



London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

COUNCIL

29 MAY 2013

PETITIONS: ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13

Report of the Leader – Councillor Nicholas Botterill

Open Report

Classification - For Decision

Key Decision: No

Wards Affected: None

Accountable Executive Director: Jane West Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Governance

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1. This report outlines the operation of the Council's Petitions Scheme over the past 12 months.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1. That Council agree to continue to operate the Petitions Scheme as outlined in paragraph 4.2.

2.2. That the operation of the Council's Petitions Scheme be noted.

3. REASONS FOR DECISION

3.1. The Council has made a commitment to receive an annual report.

4. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

4.1. The Council on 30 June 2010 adopted a Petitions Scheme in accordance with the requirements of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. The Council's Scheme drew upon the model Petitions Scheme published by DCLG. The Scheme included a commitment to submit an annual report to the Council containing the following information:

- the subject matter of all petitions received during the year;
- the number of signatures to each petition;
- a summary of the Council's response to each petition;
- any recommendations for changes to the Scheme in the light of experience with its operation.

4.2. On 24 September 2010 DCLG wrote to all Local Authority Chief Executives to advise that with immediate effect the Government had withdrawn 'Listening to communities: Statutory guidance on the duty to respond to petitions'. Despite repealing the statutory guidance, local authorities were still legally bound to "provide a facility for making petitions in electronic form". The Council introduced an E-petitions facility late in 2010 in compliance with this requirement. From 1 April 2012, the provisions of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 related to petitions were repealed. The consequence is that the Council does not have to have operate a petition scheme unless its wants to do so on a voluntary basis. It is recommended that the Council continue to operate the Petition scheme providing another avenue for residents to engage with the democratic process.

5. Annual Report 2012/13

5.1. The information referred to in paragraph 1.1 above is set out in the Appendix to this report.

5.2. The Scheme has worked well over the past three years. In 2012/13, nine petitions were received, of which six were valid. All the valid petitions were considered and responded to. Three were considered each by Cabinet Members and officers. There was also a petition submitted online but no signatures were received. While the Council also received another two invalid petitions related to De Morgan Road and the Hammersmith Farmers' Market.

5.3. The Scheme also allows people living, working or studying in the borough to petition an Overview and Scrutiny Committee but this did not happen during the period under review.

5.4. Council at its meeting on 30 June 2010, agreed the number of signatures required for each category of petition at levels outlined below. The limits were set at a level to encourage residents and other interested parties to access the democratic process. The threshold limits only relate to the decision making routes referred to below, all petitions received by the Council which falls below these thresholds will continue to be considered by officers in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Member. Once an issue has been considered by a decision maker under the scheme, a subsequent petition on the same issue will not be reconsidered by another decision maker because it has exceeded the next signature threshold.

Summary of Petition Types, Requirements and Decision Maker.

Type of Petition	Proposed Threshold (Number of Signatories)	Decision Maker
Council Debate	5000	Full Council
Call an Officer to give evidence	2000	Select Committee or Scrutiny Board
Petitions to Cabinet	250	Cabinet
Petitions to Cabinet Members	100	Relevant Cabinet Member(s)

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

6.1. There are no financial implications to this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1. The comments of the Director are within this report.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

No.	Description of Background Papers	Name/Ext of holder of file/copy	Department/ Location
1.	Various Petitions submitted during the year.	Kayode Adewumi ext. 2499	Finance and Corporate Governance, Head Governance and Scrutiny
CONTACT OFFICER		NAME: Kayode Adewumi EXT. 2499	

APPENDIX

PETITIONS RECEIVED BY THE COUNCIL IN 2012/13

No.	PETITION SUBJECT	DATE RECEIVED	SUBMITTED TO:	No. OF SIGNATURES	RESPONSE
1.	Residents Only Parking in Nonello Street, SW6 4JB	26 April 2012	Cabinet Member for Environment	44	Letter from Cabinet Member to petition organiser.
2.	Twynholme Residents Association	23 May 2012	Cabinet Member for Housing	100	Letter from Cabinet Member to petition organiser.
3.	Use and access to Garage area located on Aldine Street, Shepherds Bush	24 July 2012	Officers	22	Officers addressed the issues raised.
4	Double pavement kerb lines at Hetlev Road at the junction with Uxbridge Road, W12	1 November 2012	Leader	80	Letter from the Leader to petition organiser.
5.	Sterndale Road, W14	26 November 2012	Officers	30	Officer Response
6	Proposed Redevelopment In Sandilands Road, SW6	10 January 2013	Officers	32	Officer Response

Invalid

	Petition Subject	Date Received and Signatures	Reason
1	De Morgan Road	22 October 2012 17 signatures	This was treated as an Anti social behaviour complaint as there was insufficient detail to treat it as a petition.
2	Extend parking restrictions on QPR match days	01 December 2012 Nobody signed the E-Petition	No response
3	Hammersmith Farmers' Markets	11 December 2012 16 signatures	This was treated as a complaint and officers responded accordingly.