



Hadleigh Town Council

The Guildhall,
Market Place,
Hadleigh,
IP7 5DT

Tel: 01473 823884

Absence Approval Policy

Councillors are required to attend meetings if a legal summons has been issued. Failure to do so for a period of 6 months can result in automatic disqualification from being a Councillor - Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 states that **'..if a member of a local authority fails throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of his last attendance to attend any meeting of the authority, he shall, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the authority before the expiry of that period, cease to be a member of the authority'**

It is therefore good practice to approve absences (and not just list them) so that inadvertent disqualifications are prevented.

If a Councillor is unable to attend a meeting they must email the Town Clerk at least 1 day before the meeting (unless the absence relates to ill health or other unforeseen event) to advise of their absence.

The Town Clerk will then advise the meeting of the absence and this will be noted in the minutes.

If a Councillor is absent for 4 consecutive months (from the date of their last attendance at a summoned meeting) the Town Clerk will contact the Councillor and remind them of the '6-month absence rule' and provide a copy of the relevant legislation. They will be asked whether they wish their reason for absence to be approved at the next Full Council meeting and if they do submit a request in writing. This request will be taken to the next Full Council meeting and the details will be available to Councillors and will also be in the public domain.

Failure to request an approval of absence from meetings for 6 months from the date of their last attendance will result in automatic disqualification.

If a Councillor is absent from a meeting they are welcome to share their views on any agenda item(s) but this will not be read out by the Town Clerk at the meeting; however Councillors are welcome to ask another Councillor to read out a statement on their behalf.

Approved by Full Council on 21st July 2022

Reviewed by Full Council on 17th July 2025

Reviewed by Full Council on 19th February 2026