

Report of the AD Governance & ICT

New Arrangements for Petitions

Summary

1. Members of this Committee are now aware of their new 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 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. However, in order to simplify this process Members agreed, at the Committee's last meeting on 15 June, that the petitions annex should in future be provided in a reduced format in order to make the information relevant and manageable.
3. This was agreed, in the knowledge that the full petitions schedule was publically available on the Council's website and that it was updated and republished after each meeting of the Committee.
<http://democracy.york.gov.uk/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD1956&ID=1956&RPID=10321482&sch=doc&cat=13020&path=13020>

4. **Current Petitions Update**

A copy of the reduced petitions schedule is now attached at Annex A of the report with the following, current petitions:

20. **Anti-Social Behaviour, Clifton Moor Retail Park**
This petition has been referred to Jane Mowat, Head of Community Safety, in the first instance, it is hoped to provide a further update to Members at the meeting in relation to next steps associated with this petition.
22. **Pedestrian Crossing, Askham Lane/Westfield School**
This petition received at Council from Cllr Waller is due for consideration by the Executive Member for Transport and Planning at a Decision Session on 23 July 2015.
23. **Adoption of Nevison Grove, Stirling Grove and Wilsthorpe Grove**
We have been advised that there are Council policies in place to deal with requests for road adoptions. The lead petitioner has now been advised of the correct procedure in relation to their request.
24. **100% Affordable Community Housing for Oliver House, Bishophill**
This petition was considered in conjunction with the recent report to the Executive on 25 June 2015 regarding the disposal of Oliver House. Unfortunately the Yorspace bid for Oliver houses was considerably lower than the other top 10 bids and it was noted that a decision to sell the site on the basis of community value and high level projections of savings would have been highly challengeable for the authority. The Executive therefore took the decision to support McCarthy and Stone as the preferred bidder for the disposal of the former Elderly Persons Home. The Executive did however note that the Yorspaces bid did achieve the highest score on community value and instructed Officers to work with the group to identify future opportunities.
25. **Aldreth Grove Residents Parking Request**
This petition received by Network Management is due for consideration by the Executive Member for Transport and Planning at a Decision Session on 23 July 2015.
26. **No to Waste Collection Cuts**
This e-petition ran to 30 May 2015 and following changes in the Council administration, any next steps in relation to this petition will be advised following the outcome of revised budgetary

considerations under debate at the forthcoming July Council meeting.

27. **Multi Academy Trust**

The Director of Education of Children's Services, Education & Skills in consultation with the Executive has confirmed that legally it is for the three governing bodies of Millthorpe, Scarcroft and Knavesmire schools to make the decision on whether to convert to a Multi-Schools Academy Trust.

Therefore, the Executive does not believe that a non-binding ballot of the local community would substantially add to the existing comprehensive, inclusive and varied consultation process already underway.

However, the three governing bodies are being asked to reiterate to all parents and stakeholders how they can engage with the current consultation process to make their views known and if necessary extend the consultation timescale to ensure all parties have the opportunity to comment.

The Council's aim continues to be to ensure that children in York have the best possible education and we will continue to work in partnership with schools across the city, whatever their status, to achieve this.

28. **Repair Dodsworth Area Road Surface**

This petition is due for consideration by the Executive Member for Transport and Planning at a Decision Session to be arranged in August

5. **The Process**

There are a number of options available to the Committee as set out in paragraph 6 below. 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

6. Having considered the reduced Schedule attached which provides details of new petitions received, 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.

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

Consultation

8. 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

9. 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

10. 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

11. Members are asked to consider the petitions received and actions reported, as set out in paragraph 4 above and 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 new requirements in relation to petitions.

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**Report
Approved**



Date

3 July 2015

Wards Affected:

All



Background Papers: None

Annexes:

Annex A - Schedule of petitions received and actions taken to date