



Great Bedwyn Parish Council

April 25

Welfare Policy for Councillors absence

Whilst not covered by employment laws, the Parish Council recognises a duty of care for Councillors, to ensure their wellbeing during their time on the council.

Taking into consideration the often-personal nature of extended absence, the Parish Council will follow the policy guidelines below.

Meeting absence with no apologies.

If a councillor misses a council meeting, then the council will nominate a designated councillor to reach out to ensure the councillor in question is well and not in any need of council assistance. This may be technical/IT assistance, disability or mobility matters or illness/injury amongst others. The council will endeavour to resolve these issues where possible to allow the councillor to partake in council meetings.

If the councillor cannot be reached by usual channels – phone calls, texts, Whatsapp or email etc then the council would consider whether an in person visit was desired – whilst keeping in mind the privacy rights of the individual councillor. Each situation should be reviewed on its own merits.

It is important to respect the councillors' privacy and not give the illusion of unwelcome attention or "harassment" in any form.

If it is required, the Clerk to the council can provide the councillor with the official practices for offering apologies to council meetings to ensure the councillor is aware.

Meeting absence with apologies.

A councillor may give their apologies along with the reason to the Clerk before a council meeting, for the council to vote on accepting.

To note – the reason for the absence must be given in order for the council to lawfully approve the absence.

If apologies are received and approved then that ends the official responsibility of the councillor and the council.

However, the council may feel that it wishes to extend communications to the councillor in the event of prolonged absence – over 3 months, to ensure the councillor is still receiving all communications and is feeling included in council matters.

Care should be taken to respect the wishes of privacy from any Councillor and the council will proceed with caution before taking these steps.

The council are to decide at a council meeting or via email on any specific councillors who are best placed to make contact and what form and frequency this contact should take.

If additional contact is requested to be ceased, then this will be done with immediate effect.

Whilst councillors are still official council members' they will continue to receive all usual council communications and meeting summons via their councillor email.

Approved at May 25 full council meeting.

Minute ref 927.25-17

Date for review...May 27.....

V1.