

## Petition Policy

### 1. Introduction

This policy sets out the arrangements by which the Parish Council will receive, acknowledge, and consider petitions submitted to it.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that petitions are handled in a clear, consistent, and proportionate manner, while recognising the limits of the Council's powers, responsibilities, and resources.

### 2. What is a Petition?

A petition is a written request, signed by a number of people, calling on the Parish Council to take action, consider an issue, or note the views of the signatories.

Petitions may be submitted in paper form or electronically.

### 3. Who Can Submit a Petition?

Petitions may be submitted by:

- Residents of the parish;
- People who work within the parish; or
- Local organisations or community groups with an interest in the parish.

Unless otherwise stated, petitions do not need to be submitted by a parish elector, but the Council may take this into account when considering the petition.

### 4. Petition Requirements

To be accepted as a valid petition, it should:

- Be addressed to the Parish Council;
- Include a clear and concise statement of the issue and what action is being requested;
- Include the name and address of each signatory; for electronic petitions, a postal address or a clear statement of the signatory's local connection (for example, resident or worker in the parish), together with an email address;
- Include the name and contact details of the petition organiser or lead signatory.

Anonymous petitions will not be accepted.

### 5. How to Submit a Petition

Petitions may be submitted:

- By email to the Parish Clerk;
- By post to the Parish Clerk at the Council's official address; or
- By hand to the Parish Clerk.

Electronic petitions should be sent in a commonly used format.

### 6. Acknowledgement of Petitions

The Parish Clerk will acknowledge receipt of a petition within a reasonable timescale, normally within 10 working days.

The acknowledgement will explain:

- Whether the petition is considered valid under this policy; and
- What the next steps will be.

## **7. Consideration of Petitions**

Valid petitions will normally be considered in one of the following ways:

- Placed on the agenda of a meeting of the Parish Council or a relevant committee;
- Considered by the Chair and Parish Clerk under delegated authority; or
- Referred to another body where the matter is outside the Council's powers

The Council will decide the most appropriate course of action, taking account of the nature of the issue, the number of signatories, and whether the matter falls within the Council's remit.

## **8. Attendance at Meetings**

Where a petition is considered at a Council meeting, the petition organiser or a nominated representative may be invited to address the Council, in accordance with the Council's standing orders and public participation arrangements.

## **9. Matters Outside the Council's Control**

If a petition relates to a matter over which the Parish Council has no direct control, the Council may:

- Provide information to the petition organiser explaining which organisation or body is responsible and how the matter may be pursued;
- Provide a brief written response to the petition organiser confirming that the matter falls outside the Council's remit and signposting them to the relevant authority or organisation, without acting as an advocate, taking on responsibility for the matter, or committing Council resources.

## **10. Excluded or Inappropriate Petitions**

In addition to the exclusions set out below, the Parish Council will not normally consider petitions that seek to require the Council to take responsibility for, manage, maintain, or intervene in matters relating to privately owned land or privately managed developments.

The Council may decide not to consider petitions that:

- Are defamatory, abusive, or offensive;
- Are vexatious or frivolous;
- Relate to individual planning or licensing applications where other statutory procedures apply;
- Relate to matters where there is an existing right of appeal or complaint;
- Seek to require the Parish Council to take on, replace, or become involved in the management of private management companies or managing agents;
- Request the Parish Council to install bins, carry out maintenance, or provide services on private land, including land within privately managed housing developments, where responsibility rests with the landowner or appointed management company; or
- Duplicate a petition or issue that has been considered by the Council within the previous six months, unless there is new evidence.

## **11. Data Protection**

Personal information provided in a petition will be handled in accordance with data protection legislation. Signatories should be aware that petitions may be published or discussed in public meetings, but personal contact details will not normally be made public.

## **12. Review of the Policy**

This policy will be reviewed by the Parish Council periodically and updated as necessary.