

**Haringey** Council

## **APPENDIX 6**

*[Additions to the scheme are underlined and sections that have been removed or replaced are crossed through]*

### **Haringey Petition Scheme**

The council welcomes petitions and recognises that petitions are one way in which people can let us know their concerns. All petitions sent or presented to the council will receive an acknowledgement from the council within 10 working days of receipt. This acknowledgement will set out what we plan to do with the petition. We will treat something as a petition if it is identified as being a petition, or if it seems to us that it is intended to be a petition.

You can submit a petition to the council by:

- Sending a paper petition to:

Ian Christie  
Feedback and Information Manager  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor, River Park House  
225 High Road  
Wood Green  
N22 8HQ

- E-mailing an electronic (scanned) copy of the petition to [petitions@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:petitions@haringey.gov.uk)
- Signing and submitting your petitions online via our petitions homepage at [www.haringey.gov.uk/petitions](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/petitions).
- Presenting your petition to a meeting of the council.\*

\*Dates of Council meetings can be found via the meetings calendar on the Council website. If you would like to present your petition to the council please contact Ken Pryor (details below) by 10 a.m. at least 5 clear working days before the meeting (e.g. Friday for a meeting on the Monday 10 days later) and the process will be explained to you. Further details of how to present a petition to full Council are outlined later in this scheme.

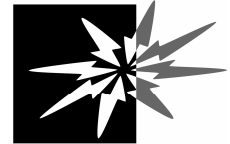
Ken Pryor  
Deputy Head of Local Democracy and Member Services  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor, River Park House  
225 High Road  
Wood Green  
N22 8HQ  
[ken.pryor@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:ken.pryor@haringey.gov.uk)

Tel. 020 8489 2915

If you are submitting a paper petition please submit the original copy of the petition (If you have submitted a scanned version you may be asked to provide the original copy). Please also note that the council reserves the right to validate petition signatures and addresses.

### **What are the guidelines for submitting a petition?**

Petitions submitted to the council must include:



**Haringey Council**

- A clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition. It should state what action the petitioners wish the council to take
- The name, address and signature of any person supporting the petition.

Paper petitions may also be submitted alongside an electronic petition. Please clearly indicate on your petition form that signatures are also being collected on the website or vice versa.

Petitions should be accompanied by contact details, including the name, address and phone number of the petition organiser. This is the person we will contact to explain how we will respond to the petition. ~~The contact details of the petition organiser and the other petitioners, other than their name, will not be placed on the website.~~ If the petition does not identify a petition organiser, we will attempt to contact one of the signatories to the petition to agree who should act as the petition organiser. Copies of paper petitions will be made available on the council website. This means that the contact details of the petition organiser, and the other petitioners, that are submitted when signing a paper petition will be visible on the council website. If you sign an e-petition people viewing the petition online will be able to see your name in the list of those who have signed it but your contact details will not be visible. However in respect of e-petitions the Council may be obliged to disclose the street where petitioners live, in the event of a Freedom of Information Act request or following a requirement under another statutory ~~requirement~~ provision.

### **What will the council do when it receives my petition?**

Where contact details have been supplied, an acknowledgement will be sent to the petition organiser within 10 working days of receiving the petition. It will let them know what we plan to do with the petition and when they can expect to hear from us again. It will also be published on our website.

If we are in a position to carry out the action in your petition then our acknowledgement may confirm the actions we have undertaken and the petition will be closed. If the petition has enough signatures to trigger a council debate, or a senior officer giving evidence, then the acknowledgment will confirm this and tell you when and where the meeting will take place. If the petition needs more investigation, we will tell you the steps we plan to take.

To ensure that people know what we are doing in response to the petitions we receive the details of all the petitions submitted to us will be published on our website, except in cases where this would be inappropriate. ~~Whenever possible we will also publish all correspondence relating to the petition. All sensitive personal details will be removed from any related correspondence.~~ As a general rule we will not publish correspondence relating to the petition unless we consider it necessary or otherwise appropriate.

