

Report to **Governance Committee**
Date **9 November 2021**
Report By **Assistant Chief Executive**
Title of Report **Vacation of Office by Failure to Attend Meetings**
Purpose of Report **To consider a proposal to delegate authority to the Governance Committee to grant dispensations to councillors in relation to non attendance at meetings of the authority.**

RECOMMENDATION:

The Governance Committee is recommended to recommend the County Council to:

- 1. delegate authority to the Governance Committee to agree reasons for councillor non attendance at meetings and grant dispensation from the requirement for councillors to attend at meetings of the Council to allow them to remain qualified until such time as they are able to attend a meeting of the Council; and**
 - 2. to agree to the Constitution being amended accordingly.**
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1. Supporting Information

1.1 Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that if a Member fails, throughout a period of six consecutive months to attend a meeting of the authority then they cease to be a member of the authority unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the Authority before the expiration of the period.

1.2 Currently reports seeking a dispensation are considered by the Governance Committee which makes a recommendation to the County Council. The County Council is the body that grants any dispensation. Given that it might be necessary to consider the reasons for the non attendance and the possibility of a granting a dispensation at relatively short notice to avoid a councillor being disqualified, it is proposed that this matter be delegated to the Governance Committee which meets more frequently than full Council.

2. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation

2.1 In order to facilitate timely consideration of requests for a dispensation in relation to councillor attendance at meetings in relation to section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 it is proposed that the County Council delegate authority to the Governance Committee to approve the reason for a councillor's non-attendance and grant a dispensation from attending meetings of the Council until such time as the councillor is able to attend a meeting.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS None