a reason for his prolonged absence from attending meetings.

To grant a dispensation to allow any councillor who is unable to attend the full Council meeting on 26 November 2018 an extended attendance exemption until the full Council meeting on 25 February 2019, where this would cause a member to go six months without attending a meeting.

### **Officers Recommendation(s):**

- 1** That an extension be granted to allow Councillor Andy Loraine's period of non-attendance at Council meetings to run for a further six months from the date of Council's approval (from 16 July 2018 to 16 January 2019).
  - 2** That a dispensation be granted to allow any councillor who is unable to attend the full Council meeting on 26 November 2018 an extended attendance exemption until the full Council meeting on 25 February 2019, where this would cause a member to go six months without attending a meeting.
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### **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 1** To comply with the Council's legal duties and to allow members to remain qualified as councillors until such time as they are able to attend a meeting of the Council.

### **Information**

- 2** Councillor Smith has informed the Head of Democratic Services that Councillor Loraine is currently incapacitated on ill health grounds and has therefore been unable to attend any meeting of the authority for a period in excess of five months. As a result of Councillor Loraine's ill health, he is unlikely to be in a position to attend a meeting in the coming months and it is requested that the

Council considers granting him a dispensation in these exceptional circumstances.

- 3 Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that if a Councillor fails, throughout a period of six consecutive months to attend a meeting of the Council, then they cease to be a member of the authority unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the authority before the expiration of the six month period.
- 4 Best practice in these circumstances proposes that the most appropriate course of action is for Council to approve that the period be extended for a further six months from the date of the authority's approval (from 16 July 2018 to 16 January 2019), during which time it is hoped that Councillor Loraine will be able to resume attendance.
- 5 At the February Council meeting, the meetings timetable for 2018/19 was approved. It was agreed to reduce the number of full Council meetings from five to four with the removal of the October meeting. So that no councillor's attendance record would be disadvantaged by the loss of the October Council meeting, councillors asked that a dispensation be granted to allow any councillor who is unable to attend the full Council meeting on 26 November 2018 an extended attendance exemption until the full Council meeting on 25 February 2019, where this would cause a member to go six months without attending a meeting.
- 6 On this basis, it is requested that the Council considers granting a dispensation to members in such circumstances.

### **Financial Appraisal**

- 7 There are no financial implications arising from this Report.

### **Legal Implications**

- 8 None over and above those set out in the body of this Report.

### **Risk Management Implications**

- 9 There are no risk management implications arising as a result of this Report. If the recommendations are not implemented, the main risk will be that the Council fails to meet its legal duties and some councillors cease to remain qualified as members of the authority.

### **Equality Screening**

- 10 This is a procedural Report with no potential for negative impacts. Therefore, an Equality and Fairness Analysis is not required.

### **Background Papers**

- 11 None

## **Appendices**

**12** None