When you sign an e-petition you will receive this information by email. We will not send you anything which is not relevant to the petition you have signed, unless you choose to receive other emails from us.

### **Are there any circumstances in which my petition will not be accepted?**

Petitions which are considered to be vexatious, abusive or otherwise inappropriate will not be accepted and no action will be taken. We also reserve the right to reject petitions where they are substantially the same as a petition which has been submitted to the Council in the past 6 months. We will explain the reasons for this in our acknowledgement of the petition. The Monitoring Officer will make the final ruling on this.

In the period immediately before an election or referendum we may need to deal with your petition differently – if this is the case we will explain the reasons and discuss the revised timescale which will apply. If a petition does not follow the guidelines set out above, the council may decide not to do anything further with it. In that case, we will write to you to explain the reasons.

If the petition applies to a planning or licensing application, is a statutory petition (for example requesting a referendum on having an elected mayor), or on a matter where there is already an existing right of appeal, such as council tax banding and non-domestic rates, alternative procedures to this scheme will apply.

### **How will the council respond to petitions?**

Our response to a petition will depend on what a petition asks for and how many people have signed it, but may include one or more of the following:

- taking the action requested in the petition
- considering the petition at a council meeting
- holding an inquiry into the matter
- undertaking research into the matter
- holding a public meeting
- holding a consultation
- holding a meeting with petitioners
- referring the petition for consideration by the council's overview and scrutiny committee\*
- calling a referendum
- writing to the petition organiser setting out our views about the request in the petition

\*The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is a committee of councillors who are responsible for scrutinising the work of the council – in other words, the overview and scrutiny committee has the power to hold the council's decision makers to account.

In addition to these steps, the council will consider all specific actions it can potentially take on issues highlighted in a petition.

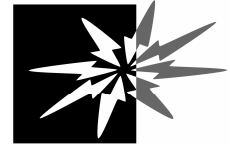
If your petition is about something over which the council has no direct control (for example the local railway or hospital) we will consider making representations on behalf of the community to the relevant body. The council works with a large number of local partners and where possible will work with these partners to respond to your petition. If we are not able to do this for any reason (for example if the petition calls for conflicts with council policy), then we will set out the reasons for this to you.

If your petition is about something that a different council is responsible for we will give consideration to what the best method is for responding to it. This might consist of simply forwarding the petition to the other council, but could involve other steps. In any event we will always notify you of the action we have taken.

### **Petitions to full Council**

The Deputy Head of Local Democracy & Member Services should be notified of any Petitions by 10 a.m. five clear days in advance of the Council meeting e.g. Friday for a meeting on the Monday 10 days later. The petition will be handed to the Mayor, and recorded as received by the Deputy Head of Local Democracy & Member Services without any further debate. The relevant Cabinet member should report the Council's response to the petition at the next ordinary meeting of the Council. A copy of this response will be sent to the Petitioner.

If a petition contains more than 2,200 signatures it will trigger a debate by the full Council, unless it is a petition asking for a senior council officer to give evidence at a public meeting. This means that the issue raised in the petition will be discussed at a meeting which all councillors can attend. The council will endeavour to consider the petition at its next meeting, although on some occasions this may not be possible and consideration will then take place at the following meeting. The petition organiser will be given five minutes to present the petition at the meeting and the petition will then be discussed by councillors for a maximum of 15 minutes. The council will decide how to respond to the



**Haringey** Council

petition at this meeting. They may decide to take the action the petition requests, not to take the action requested for reasons put forward in the debate, or to commission further investigation into the matter, for example by a relevant committee. Where the issue is one on which the council executive are required to make the final decision, the council will decide whether to make recommendations to inform that decision. The petition organiser will receive written confirmation of this decision. This confirmation will also be published on our website.

### **Officer evidence**

Your petition may ask for a senior council officer to give evidence at a public meeting about something for which the officer is responsible as part of their job. For example, your petition may ask a senior council officer to explain progress on an issue, or to explain the advice given to elected members to enable them to make a particular decision.

