



THORNABY TOWN COUNCIL COUNCIL MEETING ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy and guidance document is designed to promote efficient administration of meetings, avoid meetings being inquorate and permit timely rescheduling of meetings if required. It also highlights accountability for Members.

1. Apologies for Absence:

Members shall give as much advance notice as possible of absence from all meetings invited to.

Although this does not have to be in writing it is always good practice to mention any future absence at any previous meeting attended. Otherwise, the notification can be via an email or mobile phone messaging to the Town Clerk, or telephone the Town Clerk in a timely manner.

The deadline for receipt of an apology with reason for absence is 5pm on the same day as the meeting (sending an email or leaving a message on the answerphone after the office has closed is not acceptable as this may not be checked ahead of the meeting).

Council Members are individually responsible for ensuring they either attend a meeting following receipt of the summons or submit a valid reason for absence (not just an apology which is simply good manners) for approval.

Apologies for absence should normally be made directly by the Member concerned in advance and not via a third person such as another Member at the meeting; and the reason for non-attendance should be recorded.

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| Date of policy: 2023 Approving committee: Full Council Date of committee meeting: 21/10/23 |
| Reviewed: 2025 Approving committee: Full Council Date of Committee meeting: 24/03/25 (FC-25-575) |



2. Extended Periods of Absence:

A Member who does not attend any meetings for a period of six consecutive months will automatically be disqualified as a Councillor for Thornaby Town Council unless the Member has a statutory excuse (Membership of the Armed Forces in time of War) or the reason for absence was approved by affirmative resolution by the Council before the end of the period of non-attendance.

The Town Clerk as Proper Officer not the Council as Corporate Body has a legal duty to discharge the disqualification to which there is no right of appeal.

Council approved Reasons for Absence include:

- Bereavement
- Doctors Fit Note
- Employment working patterns
- Funeral
- Hospitalisation
- Long Term Illness
- Maternity / Paternity / Childcare
- Self-Isolation

If absence becomes necessary for extended periods, members are advised to submit a request for special dispensation to the Town Clerk via email giving the reason for absence, this is then submitted for approval by Council.

A councillor can only avoid losing their position if the Council approves a reason for their absence before the six months are up

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The councillor cannot extend the 6-month rule by submitting apologies for absence at the end of the period.

Once a councillor loses their position, they can't regain it by returning to meetings, and the council can't approve an extension in hindsight.

3. Recording and Publishing Attendance

For all meetings of the Council, the Town Clerk records Members' attendance or nonattendance whether with or without apologies is recorded on the minutes.

The Minutes of Meetings will show:

- Members in Attendance
- Members Apologies with Reason
- Members Absent

This Policy and Guidance Document will be reviewed annually or when legislation dictates.

— Policy ends here —

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