

REPORT TO:		Council	
DATE:		28 May 2026	
REPORT AUTHOR:		Jane Ellis, Executive Director	
TITLE OF REPORT:		Non Attendance by Councillor for 6 Months	
EXEMPT REPORT (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A)	No	Not applicable	
KEY DECISION:	No	N/A	

1. **Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 For Council to consider agreeing that Councillor Ethan Rawcliffe continue to be a member of the Council if he remains unable to attend any relevant meeting of the Council on or before 3rd June 2026.

2. **Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Council agrees that Councillor Ethan Rawcliffe continues to be a member of the Council if, due to illness, he is unable to attend any relevant meeting of the Council on or before 3rd June 2026, such approval to extend until 3rd December 2026.

3. **Reasons for Recommendations and Background**

- 3.1 Records show that Councillor Ethan Rawcliffe last attended a meeting of the local authority on 3rd December 2025 (this was a meeting of the Cabinet). He has been unable to attend any relevant meetings since then due to illness.
- 3.2 Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that where a Councillor fails to attend any meeting of the authority for a period of six consecutive months from the date of the last attendance, subject to certain exceptions, he or she automatically ceases to be a member of the authority. The exceptions do not apply in this instance as they relate to military service or service of the King at a time of war or any emergency related to that service.
- 3.3 Council may agree that an absent councillor remain a member of the Council despite their absence, but this decision must be made before the end of the 6 month period and the decision cannot by law be made retrospectively. Unless otherwise stated in the decision, the approval will permit an indefinite further absence, but it is generally

regarded as good practice to specify both the reason for which the approval is given and to put a time limit on the period for which it will run. The 3rd December 2026 is suggested as a time limit in this instance as it allows a significant period for recovery, whilst setting a date within which Cllr Rawcliffe’s position must be reviewed again. If Council does not agree to authorise Cllr Rawcliffe’s absence, and he does not attend a meeting before 3rd June 2026, he will automatically cease to be a member of the Council on 4th June 2026 and the Council would be under a duty to declare his office vacant under Section 86 of the Local Government Act 1972.

3.4 If the requested approval is given, and Councillor Rawcliffe does not then attend a relevant meeting of the Council before 3rd December 2026, he would automatically cease to be a councillor on 4th December 2026 unless the Council has given another approval for absence before that date.

4. Implications

Financial implications (including any future financial commitments for the Council)	None arising from this report
Legal and human rights implications	These are set out in section 3 above.
Assessment of risk	If the Council does not authorise Cllr Rawcliffe’s absence on or before the 3rd June 2026, approval cannot be given retrospectively and the Council will need to declare a vacancy under Section 86 of the Local Government Act 1972. Council should note that there are no other Council meetings before this date at which this decision can be taken.
Equality and diversity implications <i>A Customer First Analysis should be completed in relation to policy decisions and should be attached as an appendix to the report.</i>	Not applicable in relation to this report.

**5. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985:
List of Background Papers**

5.1 None