If your petition contains at least 1,100 signatures, the relevant senior officer will give evidence at a public meeting of the council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee. A list of the senior staff that can be called to give evidence can be found on the Council's website. You should be aware that the overview and scrutiny committee may decide that it would be more appropriate for another officer to give evidence instead of any officer named in the petition – for instance if the named officer has changed jobs. The committee may also decide to call the relevant councillor to attend the meeting. Committee members will ask the questions at this meeting, but you will be able to suggest questions to the chair of the committee by contacting the Overview & Scrutiny Manager by 10 a.m. at least 5 clear days before the meeting.

Overview and Scrutiny Manager  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor, River Park House  
225 High Road  
Wood Green  
N22 8HQ  
[scrutiny@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@haringey.gov.uk)

Tel. 020 8489 6922

### **E-petitions**

The council welcomes e-petitions which are created and submitted through our website. E-petitions must follow the same guidelines as paper petitions.

The petition organiser will need to provide us with their name, postal address and email address. You will also need to decide how long you would like your petition to be open for signatures. The default time set for petitions to run for is two months, but you can choose a shorter or longer timeframe, up to a maximum of 6 months.

When you create an e-petition we will try to publish it online as soon as possible however it may take up to five working days. If we feel we cannot publish your petition for some reason, we will contact you to explain why. You will be able to change and resubmit your petition if you wish. If you do not do this within 10 working days, a summary of the petition and the reason why it has not been accepted will be published under the 'rejected petitions' section of the website.

When an e-petition has closed for signature, it will automatically be submitted to the appropriate service. In the same way as a paper petition, you will receive an acknowledgement within 10 working days. If you would like to present your e-petition to a meeting of the council, please contact Ken Pryor (same details as paper petitions) within 10 working days of receipt of the acknowledgement. A petition acknowledgement and response will be emailed to everyone who has signed the e-petition and elected to receive this information. The acknowledgment and response will also be published on this website.

### **How do I 'sign' an e-petition?**

You can find e-petitions available for signature via our petitions homepage at [www.haringey.gov.uk/petitions](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/petitions). When you sign an e-petition you will be asked to provide your name, your postcode and a valid email address. When you have submitted this information you will be sent an email to the email address you have provided. This email will include a link which you must click on in order to confirm the email address is valid. Once this step is complete your 'signature' will be added to the petition. People visiting the e-petition will be able to see your name in the list of those who have signed it but your contact details will not be visible.

### **What can I do if I feel my petition has not been dealt with properly?**

If you feel that we have not dealt with your petition properly, the petition organiser has the right to request that the council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee review the steps that the council has taken in response to your petition. It is helpful to everyone, and can improve the prospects for a review, if the petition organiser gives a short explanation of the reasons why the council's response is not considered to be adequate.

The committee will endeavour to consider your request at its next meeting, although on some occasions this may not be possible and consideration will take place at the following meeting. Should the committee determine we have not dealt with your petition adequately, it may use any of its powers to deal with the matter. These powers include instigating an investigation, making recommendations to the council executive and arranging for the matter to be considered at a meeting of the full council.

Prior to requesting a formal review by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the steps taken in response to the petition, the petition organiser may contact the Feedback and Information Manager (details below), and the Council will look into your complaint. The Council may uphold your complaint wholly or partly at this stage and look again at the steps taken, or proposed to be taken, in response to your petition. If you remain dissatisfied you continue to have the right to request a review, by the council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, of the steps taken in response to your petition.

Ian Christie  
Feedback and Information Manager  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor, River Park House  
225 High Road  
Wood Green  
N22 8HQ  
[ian.christie@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:ian.christie@haringey.gov.uk)

Tel. 020 8489 2557

Once the appeal has been considered the petition organiser will be informed of the results within 5 working days. The results of the review will also be published on our website.

There is no further internal right of appeal within the Council.