

# Diversity impact assessment

<b>TITLE</b>
Revised Petitions Scheme
<b>DATE</b>
March 2026
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>
Wayne Hemingway, Head of Democratic Services
<b>1 Summary description of the proposed change</b>
What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed? How does it compare with the current situation?
The current Petitions Scheme has been in place for just over 15 years, the revised Scheme takes account of established practice over the years, aims to make the Scheme more user friendly / readable and will enable petitions from third party websites such as Change.org to be accepted by the Council.
<b>2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment</b>
E.g. Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user. E.g. Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile
<b>Equality Act 2010</b> requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.</li> <li>• Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.</li> <li>• Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.</li> </ul>
<u>Guidance: Public Sector Equality Duty: guidance for public authorities</u>

<b>3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?</b>
Is it likely to:
Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups
Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups
Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't
<b>(insert Yes when there is an impact or No when there isn't)</b>

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
<b>Age</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Disability</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>

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Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Marriage/civil partnership</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Pregnancy/maternity</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Race</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Religion/belief</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Sex</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Care experience</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Other (e.g. low income groups)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>

#### **4 Summary of the likely impacts**

Who will be affected?

How will they be affected?

Approval of the revised Scheme will increase ways in which petitions can be submitted to Medway Council, specifically by allowing petitions from third party websites, such as Change.org, to be accepted. In addition, steps will be taken to further publicise the Scheme.

#### **5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?**

What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?

Are there alternative providers?

Can demand for services be managed differently?

Please refer to section 4.

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**6 Action plan**  
Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
Annual review of petitions to include feedback on the operation of the revised Scheme	HDS	August 2027

**7 Recommendation**  
The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be: to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate, consider alternatives, gather further evidence  
If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.  
Proceed to seek approval of the revised Petitions Scheme.

**8 Authorisation**  
The authorising officer is consenting that the recommendation can be implemented, sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned, the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

**Assistant Director**  
Bhupinder Gill, Assistant Director, Legal and Governance

**Date of authorisation**  
March 2026