
**Customer & Corporate Services Scrutiny
Management Committee**

12 June 2017

Report of the Assistant Director - Legal and Governance

Schedule of Petitions

Summary

1. Members of this Committee are aware of their role in the initial consideration of petitions received by the Authority. The current petitions process was considered by the Audit and Governance Committee on 2 October 2014 and endorsed by Council on 9 October 2014. This process aims to ensure scrutiny of the actions taken in relation to petitions received either by Members or Officers.

Background

2. Following agreement of the above petitions process, Members of the Corporate and Scrutiny Management Policy and Scrutiny Committee (CSMC) had been considering a full schedule of petitions received at each meeting, commenting on actions taken by the Executive Member or Officer, or awaiting decisions to be taken at future Executive Member Decision Sessions.
3. However, in order to simplify this process Members agreed, at their June 2015 meeting, that the petitions annex should in future be provided in a reduced format in order to make the information relevant and manageable. At that meeting it was agreed that future petitions reports should include an annex of current petitions and agreed actions, but only following consideration of the petitions by the Executive or relevant Executive Member or Officer.
4. This was agreed, in the knowledge that the full petitions schedule was publicly available on the Council's website and that it was updated and republished after each meeting of the Committee.

<http://democracy.york.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13020&path=0>

5. **Current Petitions Update**

A copy of the reduced petitions schedule is now attached at Annex A of the report which provides a list of new petitions received to date. There have been no petitions considered by the Executive or relevant Executive Member/Officer since the last meeting of the Committee in February. With regards petition no. 83 – Windmill Lane Playing Fields, this has been included on the Petitions Schedule for fullness of record however, in accordance with the Petitions Scheme, has been passed to the relevant decision maker (Planning Committee) as it relates to a planning application.

6. **The Process**

There are a number of options available to the Committee as set out in paragraph 7 below, however these are not exhaustive. Every petition is, of course, unique, and it may be that Members feel a different course of action from the standard is necessary.

Options

7. Having considered the reduced Schedule attached which provides details of petitions received and considered by the Executive/Executive Member since the last meeting of the Committee; Members have a number of options in relation to those petitions:

- Request a fuller report, if applicable, for instance when a petition has received substantial support;
- Note receipt of the petition and the proposed action;
- Ask the relevant decision maker or the appropriate Executive Member to attend the Committee to answer questions in relation to it;
- Undertake a detailed scrutiny review, gathering evidence and making recommendations to the decision maker;
- Refer the matter to Full Council where its significance requires a debate;

If Members feel that appropriate action has already been taken or is planned, then no further consideration by scrutiny may be necessary.

8. Following this meeting, the lead petitioner in each case will be kept informed of this Committee's consideration of their petition, including any further action Members may decide to take.

Consultation

9. All Groups were consulted on the process of considering more appropriate ways in which the Council deal with and respond to petitions, resulting in the current process. Relevant Directorates are involved and have been consulted on the handling of the petitions outlined in Annex A.

Implications

10. There are no known legal, financial, human resource or other implications directly associated with the recommendations in this report. However, depending upon what, if any, further actions Members agree to there may, of course, be specific implications for resources which would need to be addressed.

Risk Management

11. There are no known risk implications associated with the recommendations in this report. Members should, however, assess the reputational risk by ensuring appropriate and detailed consideration is given to petitions from the public.

Recommendations

12. Members are asked to consider the petitions received on the attached Schedule at Annex A, and agree an appropriate course of action in each case.

Reason: To ensure the Committee carries out its requirements in relation to petitions.

Contact Details:

Author:
Laura Clark
Democracy Officer
Tel No. 01904 554538
e: Laura.Clark@york.gov.uk

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:
Andrew Docherty
AD Legal and Governance

Report
Approved

Date

2 June 2017

Wards Affected:

All

Background Papers: None

Annexes:

Annex A – Extract from schedule of petitions received and action taken to date