

**To the Chair and Members of the  
COUNCIL**

**APPROVAL OF COUNCILLOR ABSENCE**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This report requests Council to note the action taken by the Monitoring Officer under delegated authority in approving the request from Councillor Ted Kitchen for an extension of absence from attendance at meetings due to ill health until 22nd February, 2016.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. It is recommended that in accordance Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, the action taken under delegated authority by the Monitoring Officer in approving an extension of absence from attendance at meetings due to ill health for Councillor Ted Kitchen until 22nd February, 2016, be noted.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?**

3. The proposal set out in this report, provides an efficient mechanism to administer arrangements for long term absences due to ill health. If delegated authority had not been given to the Monitoring Officer, only Full Council could approve an extended period of absence for a Councillor who had not attended a meeting for a period of 6 months. If such an approval is not given, the absent Member will cease to be a Member of the Authority. In addition, the reduction in the number of formal Council meetings risks the possible need to convene an extraordinary meeting of Council to consider such requests.

**BACKGROUND**

4. At its meeting on 27th November, 2014, Council granted Monitoring Officer delegated authority to approve extended periods of absence for Members. Any request is to be submitted in writing to the Monitoring Officer prior to the expiration of the fifth month of absence, and if satisfied that the grounds for such a request was reasonable, such approvals are to be reported to the next available meeting of Council by the Monitoring Officer, for information.
5. Members may be aware that Councillor Ted Kitchen is currently unwell and unlikely to be able to resume normal duties for some time.

6. Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, provides that if a Member of a Local Authority fails throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of his/her last attendance, to attend any meeting of the Authority, he/she shall cease to be a Member of the Authority, unless the failure is due to some reason approved by the Authority before the expiry of that period.
7. Councillor Ted Kitchen's last recorded attendance was at the Annual Meeting of Council on the 22nd May, 2015, which in normal circumstances would mean that Councillor Kitchen would be required to attend a meeting of the Authority before the 22nd November, 2015.
8. Councillor Kitchen has indicated that he is unlikely to be able to resume normal duties for some time and therefore, to avoid disqualification, the Monitoring Officer approved his absence for an extended period until the 22nd February, 2016.

### **OPTIONS CONSIDERED& REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION**

9. (A) Support the recommendation set out at paragraph 2 of this report. (RECOMMENDED OPTION)
- (B) In the event that the Monitoring Officer did not feel able to approve the request, there may be no further qualifying meetings held before 22nd November, which may have resulted in calling an extraordinary meeting of Council to consider the request.

### **IMPACT ON THE COUNCILS KEY OUTCOMES**

10.

	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Implications</b>
	Working with our partners we will provide strong leadership and governance.	Approving the request for the extension of absence from attendance at meetings has streamlined the approval process for such requests and possibly reduced costs if an extraordinary meeting had to be convened to consider such a request.

### **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

11. If the Monitoring Officer decided not to approve Councillor Kitchen's absence and he is unable to attend a meeting prior to 22nd November, 2015, a casual vacancy would arise.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

12. These are contained within the body of the report.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

13. There are no specific financial implications associated with this report.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

14. There are no specific human resources implications associated with this report.

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

15. There are no specific technology implications associated with this report.

## **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

16. There are no specific equality implications arising from this report.

## **CONSULTATION**

17. Consultation with the Labour Group has taken place with regard to Councillor Kitchen's current well-being.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Request from Councillor Ted Kitchen

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