
MEETING	AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
DATE	6 DECEMBER 2010
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS B WATSON (CHAIR), BROOKS (VICE-CHAIR), FIRTH, HYMAN, SCOTT AND GUNNELL
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLOR VASSIE

PART B - MATTERS REFERRED TO COUNCIL.

53. UPDATED COUNCIL RESPONSE TO THE EPETITIONS DUTY IN THE LOCAL DEMOCRACY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION ACT

[See also under Part A Minutes].

Members received a report that provided an update on how the council intended to respond to the petitions duty in the Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009 (2009 Act), following recent changes introduced by the new Government.

Members recommended the following amendments to the scheme:

- Further consideration to be given as to whether people other than residents, would have the same rights in respect of petitions e.g. visitors to the city.
- Paragraph 3 under “How will the Council Respond” to read “If the petition is about something over which the council has no direct control e.g. the local railway or hospital, we *may* refer it to the council’s relevant partner organisation...”
- Paragraph 1 under “Securing a Full Council Debate” to read “*Where* a petition contains more than 750 signatures it will be debated by the full council. This means that the issue raised in the petition will be discussed at a meeting which all Councillors can attend *and vote.*”

The Head of Civic, Democratic and Legal Services suggested that the matter should be referred to the Council meeting scheduled for March, but advised that legislation may change again in the coming months and would be monitored accordingly.

RESOLVED: That Council be asked to consider the recommendations of the Audit and Governance Committee in respect of the Petitions Scheme, including the suggestion that the number of signatures be 750 rather than the 1000 suggested in the draft scheme.

REASON: In order to comply properly with the legal requirements for introducing this duty.

Councillor B Watson, Chair
[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.50 pm].