

Report of	Assistant Director of Corporate and Improvement Services	Author	Richard Clifford
Title	Authorisation of absence from Council and Committee meetings		
Wards affected	Mile End		

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Council can provide a dispensation to Councillors from the provisions of section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 and authorise continued absence from Council or Committee meetings. This report invites Council to authorise such a dispensation for Councillor Coleman.

2. Recommended Decision

2.1 To approve the absence of Councillor Coleman from attendance at Council and Committee meetings for a period of six months from 10 December 2021, pursuant to the provisions of section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

3.1 Council needs to authorise the absence of Councillor Coleman in line with the provisions of section 85 of the Local Government Act. If Council does not do so, he will cease to be a member of Colchester Borough Council.

4. Alternative Options

4.1 No alternative options are proposed.

5. Background Information

5.1 Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that if a member of a local authority fails to attend any Council or Committee meeting for a period of six months he or she ceases to be a member of the local authority unless the absence was approved by Council before the expiry of the six month period.

5.2 Councillor Coleman has not been able to attend any Council or Committee meetings for several months due to ill health. He last attended a meeting on 10 June 2021.

5.3 Under the circumstances it is requested that Council approve his continued absence for a period of six months from 10 December 2021. This would be consistent with previous decisions by Council when other Councillors have faced similar issues and also would be supportive to Councillor Coleman. The extension would not prevent Councillor Coleman from returning to meetings at any time but would give flexibility and prevent further recourse to Council before the end of the municipal year.

6. Standard References

6.1 There are no particular references to the Strategic Plan; consultation or publicity considerations or financial; community safety; health and safety, risk management or environment and sustainability implications.