

## **OLD SOMERBY PARISH COUNCIL**

**4 September 2020**

### **APPROVAL OF REASON FOR ABSENCE OF A COUNCILLOR FROM MEETINGS**

Report from: David Holmes, Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

#### **1. Budget and Policy Framework:**

The approval of reasons for absence by a Councillor from meetings is a matter for the Council to determine.

#### **2. Background:**

Section 85(1) Local Government Act, 1972 says that if a Councillor fails throughout a period of six consecutive months to attend any meeting of the authority they shall cease to be a member of the authority. However that section enables an Authority to approve the reason for non-attendance, provided that approval is given by the Authority before the expiry of the six month period.

#### **3. Risk Management:**

The Council is invited to consider the matter now to avoid the risk that any Councillors may lose their seats on the Council. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

#### **4. Recommendation:**

The Council is asked to agree that from 24 September, 2020 to 31 May 2021 (*the Annual Meeting of the Council is due to be held in May 2021 but the date is yet to be fixed*) inclusive, under the provisions of Section 85 (1) of the Local Government Act, 1972 the following reasons shall be approved for the non-attendance of a Member at any meeting throughout a period of 6 consecutive months:

##### **Having regard to the COVID-19 pandemic**

- The protection of the health of the residents of the area or
- The health of the individual Member.

**Or**

- Illness, with apologies sent if at all possible;
- Employment or work commitments;
- Caring responsibilities;
- Cancellation of meetings which the Member would otherwise have been expected to attend;
- Problems accessing a remote meeting which the Member would otherwise be expected to attend, subject to the Chairman or Parish Clerk receiving notification of this before the end of the meeting.

