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## Petition Scheme for the London Borough of Ealing

1. The Council will consider all petitions that fall within the scope of this scheme. If you need any advice or assistance in setting up or submitting your petition contact Democratic Services [democraticservices@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@ealing.gov.uk)
2. We accept both paper and e-petitions. The requirements of the Council's petition scheme apply to both paper and e-petitions. E-Petitions must use the council's system which can be found on the council's website. E-petitions set up on external websites are not accepted.
3. We do not accept hybrid petitions, they must either be electronic or paper based but not a mix of the two.
4. Paper petitions can either be submitted to the Council by post or in person. If you are submitting the petition in person, you will need to make an appointment with the Democratic Services team by contacting [democraticservices@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@ealing.gov.uk).
5. If you submit an e-petition on the Council's website, the wording of the petition will first be checked by a member of the Democratic Services team. You may receive some feedback or suggestions on the wording of the petition before it is approved.
6. Should your e-petition be approved, you will have a month to collect signatures. In exceptional circumstances, by agreement of the Monitoring Officer, a longer time period may be granted. When the e-petition reaches its closing date, no more signatures can be collected.
7. The Council will not publish a petition on its website that is defamatory, frivolous, offensive or otherwise inappropriate. Petitions asking the Council to take action that is outside its powers or duties will also be refused.

## Who can sign a petition

8. Any individual who lives in the London Borough of Ealing can sign a petition. Any signature on a petition that does not give an address in the London Borough of Ealing will not be accepted.

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

9. Petitions submitted to the council must:

- Contain the name, a valid address with postcode within the Borough of Ealing of any signatories.
- Paper petitions must contain the signature of any person supporting the petition.
- Include a clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition. It should state what action the petitioners wish the council to take.
- Contain the petition organiser's contact details. This is the person we will contact to explain how we will respond to the petition.
- Relate to a matter for which the authority has responsibility, and which affects the authority or its area.

## **Are there petitions the Council cannot accept?**

10. Although most petitions we receive will be accepted, there are some circumstances where we will not be able to deal with your petition under this scheme. The following petitions are excluded from this scheme:

- petitions which in the opinion of the Monitoring Officer are considered vexatious, defamatory, offensive, frivolous or abusive or otherwise inappropriate will not be accepted.
- petitions that do not engage the council's responsibilities including, matters which relate to the proceedings of a political party, and matters that are the subject of electoral law.
- petitions which relate to any matter that is, or is likely to be, the subject of legal proceedings. This includes petitions which the Monitoring Officer considers would put the Council at risk of constituting a contempt of court, or any petition which is asking the Council to do anything unlawful.
- petitions that do not follow the guidelines set out above.
- petitions where there is already an existing way of making representation and a process for right of appeal such as Planning, Licensing, council tax banding and non-domestic rates.
- statutory petitions (for example requesting a referendum on having an elected mayor)
- petitions which name or clearly identify an individual
- petitions which are substantially the same as a petition which has been considered under the petition scheme within the last 12 months
- petitions which involve the disclosure of confidential or exempt information as defined under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Authorities (Access to Information (Exempt Information))(England) order 2006)
- petitions in the period immediately before an election or referendum which the Monitoring Officer considers are inappropriate during the pre-election or pre-referendum period.

11. Where a petition has not been accepted, we will contact you to explain the reasons for doing so.

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

12. The Council will normally send its substantive response within 4 weeks of receipt, however there may be occasions where this is not possible, for example, over the summer holidays, in the period immediately prior to an election or referendum, where a petition relates to a matter yet to be considered.
13. In most cases, officers will provide responses to petitions. However, in some cases a cabinet member or committee chair may decide to issue a response.
14. Our response may confirm that we have taken the action requested and the petition will be closed.
15. Where the subject matter of the petition relates to a matter which is, or will shortly be, the subject of statutory or non-statutory consultation by the authority, the Monitoring Officer may elect to include the petition in the consultation process. You will be informed if this is the route that has been taken. If this is the action the Council takes, you will not receive a response to your petition as it will be considered as part of the consultation process.
16. If the petition has enough signatures to trigger a debate at a meeting of full Council, you will be contacted to tell you when and where the meeting will take place.
17. The signatories will be verified when identifying if a debate at full Council has been triggered. Any signatories without a valid address, or any duplicates, will be discounted.
18. 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:
  - a. taking the action requested in the petition
  - b. provide formal response setting out the Council's response to the petition
  - c. Submit the petition for debate at Full Council

## **Full Council Debates**

19. If the petition contains at least 1% of the assessed population figure from the 2021 Census (3,671) as published by the Office of National Statistics it will be debated by the full Council.
20. 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 a future meeting. The Mayor has absolute discretion as to when a debate petition should be taken to Council. The petition organiser will be advised of the date for full Council and the time allowed for presentation of the petition.
21. At the meeting, the Petitioner will be given 5 minutes to present their petition. Once the petition has been presented there will be a debate lasting up to twenty minutes.
22. The council will respond to the petition at the conclusion of the 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. At the conclusion of the debate, the Council may choose not to take any action in relation to the petition.