

REGENERATION, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

28 JUNE 2012

PETITIONS

Report from: Robin Cooper, Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture

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Summary

This report advises the Committee of the petitions presented at Council meetings, received by the council or sent via the e-petition facility, including a summary of officer's response to the petitioners.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

1.1 The constitution provides that petitions received by the council relating to matters within the remit of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be referred immediately to the relevant Director for consideration at officer level.

2. Background

2.1 The Director is asked to respond to the petition request within 10 working days. The petition organiser may request to refer the matter to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee if s/he is not satisfied with the answer and has given reasons for their dissatisfaction.

2.2 If the petition contains at least the number of signatures equating to 5% of Medway's population (currently 12,675 signatures) it will be debated by Full Council unless it is a petition asking for a senior council officer to give evidence at a public meeting.

2.3 If the petition contains at least the number of signatures equating to 2% of Medway's population (currently 5,070 signatures) the relevant senior officer may give evidence at a public meeting of the relevant overview and scrutiny committee.

2.4 A petition may also be submitted through the e-petition facility on the council's website. E-petitions must follow the same guidelines as paper

petitions. A petition acknowledgement and response will be emailed to everyone who has signed the e-petition and elected to receive this information.

- 2.5 A summary of the response to all petitions will also be published on the council's website.

3. Petitions

- 3.1 A summary of responses relevant to this Committee that have passed the ten day deadline for a request for referral to the Committee and are therefore seen as acceptable to the petitioners are set out below.

Subject of petition	Date of receipt	Response
<p>Call upon Council and Police to make tackling nuisance motorbikes and the associated anti-social behaviour a top local priority</p> <p>Presented by Councillor Stamp</p>	<p>Council</p> <p>12 January 2012</p>	<p>This area has been identified as the top priority for neighbourhood policing and a walkabout of the area has been arranged with the ward councillor to identify ways to resolve the issue.</p>
<p>Request the Council to commission a statue of Charles Dickens to be placed in the gardens of Eastgate House</p>	<p>E-petition</p> <p>21 February 2012</p>	<p>This is in direct contravention to Dickens' will, as he asked that no statues are erected of him. However, as it is his bicentenary, there are plans for some outstanding ways to mark it in Medway and a £1 million bid to renovate Eastgate House.</p>
<p>Request for alleygates to the rear of 1 - 71 Blenheim Avenue, Chatham</p> <p>Presented by Councillor Maple</p>	<p>Council</p> <p>26 April 2012</p>	<p>Application forms were sent to lead petitioner and when completed forms received, officers will take an application to court to change the legal status of the alleyway from public to private. Once granted, an order will be placed to install the gates.</p>
<p>Request to scrap the parking meter in car park at Luton library</p> <p>Presented by Councillor Osborne</p>	<p>Council</p> <p>26 April 2012</p>	<p>The council leases this car park from MHS homes. It does this to protect local trade by ensuring there is sufficient parking for customers. There are charges at most car parks but the council strives to keep down the costs of parking, although in this case there is also an annual rental to MHS of £3,400.</p>

<p>Join the Kent Freedom Pass Scheme. We also petition the council to abolish the Half-Price Bus Pass Scheme</p>	<p>2 May 2012 E-petition 5 May 2012</p>	<p>There are no national standard children's fares schemes and concessions for young people are at the discretion of the local council. Concessions for university students and staff are negotiated directly between the universities and bus companies. With the different pricing of tickets it is common practice to offer a concession on the single adult fare. With current financial constraints, the additional cost for a full Medway Freedom pass scheme (giving free travel) went beyond the council's budget allocation and hence the lower cost half-fare scheme, called the Medway Youth Pass, was agreed.</p>
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4 Risk Management

- 4.1 The Council's petition scheme has been drafted in compliance with the minimum requirements of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 relating to petitions. This will minimise the risk of any challenge to the legitimacy of the Council's arrangements for handling petitions.

5 Financial and Legal Implications

- 5.1 Any financial and/or legal implications arising from the issues raised by the petitions are set out in the comments on the petitions.

6 Recommendation

- 6.1 Members are requested to note the petition responses and appropriate officer action in paragraph 3 of the report.

Background papers

Medway Council's Constitution
Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009

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