

Report to:	COUNCIL
Relevant Officer:	Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships
Date of Meeting:	9 February 2022

MEMBER ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider an extension to the period of six consecutive months as the period of non-attendance at Council related meetings for Councillor John Wing.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To approve a dispensation in relation to the non-attendance of Councillor Wing at formal Council related meetings and agree the extension to the six month period of non-attendance up until 30 September 2022.

2.2 That it is noted that the reason for this extension is due to Councillor Mr Wing's current illness.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To clarify the reasons for Councillor Wing's non-attendance at Council meetings and to provide a dispensation to allow him to continue in his role as a Councillor.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 To not support the recommendation, or to extend the dispensation for an alternative period of time.

5.0 Council priority:

- 5.1 The relevant Council priority is
- "The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool"
 - "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

6.0 Background information

6.1 The law states that where a Council member fails throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of their last attendance at a Council related meeting then subject to certain provisions, he/ she ceases to be a member, unless the failure was due to some reason approved before the expiry of that period. There have been dispensations for all councillors at various stages of the pandemic relating to non-attendance at meetings.

6.2 However, the last general dispensation expired on 30 September 2021, with a new 6 month period commencing on 1 October 2021. Councillor Wing's 6-month period would therefore expire on 31 March 2022. Councillor Wing suffers from pulmonary fibrosis and at the moment has been advised not to attend physically present meetings. Council is therefore requested to extend his six month period until 30 September 2022 and agree this as a dispensation.

6.3 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 None.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 states that a member of a local authority loses office if they do not attend a formal meeting at least once in any six-month period. A decision is sought at this Council meeting, as retrospective approval cannot be given when the 6-month period has expired.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 Not applicable.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 Not applicable.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 Not applicable.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 None.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.