

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL

13 December 2021

MEMBER NON-ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS – DISPENSATION FOR COUNCILLOR ALINA GASKIN

1. Summary

To seek approval for the continued absence of Councillor Alina Gaskin from meetings of the Council due to ill health and matters ancillary thereto.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the General Assembly of the Council notes Councillor A Gaskin's current indisposition for medical reasons and that she be granted a dispensation to enable her to remain a Councillor for the duration of her indisposition, on the grounds of ill health.

3. Background and Discussion

The Local Government Act 1972 sets out the terms under which a council member is disqualified by failing to attend any meeting of the authority throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of his/her last attendance. The Act further provides that where the failure to attend is approved by the authority in advance of the expiration of a six-month period, then the Member will not be disqualified.

The Council granted a general dispensation to all Members at its meeting on 27 July 2020, to cover Members who might be unable to attend meetings during the period in which national COVID restrictions were in-place and meetings were being held virtually. This general dispensation ended on 19 July 2021, when national restrictions were lifted and it became possible for meetings to return to being held fully in-person and without social distancing.

Councillor Gaskin has been unable to attend a qualifying meeting due to ill health since the end of the general dispensation period. Under the terms of the Local Government Act 1972, the expiration of the six-month disqualification period would therefore occur on 19 January 2022.

Councillor Gaskin remains unwell and is unlikely to be in a position to resume her full civic duties and attendance at meetings within the six-month timeframe. It is therefore recommended that Councillor Gaskin should be granted a dispensation to enable her to remain a Councillor for the duration of her indisposition, on the grounds of ill health.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

Not applicable

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5. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

Financial Implications	None
Legal Implications	None
Staffing Implications	None
Administrative Implications	None
Risk Assessment	No uncertainties and/or constraints

6. Appendices

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<u>Documents consulted</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>File Ref</u>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Section and Directorate</u>	<u>Exempt Information Category</u>
			Alan Twyman Democratic Services Manager 01322 343430	Democratic Services/ Corporate Services	N/A