

Regeneration, Culture and Environment

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

20 January 2026

Petitions Report

Report from: Adam Bryan, Director of Place

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Summary

This report advises the Committee of petitions received by the Council which fall within the remit of this Committee including a summary of the responses sent to the petition organisers by officers.

1. Recommendations

- 1.1. The Committee is requested to note the petition responses and appropriate officer actions in paragraph 4.1 of the report.

2. Budget and policy framework

- 2.1. In summary, the Council's Petition Scheme requires the relevant Director to respond to the petition organiser, usually within 10 working days of the receipt of the petition by the Council. Overview and Scrutiny Committees are always advised of any petitions falling within their terms of reference together with the officer response. There is a right of referral of a petition for consideration by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee by the petitioners if they consider the Director's response to be inadequate. Should the Committee determine that the petition has not been dealt with adequately it may use any of its powers to deal with the matter. These powers include instigating an investigation, making recommendations to Cabinet and arranging for the matter to be considered at a meeting of the Council.
- 2.2. The petition scheme is set out in full in the Council's Constitution at [Council rules](#).
- 2.3. Any budget or policy framework implications will be set out in the specific petition response.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Council's 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.
- 3.2. Where the Director is able to fully meet the request of the petitioners a response is sent setting out the proposed action and timescales for implementation.
- 3.3. For petitions where the petition organiser is not satisfied with the response provided by the Director there is provision for the petition organiser to request that the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee review the steps the Council has taken, or is proposing to take, in response to the petition.

4. Completed Petitions

- 4.1. The response to petitions relevant to this Committee that has been accepted by the petition organiser, with no request for referral to this Committee, are set out below.

Subject of petition	Summary of Medway Council's response
Provide a direct school bus from Lordswood/ Walderslade to Rainham School for Girls/ The Howard School, Rainham	<p>We have explored the feasibility of introducing a dedicated school bus service between Lordswood/ Walderslade and Rainham. One local bus operator has expressed interest. However, they have indicated that the service would require a significant minimum income to be commercially viable. Based on current eligibility criteria, the service would rely heavily on fare-paying passengers. A new service would likely require financial support in its early stages to become sustainable. We are mindful of the risk that this could become a long-term funding commitment, similar to other routes introduced due to perceived demand. Given the uncertainty around future funding, particularly the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) beyond this year, we do not believe it would be appropriate to allocate public funds to support this service at this time.</p> <p>We will continue to explore options, however, in the current climate, this may be challenging.</p>

5. Risk management

- 5.1. 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.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1. Any financial implications arising from the issues raised by the petitions will be taken into account as part of the review of these matters. Actions referred to in the officer responses which are not within existing budgets, and any further activity, would require Cabinet and Council approval for budgetary additions if funding was available.

7. Legal implications

- 7.1. Overview and Scrutiny Rule 21.1 (xiv) in the Council's Constitution provides that the terms of reference of this Committee include the power to deal with petitions referred to the Committee under and in accordance with the Council's petition scheme.

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Appendices

None

Background papers

None