



Councillor Leave of Absence

Corporate Priority:	All
Relevant Ward Member(s):	N/A
Date of consultation with Ward Member(s):	N/A
Exempt Information:	No

1 Summary

- 1.1 To determine whether to grant a dispensation in order to allow a Councillor to remain a member of the Authority following the non-attendance at a meeting of the Authority for a period of six consecutive months.

2 Recommendation

That Council:

- 2.1 Grant a dispensation to allow Councillor Mel Steadman to remain a Member of the Authority up to and including 8 May 2023 should she not be able to attend a meeting as a member before 3 September 2022 due to continued ill health.

3 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 Unless the authority has approved the leave of absence, failure to attend a meeting throughout a period of six means would mean that the member ceases to be a member of the authority pursuant to Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

4 Background

- 4.1 Due to ill health, Councillor Mel Steadman last attended a meeting of Melton Borough Council on 3 March 2022. On 3 September 2022, Councillor Steadman would not have attended a meeting for six consecutive months.

5 Main Considerations

- 5.1 A leave of absence may be granted by the Authority, through a decision approved by Council, in accordance with Section 85 Local Government Act 1972. This decision must be approved before the expiry of the six-month period.
- 5.2 The dispensation, if approved, will expire on 8 May 2023, this is the fourth day after the ordinary election when all councillors retire.
- 5.3 The next Council meeting after July 2022, is scheduled for 22 September 2022.

6 Options Considered

- 6.1 Not to grant a dispensation. This would mean that unless Councillor Steadman attended a meeting before 3 September 2022, she would cease to be a member of the authority.
- 6.2 Grant a dispensation for a specific length of time.

7 Consultation

- 7.1 Consultation has been undertaken with the Group Leader of the Conservative Group of which Councillor Steadman is a member. The Conservative Group Leader, Councillor Orson, has indicated that due to continued ill health Councillor Steadman may not be able to attend a meeting of the Authority before 3 September 2022.

8 Next Steps – Implementation and Communication

- 8.1 There are no next steps, the dispensation would allow Councillor Steadman to remain a Councillor in the event that she is unable to attend a meeting within the six-month period starting on 3 March 2022.

9 Financial Implications

- 9.1 There are no financial implications to this report.

Financial Implications reviewed by: Deputy s151 officer

10 Legal and Governance Implications

- 10.1 Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 states the following:

“... if a member of a local authority fails throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of his last attendance to attend any meeting of the authority, he 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.”

Legal Implications reviewed by: Monitoring Officer 19.07.22

11 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

- 11.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) screening form has been completed. No adverse or other significant issues were found.

12 Community Safety Implications

12.1 There are no Community Safety Implications arising from this report.

13 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

13.1 There are no environmental or climate change implications arising from this report.

14 Risk & Mitigation

Risk No	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk
1	A failure to grant the dispensation may result in Councillor Steadman ceasing to be a member of the authority.	High	Critical	High Risk

		Impact / Consequences			
		Negligible	Marginal	Critical	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Score/ definition	1	2	3	4
	6 Very High				
	5 High			1	
	4 Significant				
	3 Low				
	2 Very Low				
	1 Almost impossible				

Risk No	Mitigation
1	Granting a dispensation to allow the leave of absence due to ill health will eliminate the risk

15 Background Papers

15.1 None

16 Appendices

16.1 None

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