
**Corporate & Scrutiny Management Policy &
Scrutiny Committee**

5 September 2016

Report of the Assistant Director Governance & ICT

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

Petition Number

46 & 46a. Ban Lettings Boards

Two petitions have been received both of which requested the Council to Ban Lettings Boards in locations where there were an excessive amount and where there was local support. The first came via an e-petition which ran from 17 November 2015 to 31 March 2016 on the Council's website, and the second, signed by 182 local residents, presented as a hard copy petition to Council on 17 December 2015 by Cllr Shepherd.

The Committee had previously been updated that Officers had been considering potential ways of applying for special powers to ban letting boards under Schedule 3, Part 1, Class 3A of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007). This had included discussions with other local authorities who had undertaken this process.

Since that time the Committee have made requests for an update on the current situation in relation to the petitions requests. This update is now provided for Members information at Annex B.

54. Reduce the Speed on Haxby Moor

This e-petition, which requested the Council to reduce the speed of traffic on Haxby Moor, was uploaded on to the Council's website on 13 July 2016 and ran until 21 August 2016. However at the end of that period no residents had signed the petition.

As the petition received under the 10 signatory threshold for consideration by CSMC the petition was forwarded to the Director of City and Environmental Services to enable him to respond directly to the petitioner regarding his concerns.

56. Ashley Park Road

Councillor Ayre presented a petition to Council, on 21 July 2016, signed by 34 residents requesting the Council to move a lamp post situated adjacent to 19 Ashley Park Road owing to resident's safety concerns. Since that date Officers have met with Cllr Ayre and confirmed the inclusion of the column in this years replacement programme for completion by November 2016.

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 together with the update at Annex B on the Lettings Boards petitions; 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 and actions reported, as set out in paragraph 5 above and on the attached Schedule at Annex A and update at Annex B, and agree an appropriate course of action in each case.

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

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**Report
Approved**



Date 24 August 2016

Wards Affected:

All



Background Papers: None

Annexes:

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

Annex B - Banning Letting Boards update