



Dunton Green Parish Council

Meeting Attendance Policy & Guidance

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.

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, there is a duty on Councillors to attend meetings of the Council upon which they have been elected to serve. Accordingly, a Councillor summoned to a meeting of the Council or one of its committees or sub-committees is expected to make every effort to attend.

Apologies for Absence

Members shall give as much advance notice as possible of absence from all meetings. Although this does not have to be in writing, it is good practice to mention future absence at a previous meeting, send an email to the Clerk, or telephone the 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 this time is not acceptable as this may not be checked ahead of the meeting).

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 must 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 must be approved by affirmative resolution and recorded in the minutes by Council.

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 Dunton Green Parish 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.¹ The Clerk as Proper Officer² not the Council as Corporate Body has a legal duty to discharge the disqualification to which there is no right of appeal. Members are reminded they are responsible for monitoring their own attendance.

Council approved Reasons for Absence include:

Long Term Illness / Hospitalisation / Doctors Fit Note / Self Isolation
Bereavement / Funeral
Maternity / Paternity / Childcare
Work Commitments

If absence becomes necessary for extended periods, members are advised to submit a request to the Clerk giving the reason for absence, for approval by Council.

¹ Local Government Act 1972, s. 85(1)&(2)

² Local Government Act 1972, s. 112

Meeting Attendance: Illness and Respect for Attendees

Whilst there is a duty on Councillors to make every effort to attend meetings of the Council upon which they have been elected to serve, there remains an onus of responsibility for all regarding the health and safety of meeting participants. Where a councillor (or a member of staff or a member of the public) is ill they must consider whether their attendance is likely to put at risk the health and safety of other attendees and/or consider that the use of a face covering might be appropriate to help minimise the spread of infection should they feel it appropriate that they attend. Dunton Green Parish Council is a Civility & Respect Pledge Council and as such expects that respect to extend to matters such as this.

Recording and Publishing Attendance

For all meetings of the Council, the Clerk will record Members' attendance, or non-attendance with or without apologies. The Minutes of these meetings will show Members in attendance and Members absent with and without apologies³.

An Attendance Book is signed by Members in attendance at each meeting and any apologies for absence are recorded in this book by the Clerk.

This Policy and Guidance Document will be reviewed annually or should legislation dictate.

Reviewed and Adopted at the Meeting of the Parish Council on Tuesday 11th July 2023

Review History

Reviewed and Adopted at the Meeting of the Parish Council on Tuesday 8th November 2022

Adopted and Approved at the Meeting of the Parish Council on Tuesday 10th May 2022

³ LGA 1972, Sch12, para 40.