



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

17th JULY 2019

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

PETITIONS CRITERIA

REPORT OF THE INTERIM HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to provide members with the proposed criteria for publicising the progress and response of the Council to public petitions.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee:

- (i) Comment and agree on the proposed Criteria for publication of Petitions on the Council website, as outlined within the report and review its effectiveness following a 12-month period.
- (ii) Subject to the agreement of 2.1 (i) the Interim Head of Democratic Services arranges for the development of a Petitions page on the Council website.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 At the 24th Council AGM, Members considered the report in respect of changes to the constitution.

3.2 As part of the report, members considered the publication of petitions on the Council Website. It was proposed and agreed at the meeting that the criteria for publication of petitions be considered by the Democratic Services Committee.

4. PETITIONS CRITERIA

4.1 It is proposed that to ensure Local Members and the public receive appropriate information in respect of their concerns/requests as highlighted within a petition the following procedures be adopted via a Petitions Protocol:

- a) Upon receipt, a copy of the petition is provided to both the appropriate Cabinet Member, Local Member(s) and the relevant Senior Officer for information and consideration.

- b) A list of petitions which have met set criteria (i.e. Number of signatories to the petition, affects more than ward) would be listed on the Council Website for the public to view.
 - c) The relevant Cabinet Member will respond to the lead petitioner and Local Member(s).
 - d) Any action taken forward in respect of the petition would also be published on the Council website.
- 4.2 It is anticipated that this process would formalise the current procedures in respect of petitions and provide an opportunity for the Council to publically demonstrate any actions taken forward once petitions are received. This procedure would also allow for the relevant Cabinet Member(s) to be involved.
- 4.3 The proposed criteria for publication on the Council's website is suggested as the following:
- *Petitions of 60 or more signatories, where the issue could reasonably be expected to:*
 - i. *affect the Communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions; or*
 - ii. *result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant.*
- 4.4 It is suggested that publication of the petition on a standalone 'Petitions Webpage ' on the Council Website would provide:
- i. a link to a copy of the Petition, (as long as the petition clearly advises that all data protection and GDPR right shave been conformed to).
 - ii. Date of the receipt of the Petition (i.e. link to Council minutes when petition presented)
 - iii. Resulting action (link to Cabinet Member response) and any further links as appropriate i.e. report to a Committee / Delegated Decision.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The formulation of a petitions policy and criteria will enhance the ability for all members of the public to engage with the Council and receive feedback on a matters raised via a public petition which meets the criteria proposed.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The development of a petition criteria has been considered by the Council's constitution committee and full Council.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

7.1 Should Members support the recommendations proposed, this process will be supported through existing arrangements.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None

9. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

9.1 These proposals will support the ability for the public to become involved in key matters.

9.2 If agreed, the proposed approach will strengthen the voice of the public on matters which may impact upon them.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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BACKGROUND PAPERS –

- [Council AGM 2019](#)
- [Corporate Governance & Constitution Committee](#)