



Hetton Town Council



Member Apologies for Absence Policy

(Adopted 22 April 2025)

Aim

To provide a clear and consistent approach for the Town Council in considering apologies.

Background

Members have a duty to attend meetings when summoned to do so; the notice to attend a council meeting is, in law, a summons, because you have a duty to attend and to consider, in advance of the meeting, the agenda and any related documents which were sent to you with the summons.

It is recognised that on occasions, some Members will be unable to attend a meeting of Full Council or a Committee.

In such circumstances an apology for absence should be submitted.

Process

- 1) An apology for absence must be made directly to the Town Clerk by the Member affected. This can be submitted via:

email: townclerk@hettontowncouncil.gov.uk

Phone call or text: 0191 561 6600 (phone only) or 0753 867 3657.

An apology must be notified to the Town Clerk no later than 30 minutes prior to commencement of Full Council or a Committee meeting.

Apologies for absence will not be accepted via a third party nor "from the floor".

- 2) A reason must be provided to enable Council to properly consider the apology received. The absence and reason (and whether approved or otherwise) will be recorded in the minutes.
- 3) A Member absence without notification of an apology will be recorded as unapproved and identified as such in the minutes.

Persistent absence

In accordance with LGA 1972 Section 85 (1), if a Member fails throughout six consecutive months to attend any meetings of the Council or its Committees of which he/she is a Member; then he/she ceases automatically to be a Member of the Council; unless he/she has a statutory excuse (broadly speaking military service during war or an emergency) or if failure to attend is due to a reason approved by Council. The period begins with the last meeting attended.