
**Customer & Corporate Services Scrutiny
Management Committee**

10 June 2019

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 former 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>

Current Petitions Update

5. 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 together with details of those considered by the Executive or relevant Executive Member/Officer since the last meeting of the Committee in April. Further information relating to petitions which have been considered by the Executive Members/Officers since the last meeting are set out below:

Petition Number:

116. Traffic Speeds on Wetherby Road.

This 19 name petition calling for action to control vehicle speeds on Wetherby Road was presented by Councillor Waller at an Executive member for Transport and Planning Decision Session on 15 November 2018. It was considered by the Executive Member for Transport and Planning on 14 March 2019 when it was resolved that officers be requested to notify Ward/Parish Councillors that:

- a) The current speeds on Wetherby Road would meet the existing Council policy for the potential reinstatement of a Vehicle Activated Sign funded by the Ward/Parish Council.
- b) If speeding remains a concern a further request for investigation could be submitted to North Yorkshire Police after August 2020 in accordance with the current Speed Management Policy.
- c) Speed camera vans are managed solely by North Yorkshire Police and any request for the implementation of Safety Cameras on Wetherby Road would need to be communicated directly to the Police.

123. Kingsway area improvements before further building works starts.

This 23-name petition called for improvements prior to any further building work starting in the Hob Moor area: Improving the access along Kingsway West/Ascot Way; removing where necessary, the grass verge; providing dropped kerbs of lay-by parking where this doesn't already exist; providing alternative, modern, children's play facilities before any existing provision is removed. It was presented at Full Council and was considered by the Executive Member for Transport and Planning on 14 March 2019 when it was resolved that officers be requested to notify ward Councillors that:

- a) The impact of development on the adjacent highway network has been considered as part of the planning process for individual developments.
- b) Laybys are not considered to be necessary at this location for road safety or congestion reasons however could be considered for funding from Ward Council funds if considered to be a priority for the area.
- c) The provision of children's play facilities will be reviewed before any existing provision is removed.

124. Highway repairs in the Ridgeway area.

This 8-name paper petition calling for action to have roads and footpaths in the Ridgeway area repaired and, where necessary, resurfaced and that grass verges be "edged" and hedges trimmed back so that the original widths of footpaths are restored, was presented at Full Council. It was considered by the Executive Member for Transport and Planning on 14 March 2019 when it was resolved that officers be requested to notify the lead petitioners and Ward Councillors that maintenance for all streets is prioritised using a citywide evidence based process and that the streets would be maintained when their condition warrants intervention when compared to other streets across the city.

125. Highway repairs in the Askham Lane area.

This 13-name petition called for action to have roads and footpaths (including speed cushions) at the low numbered end of Askham Lane repaired and that grass verges be "edged" and that hedges/trees are trimmed back so that the original width of the footpath is restored was presented to Full Council. It was considered by the Executive member for Transport and Planning in 14 March 2019 when it was resolved that officers be requested to notify the lead petitioners and Ward Councillors that maintenance for all streets is prioritised using a citywide evidence based process and that the streets would be maintained when their condition warrants intervention when compared to other streets across the city.

127. To consider a full resurface of Grange Street, York.

This 127-name petition was handed in by Cllr D'Agorne. It was considered by the Executive member for Transport and Planning in 14 March 2019 when it was resolved that officers be requested to notify the lead petitioners and Ward Councillors that maintenance for all streets is prioritised using a citywide evidence based process and that the streets

would be maintained when their condition warrants intervention when compared to other streets across the city.

128. Petitions for new road surface at Minster Close, Corner Close, Helmsley Grove, Westfield Grove, Wigginton and Kennedy Drive, Little Lane, Lowfield Drive, Coppice Close Haxby .

These paper petitions containing 13, 19, 16, 11, 26, nine, 17 and seven names respectively were presented by Councillor Cuthbertson at Full Council on 28 February. They were considered by the Executive member for Transport and Planning in 14 March 2019 when it was resolved that officers be requested to notify the lead petitioners and Ward Councillors that maintenance for all streets is prioritised using a citywide evidence based process and that the streets would be maintained when their condition warrants intervention when compared to other streets across the city.

140. Petition to ask City of York Council to declare a Climate Emergency.

The electronic copy of this petition had 567 signatures, the hard copy 234 signatures and there were a further 85 handprints. It was presented on behalf of Extinction Rebellion by Cllr Waller at Full Council on 21 March 2019. The Petition was discussed as part of a Motion at Full Council and City of York Council agreed to declare a Climate Emergency.

The Process

6. 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 resources 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 as further outlined in this report, and agree an appropriate course of action in each case.

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

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Wards Affected:

All

Background Papers: None

Annexes:

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