



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL PETITION SCHEME

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

The Council welcome the opportunity for feedback and values the voice of local communities through the petitions scheme. Although the current process allows for transparency of responses the review has allowed for the opportunity to further strengthen this area, taking advantage of digital mechanism to support public engagement through petitions.

The Council's response to a petition would be taken forward on a tiered approach depending on the number of people who have signed the Petition. The table sets out the potential thresholds:

| Tier | Number of Signatures | Response |
|------|---|--|
| 1 | 1-500 | Response from the relevant Director / Head of Service |
| 2 | 500 + | Response from the relevant Cabinet Member and publication of response on the dedicated Council webpage |
| 3 | 1000+ Hybrid petition – Electronic and or paper | As above, with a petition being referenced for information only on a Council agenda. When noting petitions, Council may determine the referral of the matter to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. |

It will be important that all petitions clearly illustrate the names and addresses of the signatory to allow the Council to determine that there are no duplication of signatures and to ensure that the signatory lives within the County Borough. It is also important that a lead signatory is identified within the Petition.

If a petition exceeds 1000 signatures but does not capture all of the petitions requirements (i.e address information is not provided to confirm that the signatory is a resident of RCTCBC) then such a petition would automatically receive a tier two response.

In respect of a petition that reaches a tier 3 level response then the following procedures would be taken forward. Responsibility for validation of a petition would rest with the Proper Officer.

TIER 3 RESPONSE

As an enhancement to the current petition arrangements, and in response to the statutory guidance of the Welsh Government, if a Petition (whether electronic or paper based) contains 1000+ signatures, the matter will be referenced for information only on the Council's agenda.

When noting this detail, Council may determine to refer a subject matter to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

When a Member proposes a motion to refer the matter they will have a maximum of 5 minutes to present their motion. The motion must be seconded, but the seconder will not be permitted to speak. A member of the Executive and / or the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee has the discretion to respond to such request before a decision by Council, with the permission of the Presiding Member.

Consideration by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Following referral the Overview & Scrutiny committee 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.

Where appropriate a request will be presented with an officer report, providing the appropriate advice.

The relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holder will be provided with the opportunity to respond to the content of the petition to inform the committee's deliberations.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee may decide to make recommendations or further scrutinise the content of the Petition request, or to commission consideration into the matter, by referral to one of the thematic Scrutiny Committees or Democratic Services Committee. Any recommendations arising out of the referral would be presented to Cabinet or the relevant Executive Member through the usual process for their consideration.

The Lead Petitioner would be invited to attend the meeting, in line with the parameters of the Council's 'public speaking at scrutiny Committee arrangements' (guidance document can be found [here](#)). The Lead Petitioner will also receive written confirmation of the decision as soon as practicable following the decision having been made. Confirmation of the outcome will also be published on the Council's website.

When a petition has been heard at a scrutiny meeting no further petition on a similar topic and seeking a similar outcome shall be considered and no further

address shall be heard on that item, within six months of the meeting at which the petition was considered.

In the event that more than one Petition is received on a similar theme / topic, which meets the relevant criteria and seeking a similar outcome, only one Lead Petitioner will be permitted to present the Petition. The Council Business Unit will notify each Lead Petitioner and ask them to liaise with each other to consider amalgamating the Petitions and agree which Lead Petitioner will present the Petition to Council. In the absence of such agreement, the Proper Officer may determine in consultation with the Chair, at their discretion how many petitioners should be afforded speaking rights.

Under the amended petition arrangements, petitions presented by Elected Members will be considered in accordance with the above arrangements as outlined in 5.6 of the report.

Petitions relating to live planning applications will continue to be dealt with under the current planning petitions process, as the Council has one of the most generous public speaking arrangements of a planning committee for the public. Petitions received during a public consultation will be included within the consultation process and will not be subject to the process contained within the petitions scheme.
