

## **REGENERATION, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**26 JUNE 2014**

### **PETITIONS**

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

Author: Ellen Wright, Democratic Services Officer

#### **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 Since the last meeting of the Committee, six petitions have been received falling within the remit of this Committee.

3.2 A summary of the response, which has passed the ten day deadline for a request for referral to the Committee and is therefore seen as acceptable to the petitioners, is set out below.

Subject of petition	Date of receipt and whether paper or e-petition	Response
<p>Concern re building work being carried out at Rainham Station and the adverse effect on residents' privacy, the increase in noise pollution and the decrease in property value as a result of the works.</p>	<p>27 March 2014 (paper)</p>	<p>All building work carried out by Network Rail is exempt from the planning system as is most work undertaken on railway land. Therefore there was no planning application that could be advertised or be the subject of public consultation. Network Rail is therefore responsible for engaging with residents at pre-commencement stage. The Council would not be involved. However, the Council has been working with Network Rail to ensure that residents are kept informed and a public meeting was held on 29.03.14. It is intended that further meetings will take place.</p>
<p>Request for extra paths through verges between Boughton Close and Charing Road. There are older residents and wheelchair users who find it difficult to access their cars.</p>	<p>Handed in at Council on 24 April 2014 (paper) (Councillor Harriott)</p>	<p>The request for two extra paths through the grass verges at Boughton Close and Charing Road so that wheelchair users and the elderly may access their vehicles more easily has been noted. This type of scheme would be subject to Local Transport Plan funding. Highways officers have been requested to look at the location shown on the petitioner's plan to see if installation of the paths is possible.</p>

		If so, detailed plans and estimates will be drawn up for consideration.
A request for the extension of the Parking Permit Scheme in Maidstone Road, Rochester to include house numbers 85-151.	Handed in at Council on 24 April 2014 (paper) (Councillor Bowler)	This scheme is now due to be implemented in the coming months
A petition regarding the unacceptable condition of Darland Avenue and Rowland Avenue and asking the Council to carry out suitable repairs as soon as possible.	Handed in at Council on 24 April 2014 (paper) (Councillor Maple)	Following the receipt of the petition, highways officers had undertaken an assessment of the site using the suitable criteria to assess for potential resurfacing. Darland Avenue scored a category 3 and Rowland Avenue a category 2. The highest priority would be a category 1. The Council's current resurfacing programme only includes category 1 sites of which there is a long list together with limited financial resources. However both roads mentioned in the petition will continue to be monitored in case of deterioration.
A petition re the provision of trolley collection points at the Waterfront Way Chatham Bus Station platforms C and D.	1 May 2014 (paper)	Sainsbury's currently have a trolley park opposite the Information Centre at the Bus Station and Sainsbury's have been contacted with regard to the request for a trolley park to be provided between platforms C and D. The Bus Station Manager has agreed to contact a number of other large shops in Chatham to see if any of them would be willing to install and maintain a trolley collection point.
A request for width and weight restrictions on Higham Road and Islingham Farm Road to stop contractors delivering to and collecting from the army base and making the vehicles use the army built Woodfield Way instead.	14 May 2014 (paper)	The request for width and weight restrictions has been noted by the Council who have contacted the Ministry of Defence to discuss the route of HGVs to the army camp on Islingham Farm Road. The petitioner was advised that width restrictions would need to be physical in nature and this could impede the access of emergency and delivery vehicles. The introduction of weight restrictions would require Traffic Regulation Orders to be produced and breach of these orders would be

		enforceable by the Police. The Council hopes to meet with the Ministry of Defence and will carry out a traffic survey to look at the extent of the problem. Following the meeting and the survey the Council will inform the petitioner further.
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#### **4. Risk Management**

- 4.1 The Council has a clear scheme for handling petitions set out in its Constitution. This ensures consistency and clarity of process, minimising the risk of complaints about the administration of 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 response and officer action as set out in paragraph 3 of the report.

#### **Background papers**

None.

#### **Contact for further details:**

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