



# **Petitions Policy**

# **Teignmouth Town**

# **Council**

Approved - 22.5.18

Review May 2019

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Council welcomes and encourages its community to provide feedback to the council and offers many opportunities and ways to do so as a matter of course.
- 1.2 The Council recognises that petitions are one way in which people can let the council know their concerns.
- 1.3 The Council will treat something as a petition if it is identified as such, or if it seems to them that it is intended to be a petition. A petition will be treated as such if it has at least 10 signatories or petitioners.
- 1.4 Petitions should be addressed to the council and submitted to:  
  
The Town Clerk  
Bitton House  
Bitton Park Road  
Teignmouth  
TQ14 9DF
- 1.5 Petitions can also be presented at any of the scheduled council meetings during Public Participation.
- 1.6 Signatories to petitions will only be considered valid if they are resident within the parish of Teignmouth.
- 1.7 Petitions submitted to the council must include:
  - a. A clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition and the action the petitioners wish the council to take
  - b. The name, address and signature of any person supporting the petition
- 1.8 Petitions must be accompanied by contact details, including either a postal or e-mail address, for the petition organiser. This is the person the council will contact to explain how it will respond to the petition. If the petition does not identify an organiser, the council will contact signatories to the petition to agree who should act as the organiser.
- 1.9 To help us deal with your petition it should, if applicable, include a summary of any action already taken to resolve the issue of concern including, for example, details of elected Members that have been approached.

- 1.10 In the period immediately before an election or referendum we may need to deal with your petition differently – if this is the case we will explain the reasons and discuss the revised timescale which will apply.

## **2 Petitions with 100+ signatures**

- 2.1 A petition with 100 or more identifiable signatures will be put forward for debate, as a separate agenda item, at the next suitable meeting of the Council or the relevant committee.
- 2.2 Where a petition is debated by committee, the Chairman of the committee shall report on this to the next Council meeting.
- 2.3 The petition organiser (or an appointed deputy) will be given five minutes to present the petition at the meeting and the petition will then be discussed by members for a maximum of 15 minutes.
- 2.4 The council will determine how to respond to the petition at this meeting; usually this shall be to:
  - a. action the petition requests
  - b. not action the petition requests for reasons put forward in the debate
  - c. commission further investigation into the matter
- 2.5 The petition organiser will receive a written confirmation of the decision.

## **3 Petitions with 10 - 99 signatures**

- 3.1 A petition with between 10 and 99 signatures shall be reviewed by the Town Clerk, Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor and relevant members (e.g. the appropriate committee members or ward members) to determine the appropriate course of action.
- 3.2 At the discretion of the Town Mayor, a petition may be referred to Council or the appropriate committee for debate as per petitions with in excess of 100 signatures.
- 3.3 The petition organiser will receive a written confirmation of the decision.

## **4 General Provisions**

- 4.1 An acknowledgement will be sent to the petition organiser within ten working days of receiving the petition which will explain what the council plans to do.

- 4.2 Details of the petition will be published on the Council's website, although the contact details of the petition organiser will not be included
- 4.3 A petition will not normally be considered if a similar petition was considered within the previous six months.
- 4.4 When more than one petition is received seeking the same outcome, they will be treated separately, but only the petition organiser of the first petition to be received will be invited to address the relevant meeting.
- 4.5 If the petition is about something over which the Council has no direct control it may consider making representations on behalf of the community to the relevant body.
- 4.6 Petitions will not be presented to the Annual Meeting of the Council nor to extraordinary meetings which are not called for the purpose of receiving the petition.
- 4.7 Petitions which are considered to be vexatious, abusive or otherwise inappropriate will not be accepted.
- 4.8 GDPR. Advice is to be sought with regards the application of GDPR and petitions. The current practice is to redact petitioner's names and those who have signed the petition.