

**1st March, 2016**

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

**APPROVAL OF COUNCILLOR ABSENCE**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This report requests that Council note the action taken by the Monitoring Officer (acting 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 5th March, 2016.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. It is recommended that Council note the action taken by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, in approving an extension of absence from attendance at meetings due to ill health for Councillor Ted Kitchen until 5th March, 2016.

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

3. Full Council delegated authority to the Monitoring Officer to approve extended periods of absence to Elected Members who had not been able to attend a requisite formal meeting for an extended period of time.

**BACKGROUND**

4. At its meeting on 27th November, 2014, Council granted the 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 has been unwell for some time and is unsure when he will be able to resume his normal duties.
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. The Monitoring Officer under delegated authority, approved an extension of absence from attendance at meetings due to ill health for Councillor Kitchen until 22nd February, 2016 and this was reported to the Council meeting held on 26th November, 2015. Councillor Kitchen's health has improved and he has indicated he hopes to be able to attend the Council meeting on 1st March, 2016. Accordingly, a further extension has been granted by the Monitoring Officer until the 5th March, 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, an extraordinary meeting of Council would have had to be called to consider Councillor Kitchen's 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 February, 2016, 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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