



Fishguard & Goodwick Town Council

Meetings Apologies Policy

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the procedure for Town Councillors to notify the Town Council of their inability to attend meetings. It ensures that elected councillors fulfil their responsibilities while complying with legal requirements regarding attendance.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all elected and co-opted members of the Town Council, who have been officially served notice of their election or appointment.

3. Legal Context

Town Councillors are elected members and must adhere to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, Section 85, which requires that councillors attend council meetings regularly. If a councillor does not attend any meeting for six consecutive months, without the Council formally approving their reason for absence, they will automatically lose their seat.

4. Procedure for Offering Apologies

a) Advance Notice:

- Councillors who cannot attend a meeting must notify the Town Clerk as soon as possible and no later than 16:00 on the day of the meeting.
- Apologies can be offered in person, by email, via telephone, or phone messaging service.

b) Contents of Apology:

- The councillor must provide a valid reason for their absence, such as illness, family emergencies, work commitments, or other pre-approved personal matters.

c) Recording of Apologies:

- The Clerk will record apologies in the minutes of the meeting. However, the specific reason offered and approved will not be recorded.
- The Town Council will vote at the start of the meeting to determine whether the apology will be accepted and, as such, the member excused.
- If the reason is not deemed acceptable, the absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised'.

d) Non-Attendance Without Apology:

- Councillors who fail to provide an apology before the meeting and do not attend will have their absence recorded as 'absent without apology'.
- Persistent unauthorised absences, under the Local Government Act 1972, councillors will face disqualification if they fail to attend for a continuous six-month period without valid reason.

e) Exceptional Circumstances:

- In cases of emergency or other unavoidable circumstances only (i.e. broken-down vehicle), councillors may submit apologies up to the start of the meeting.
- In exceptional circumstances (i.e. medical emergency), councillors may submit apologies after the meeting. The Town Council will consider these late apologies on a case-by-case basis and vote on whether to accept them.
- The minutes of attendance at a meeting will reflect the position known at the time of the meeting. Should the Town Council vote to accept late apologies, it will be reflected in the minutes of the meeting at which the apologies are heard.

5. Responsibilities

Councillors: Councillors must ensure they notify the Town Clerk if they are unable to attend meetings and provide valid reasons for their absence. As elected members, Councillors have a duty to serve their community and fulfil the responsibilities of their office.

Clerk: The Clerk is responsible for recording apologies, ensuring the meeting minutes reflect accurate attendance, and presenting councillor absences for the council's consideration.

6. Notice of Election and Responsibilities

All councillors, upon election or co-option, are served notice of their appointment, which outlines their duties, including the requirement to attend council meetings. By accepting this notice, councillors agree to comply with the Council's Meetings Apologies Policy and to provide reasons for any non-attendance as outlined in this Policy.

7. Consequences of Non-Compliance

Councillors who fail to attend any meeting for a continuous six-month period, without the Council's approval of their reason for absence, will be disqualified and removed from their seat.

Date Adopted: 1st September 2026

Minute Reference: TC/26-09