

## 1. Introduction

Petitions are a method by which people can let councils know as to their concerns and welcomes petitions from anyone who lives, works, or studies in Streatley or who uses the services provided by Streatley Parish Council (SPC).

All petitions sent or presented to the Parish Council will receive an acknowledgement from the council within 2 working days of receipt, and a substantive response of how the council will respond to the petition within 15 working days of receipt. Council response to a petition will depend on petition subject matter and number of signatories. The petition will also be published on the council website. Specific petition subject matter will be addressed as follows:

**Highways issues** : will be forwarded on to West Berkshire Council Highways Department.

**Non-determined planning or licensing applications:** will be forwarded on to West Berkshire Council Planning Department.

**Statutory petitions:** (e.g. requesting a referendum or changing the council's governance arrangements) or on matters with existing right of appeal such as council tax banding and non-domestic rates, will be forwarded on to West Berkshire Council.

## 2. Guidelines for Petition Submission

In order to be officially received by the Council, all petitions must:

- contain the name and contact details of the petitioner. Only the name of the petitioner will be published;
- contain a clear and concise statement of the concern and what action the petitioners wish the council to take;
- be relevant to the role and responsibility of the council;
- contain at least 10 names or signatures;
- names are to be accompanied by a postcode and house number for paper petitions, and full address and email address for electronic petitions. Only the name and postcode will be displayed in any council report;
- not be defamatory, frivolous, offensive, vexatious, unlawful or otherwise improper
- not name or identify individual service users, members of staff or members of staff of partner agencies

### **3. Petitioner Duties**

A petitioner will be expected to be the point of contact with council officers. Name, but no other details other than postcode, will be published.

If a petition is of sufficient size the council will ask the petitioner whether the petition is required to be presented or debated.

if the petition is of sufficient size, a petitioner will have the opportunity to address the council at committee meetings.

An alternative person may be nominated to undertake these actions but not multiple parties.

### **4. Council Response to Petitions**

The council's 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
- referring the petition to the relevant West Berkshire Council department
- consider the petition as a consultation response if received during a consultation period
- holding an inquiry into the matter
- undertaking research into the matter
- holding a public meeting
- holding a meeting with petitioners
- calling a referendum
- writing to the petitioner explaining the council's views regarding the petition
- other suitable action

If more than one petition is received on a similar subject matter the petitions may be considered by the Council as a single matter and progressed together.

A petition will not normally be considered where it is received within 6 months of another petition being determined by the appropriate authority on the same matter.

If a petition is received immediately before an election or referendum the council may need to deal with the petition differently, in which case the council will contact the petitioner to discuss the course of action.

## 5. Petition Debate at Council Meeting

If a petition has at least 50 valid signatures, the matter may be allocated time at a Council meeting or a special Council meeting convened. A request for such a debate must be submitted to the Council Clerk at least 10 working days before a specific Council monthly meeting.

At any routine monthly meeting any member of the public is entitled to have up to five minutes to present a subject or petition and two other speakers are entitled to do so for three minutes each. Further allocated time is at the discretion of the Meeting Chairman. The relevant Councillor then responds to the petition.

The Meeting Chairman would move a motion relating to the petition for the Council to debate the matter for up to 30 minutes in the presence of the public but without public interjection.

## 6. Questions and Complaints

If the Petitioner considers the Council has not dealt with the petition properly, the petitioner should submit a complaint to the council Complaints Service. Any complaint should be made within twenty working days from the council response regarding the petition.

It is important to emphasise here that the review process is concerned with whether the steps taken by the council in response to the petition were adequate – it is not about whether the decision in responding to the petition was acceptable.



Signed : .....

Colin Smith  
Chairman, Streatley Parish Council

Date : 09 December 2024