



Extraordinary Full Council

Date: Thursday, 11 June 2020
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: A link to the meeting can be found on the front page of the agenda below.

Membership: (Quorum 21)

The Council membership is listed on the following page.

Chief Executive: Matt Prosser, South Walks House, South Walks Road, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1UZ (Sat Nav DT1 1EE)

For more information about this agenda please telephone Democratic Services on 01305 252216 or susan.dallison@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk



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Due to the current coronavirus pandemic the Council has reviewed its approach to holding committee meetings. Members of the public are welcome to view this meeting and listen to the debate online by using the following link [Click here for the Live Stream](#)

Members of the public wishing to view the meeting from an iPhone, iPad or Android phone will need to download the free Microsoft Teams App to sign in as a Guest, it is advised to do this at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the meeting.

Please note that public speaking has been suspended. However public participation will continue by written submission only. Please see detail set out on this agenda.

Dorset Council is committed to being open and transparent in the way it carries out its business whenever possible. A recording of the meeting will be available on the council's website after the event.

Membership of Dorset Council

Anthony Alford	Stella Jones
Jon Andrews	Andrew Kerby
Rod Adkins	Paul Kimber
Michael Barron	Rebecca Knox
Peter Barrow	Noc Lacey-Clarke
Shane Bartlett	Howard Legg
Pauline Batstone	Robin Legg
Derek Beer	Cathy Lugg
Richard Biggs	Laura Miller
David Bolwell	David Morgan
Alexandra Brenton	Louie O'Leary
Cherry Brooks	Jon Orrell
Piers Brown	Emma Parker
Ray Bryan	Mike Parkes
Andrew Canning	Andrew Parry
Graham Carr-Jones	Mary Penfold
Simon Christopher	Bill Pipe
Kelvin Clayton	Valerie Potheary
Susan Cocking	Byron Quayle
Robin Cook	Molly Rennie
Tim Cook	Belinda Ridout
Toni Coombs	Mark Roberts
Janet Dover	Julie Robinson
Jean Dunseith	Maria Roe
Mike Dyer	David Shortell
Beryl Ezzard	Jane Somper
Tony Ferrari	Andrew Starr
Spencer Flower	Gary Suttle
Les Fry	Clare Sutton
Simon Gibson	Roland Tarr
Barry Goringe	David Taylor
David Gray	Gill Taylor
Matthew Hall	David Tooke
Paul Harrison	William Trite
Jill Haynes	Daryl Turner
Brian Heatley	David Walsh
Ryan Holloway	Peter Wharf
Ryan Hope	Kate Wheller
Robert Hughes	Sarah Williams
Nick Ireland	John Worth
Sherry Jespersen	
Carole Jones	

AGENDA

Page No.

1 APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interest.

3 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive any announcements from the Chairman of Council.

4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

Business of extraordinary meetings of the Full Council – Procedure Rule 3.2 states:

“Unless the Chairman is of the opinion that an item should be considered as a matter of urgency, Full Council will only consider the business which is specified in the notice of the extraordinary meeting. Petitions, questions, deputations and statements will be accepted only if they relate to the business for which the extraordinary meeting has been arranged”. This means that only questions relating to the report on the dispensation to councillors for non-attendance at committee meetings will be accepted unless the Chairman decides that the matter is urgent.

Due to Covid-19 the Council has put in place new arrangements to enable virtual Full Council and committee meetings to take place during the pandemic period and has introduced temporary standing orders to reflect the new legislation. Subject to the statement above members of the public or a town or parish council can submit a written question or statement of no more than 450 words which will be published as a supplement to the agenda prior to the meeting. Although the questions and statements cannot be read out at the meeting the appropriate Portfolio Holder will provide a response to any questions received as part of the meeting.

The full text of the question or statement must be received by 8.30am on Monday 8 June 2020.

Details of the Council’s temporary procedure rules can be found at:

[Dorset Council Constitution](#)

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

Business of extraordinary meetings of the Full Council – Procedure Rule 3.2 states:

“Unless the Chairman is of the opinion that an item should be considered as a matter of urgency, Full Council will only consider the business which is specified in the notice of the extraordinary meeting. Petitions, questions, deputations and statements will be accepted only if they relate to the business for which the extraordinary meeting has been arranged”. This means that petitions and statements will only be accepted if they relate to the report on dispensations for councillors for non attendance at meetings or if the Chairman decides that the matter is urgent.

Due to Covid-19 the Council has put in place new arrangements to enable virtual Full Council and committee meetings to take place during the pandemic period and has introduced temporary standing orders to reflect the new legislation.

