

Recommendation of the Members' Code of Conduct Committee

Council – 20 July 2017

Review of Petition Scheme

1. At its meeting on 25 April 2017 the Members' Code of Conduct Committee considered a report on a review of the current Petition Scheme.
2. The Council adopted a Petition Scheme on 22 July 2010 with the following options for responding to a petition:
 - a) support the action the petition requests
 - b) dismiss the action the petition requests
 - c) if the content relates to a matter on the agenda for the meeting the petition be considered when the item is debated; or
 - d) the petition be referred to the Cabinet or Overview and Scrutiny Committee for further consideration
3. The Petition Scheme was based on a Model Scheme and although the duty on councils to run a petitions scheme was abolished by the Localism Act 2011, the Council continues to run the previously adopted Scheme in order to provide an opportunity for residents to express their concerns and priorities to their local authority.
4. The Members' Code of Conduct Committee was asked to consider a proposal to widen the options for responding to petitions in the most appropriate way after members had expressed concern that Standing Orders limited the options available to them.
5. As there is no longer a statutory requirement to have a Petition Scheme, the Council may adapt the Scheme as it sees fit to include a wider choice of responses to the matters that come before it.
6. The proposed options for responses to petitions were as follows:
 - (a) take, or support, the action the petition requests; or
 - (b) not to take the action requested for reasons put forward in the debate; or
 - (c) note the petition and keep the matter under review; or
 - (d) if the content relates to a matter on the agenda for the meeting the petition be considered when the item is debated; or
 - (e) the petition be referred to the Cabinet or Overview and Scrutiny Committee for further consideration
7. Cabinet recommends Council to agree the proposed changes to the Petition Scheme.

Murray Litvak
Chairman of Members' Code of Conduct Committee

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