

Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee

18 June 2026

Annual Review of the Council's Petitions Scheme

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Summary

This report provides an annual review of the Council's Petitions Scheme.

1. Recommendations

- 1.1. The Committee is asked to note the annual review of the Council's Petitions Scheme.

2. Budget and policy framework

- 2.1. The Petitions Scheme forms part of the Council's Constitution and is attached as Appendix B to the report.

3. Background

- 3.1. Full Council adopted its current Petition Scheme on 25 November 2010 in response to provisions in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. The Act placed a new duty on local authorities to respond to all petitions and to establish a scheme for handling petitions including provision of a facility for electronic petitions (e-petitions).
- 3.2. With effect from 1 April 2012 the provisions relating to petitions in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 were repealed by Section 46 of the Localism Act 2011. The Government considered this would provide more discretion for local authorities to decide how to approach petitions locally. Full Council was advised of this at its meeting on 26 July 2012 and took the view that no change was required to Medway's Petition Scheme as it was working effectively at the time.
- 3.3. The Committee considered a report at its last meeting setting out a review of the Scheme itself. Following consideration at Cabinet on 7 April 2026, the report was referred to full Council on 23 April 2026, where it was moved and

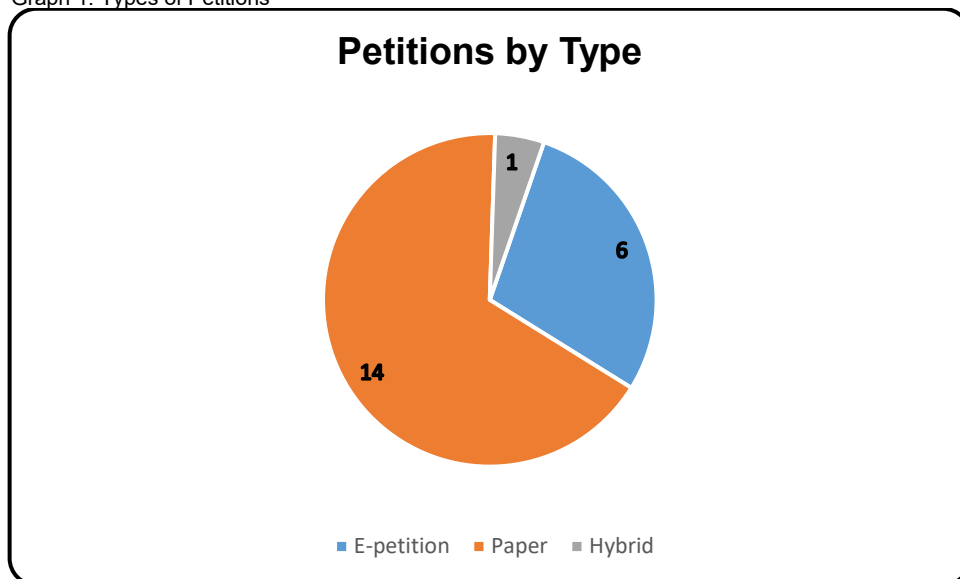
seconded and taken forward to the next ordinary full Council meeting for consideration (16 July 2026).

- 3.4. This particular report covers the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026, noting that consideration of the proposed changes to the Scheme will take place at full Council on 16 July.

4. Annual review

- 4.1. Information on the number of petitions received each year, their subject matter, the Council's response and the outcome of the review is published on the Council's website. The information available on the website dates back to 2011 (following full Council approval of the current scheme at the end of 2010) and is regularly updated. This information with reference to 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026 is set out in full at Appendix A to the report.
- 4.2. 21 valid petitions were received during the period, compared to 14 in the 2024-25. 14 paper petitions were received, six e-petitions and one hybrid petition. The increase in the number of petitions is reflected in the increase in paper petitions.

Graph 1: Types of Petitions



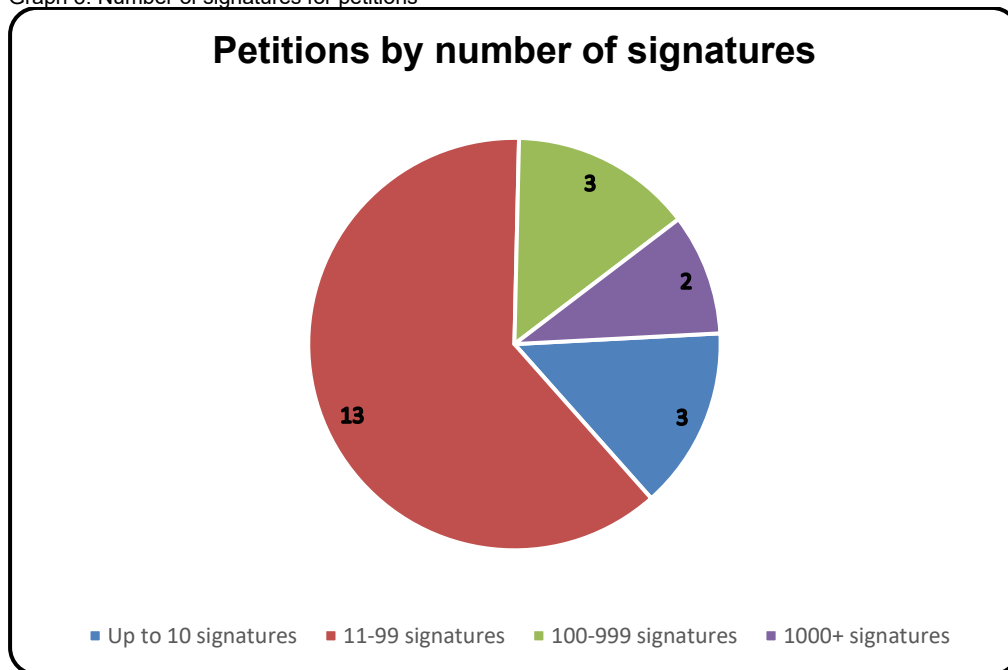
- 4.3. Four petitions were rejected in the period. This is in line with previous years, 2024-25 when six petitions were rejected. The reasons for rejection are set out below:
- Two petitions were rejected because the petition did not contain all of the necessary information. The lead petitioners were contacted to request further information, but no further information was received.
 - One petition was rejected because the subject of the petition had been part of a statutory consultation process which had been completed in the preceding month.