The revised petitions scheme and procedures relating to deputations can be viewed at :

[Dorset Council Constitution](#)

6 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

Business of extraordinary meetings of the Full Council – Procedure Rule 3.2 states:

“Unless the Chairman is of the opinion that an item should be considered as a matter of urgency, Full Council will only consider the business which is specified in the notice of the extraordinary meeting. Petitions, questions, deputations and statements will be accepted only if they relate to the business for which the extraordinary meeting has been arranged”. This means that only questions relating to the report on the dispensation to councillors for non-attendance at committee meetings will be accepted unless the Chairman decides that the matter is urgent.

To receive questions submitted by councillors.

The deadline for receipt of questions is 8.30am on Monday 8 June 2020.

7 DISPENSATION FOR NON-ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

7 - 10

To consider a report by the Team Leader, Democratic Services.

8 URGENT ITEMS

To consider any items of business which the Chairman has had prior notification and considers to be urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The reason for the urgency shall be recorded in the minutes.

9 EXEMPT BUSINESS

To move the exclusion of the press and the public for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

The public and the press will be asked to leave the meeting whilst the item of business is considered.

There is no exempt business.

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Full Council 11 June 2020 Dispensation for non-attendance at committee meetings

For Decision

Portfolio Holder:	Cllr S Flower, Leader of the Council
Local Councillor(s):	All
Executive Director:	Jonathan Mair, Corporate Director Legal & Democratic

Report Author: Susan Dallison
Title: Democratic Services Team Leader
Tel: 01305 252216
Email: susan.dallison@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Recommendation:

That all members of council receive a dispensation in relation to Section 85 of the Local Government Act for the period up to and including 6 May 2021 for the reason that not all members may be able to attend a virtual committee meeting during this pandemic period.

Reason for Recommendation:

To prevent members from being disqualified as a councillor during the Covid-19 pandemic period whilst the Council has reduced the number of committee meetings taking place.

1. Executive Summary

On 23 March 2020 Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced that lockdown measures would be introduced in the UK in an attempt to limit the spread of Covid-19. As a result of these unprecedented measures the majority of Dorset Council staff started working from home to comply with the lockdown rules and

all face to face committee meetings, including the Annual Meeting of Council were postponed.

Whilst the Council awaited new regulations to be made to enable virtual committee meetings to take place, officers in Democratic Services and ICT started work on putting in place arrangements to enable virtual meetings to take place as soon as legally possible. On 2 April 2020 the Government laid new regulations which came into force on 4 April 2020 giving councils powers to hold meetings remotely to enable critical decisions to be made during the pandemic period. The regulations are titled 'The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No. 392. The new regulations are in force until 7 May 2021.

Due to the additional resources required to put in place virtual meetings (3 democratic services officers are needed to support each meeting instead of the normal 1) and the Council's focus on supporting vulnerable residents in the community, the Leader of Council made the decision to prioritise a number of committees that would be run as virtual meetings: Cabinet, Audit & Governance Committee, 3 Area Planning Committees, Licensing Sub-committees, Resources Scrutiny Committee and School Appeal Hearings. The Annual Meeting of Council has been postponed until 3 September 2020.

2. Financial Implications

Savings will be achieved by councillors not claiming travel costs for attendance at meetings.

3. Climate implications

Reduction in carbon dioxide emissions from councillors not driving to attend committee meetings that have been postponed during the Coronavirus pandemic.

4. Other Implications

N/a

5. Risk Assessment

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Medium

Residual Risk: Medium

7. Equalities Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been undertaken in respect of this decision however an impact assessment had been undertaken in respect of holding virtual committee meetings.

8. Appendices

None

9. Background Papers

Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1975

Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No. 392

10. Dispensation for non-attendance at committee meetings

- 10.1 Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that councillors who have not attended a meeting in any 6 month period since their last committee attendance will automatically cease to be a member of the Council. This section applies automatically unless the failure to attend is approved by Full Council in advance.
- 10.2 During this pandemic period the normal schedule of Full Council, committee meetings has been temporarily suspended with a focus on prioritising key decision making through virtual meetings of Cabinet, quasi-judicial committees, Audit and Governance Committee and scrutiny via the Resources Scrutiny Committee. Attendance by a committee member at a virtual meeting does meet the requirements of Section 85 of the Local Government Act for attendance. However, a number of councillors may not have the opportunity to attend a virtual committee meeting depending on which committees they have been appointed to and whether those committees are being held. In addition the Covid-19 pandemic increases the risk that councillors may become unwell and therefore unable to attend a virtual committee meeting.
- 10.3 It is therefore considered appropriate, that during this public health crisis, an automatic dispensation is given to all councillors in respect of the 6 month non-attendance rule, up to and including 6 May 2021.

Footnote:

Issues relating to financial, legal, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.