

## **WEST SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Apologies for Absence**

#### **1. Background**

- 1.1 The names of those Councillors present at a meeting of the Council must be recorded and included in the minutes of the meeting (paragraph 40 of Schedule 12 to 1972 Local Government Act). For ease of reference, the minutes should also record the names of those Councillors who are absent from a meeting.

#### **2. Report Details**

- 2.1 If a Councillor wants his/her absence from a meeting to be approved by the Council, he/she should submit a written request (where possible) together with the reason for absence before the meeting takes place.
- 2.2 A record of absence does not amount to Council approval of that absence. Therefore, minutes of a meeting should document that Councillors present approved the absence of a Councillor by resolution. To ensure that the Councillors can approve the absence, a reason for absence should be provided. The recording of such information must not conflict with a Council's duty to handle personal data or sensitive personal data.
- 2.3 The Local Government Act 1972 states that a Councillor cannot continue in office if he/she fails to attend a meeting of the Council, a Committee, Sub Committee, or other by whom for the time being any of the functions of the Council are being discharged or who were appointed to advise the authority for a period of six consecutive months and the reason for his/her absence has not been formally approved before the expiry of the six month period. Approval cannot be retrospective.
- 2.4 If the Parish Council does not approve a reason for non attendance, forfeiture of office will apply. In the event of a Councillor ceasing to be a member of the Parish Council by reason of failure to attend meetings, the Parish Council will declare the office vacant and the Casual Vacancy process will apply.

#### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 That Council notes the process for Apologies for Absence
- 3.2 That West Swindon Parish Council Standing Orders 2018 are amended to include paragraphs 2.1 to 2.4 of this report.

**Paula Harrison  
Parish Manager**