- One petition was rejected because it was outside of the responsibility of the Council.

4.4. Members will also note that a number of petitions were submitted for which other formal processes were in place, specifically planning or licensing applications. Such petitions were dealt with under those other formal processes instead of the Petitions Scheme. Eight petitions received in 2025-26 fell into this category. All of the petitions received under the petition scheme were requests relating to the Place Directorate.

4.5. In total over 4000 signatures were received during the period which is significantly greater than the previous year. Graph 3 shows the distribution of signatures for petitions.

Graph 3: Number of signatures for petitions



4.6. Once a petition has been received by the Council, the lead petitioner will receive a response from the relevant Directorate. A brief summary of the responses to valid petitions is provided at appendix A. Where a lead petitioner is dissatisfied with the response from the Directorate, the matter can be referred to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee for further consideration.

4.7. Two lead petitioners stated they were dissatisfied with the responses that they received, and both were further reviewed by the Regeneration Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee in October 2025.

4.8. The first referred to the removal of a wall in Lordswood Lane, Chatham. The petitioners were opposed to the removal of the wall which provided a safe green space for children to play in safely. Officers explained that the wall has

degraded and posed a safety risk, so needed to be removed and a vehicle restraint system had been proposed as a replacement. The Committee requested that further safety measures be explored to replace the wall including fencing and planting.

- 4.9. The second petition reviewed related to safety issues on Wayfield Road, Chatham. The petition requested further safety measures, the Committee agreed this would be added to the road safety teams work programme for 2026/27 and further options for safety measures would be explored.

5. Outcomes from Petitions

- 5.1. The Council has undertaken to complete a number of actions following petitions from residents either through responses to the petition or via a referral to the relevant Committee. Below are some outcomes from petitions received during the period.
- 5.2. In April 2025, the Council received a petition proposing to introduce a 20mph zone in the area of Central Strood. The initial response undertook to consider the issue.
 - 5.2.1. A commission has been issued to investigate and provide design options for the introduction of a pilot 20mph limit / 20mph zone for the Weston Road area in Strood, generally enclosed by the A2 London Road, Gun Lane, and Cliffe Road. We hope to be in a position to engage with the local community, Members and other key stakeholders on a potential scheme towards the end of the 2026/27 financial year.
- 5.3. Following a petition, the Council had undertaken to complete a review of road safety on Stoke Road, the Ratcliffe Highway, and Avery Way, Allhallows in July 2025. Below is a further update on the position.
 - 5.3.1. The Road Safety team reviewed data and found that the roads identified had a relatively good safety record when compared to other locations in Medway, so would not be a priority for road safety alterations at this time. The Road Safety team also undertook a speed survey of the roads and passed on information for enforcement regarding speed in Stoke Road. Personal injury collision records will continue to be monitored as part of the Council's wider statutory duties.
- 5.4. A petition was received in October 2025 requesting the Council provide a direct school bus from Lordswood/ Walderslade to Rainham School for Girls/ The Howard School, Rainham.
 - 5.4.1. Nu-Venture launched a school bus service from Walderslade and Lordswood to Rainham Schools on 20th April. This new service is funded through Medway's Bus Service grant funding from HM Government.

6. Risk management

- 6.1. The publication of clear arrangements for handling petitions ensures transparency and consistency of approach.
- 6.2. Clear advice is set out on the Council's website strongly advising anyone wishing to start an e-petition to use the Council's e-petition facility to ensure the petition meets the requirements of the Council's Petitions Scheme. A template for paper petitions is also available to download from the Council's website for the same reason.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1. The cost of administering and processing petitions is met from within existing budgets.

8. Legal implications

- 8.1. Since the repeal of the provisions relating to petitions in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 local authorities have discretion to put in place locally determined arrangements for handling petitions. Any changes to the Council's Petition Scheme would require approval by full Council as the scheme forms part of the Council's Constitution.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Summary of petitions 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

Background papers

None