

Ward: All

Portfolio: Cross Cutting

FROM: Monitoring Officer **Date:** 27th September 2021

SUBJECT: Attendance at Meetings – Authority to Exempt (Councillor Helen Sprawson-White)

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Report Sign off	Seen by:	Name	Date
	Legal	Lesley Dolan	13/09/2021
	Finance	Richard Bates	14/09/2021
	Chief Executive Officer	Stuart Brown	13/09/2021
	Head of Service	N/A	N/A
Summary:	<p>This report seeks approval from Council to exempt Councillor Sprawson-White from attending any meetings of the Council and its Committees and Sub-Committees due to a request for a short sabbatical for personal reasons.</p> <p>Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 confirms that a Councillor who is absent from all meetings of the Council and any Committees and Sub-Committees of which they are a member for a period of six months automatically ceases to be a member of the Council unless they have been given a leave of absence by the Council before the expiry of that six month period.</p>		
Recommendation:	<p>It is recommended that Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Approves the request from Councillor Sprawson-White for an extension beyond the six-month period of non-attendance on the grounds of personal reasons. That such an extension be granted until 13 January 2022 which would allow for any request for a further extension to be considered by Council at the December meeting. In the event of that meeting either being cancelled or postponed, such an extension to remain in place until after the next available meeting of the Council. 		
Direct and/or indirect impact on service delivery to our customers and communities	There is no impact on the Council's service delivery		
Financial Implications:	Not applicable.		
Climate Change Implications:	Not applicable.		

Legal Implications:	Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act (1972) enables a local authority to approve the reason(s) for non-attendance of a Member at any meeting of the authority throughout a period of six consecutive months, provided that approval is given by the authority before the expiry of the six month period.
Crime and Disorder Implications:	Not applicable.
Equalities Implications:	Not applicable.
Risk Assessment and Adverse Impact on Corporate Actions:	Not applicable.

INTRODUCTION

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 cease to be a member of the authority. The only exceptions are if their non-attendance has been approved by the authority (i.e. Full Council) before the expiry of the six month period or if the Councillor is a member of the armed forces (including reserve forces) and cannot attend due to active service.

BACKGROUND

The last meeting of a Committee of the Council attended by Councillor Sprawson-White, of which she is a member, was a Licensing sub-committee on 12 May 2021. Councillor Sprawson-White has now requested a short sabbatical for personal reasons in order to exempt her from attending any meetings of the Council and any Committees and Sub-Committees of which she is a member. The six-month period of non-attendance will expire on 12 November 2021 and Councillor Sprawson-White will cease to be a member of the Council unless she has been given a leave of absence by the Council before that date.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Council:

1. Approves the request from Councillor Sprawson-White for an extension beyond the six-month period of non-attendance on the grounds of personal reasons.
2. That such an extension be granted until 13 January 2022 which would allow for any request for a further extension to be considered by Council at the December meeting. In the event of that meeting either being cancelled or postponed, such an extension to remain in place until after the next available meeting of the Council.

Contact Officer: David Clark
Ext No: 41539
e-mail: david.clark@mendip.gov.uk