

## **PETITION SCHEME**

A petition is one way in which you can let the Council know your concerns.

### **1.0 What is a petition?**

1.1 A petition is any communication that is signed by 10 or more people either on paper or in electronic format. There are no restrictions on who can submit or sign a petition. For details of the e-Petition scheme, see paragraphs 8 & 9 below.

### **2.0 What should a petition contain?**

#### **2.1 A clear statement of your concerns**

This must relate to something which is the responsibility of this Council. Where a petition relates to a matter over which the authority has no responsibility or influence, we will return the petition to the petition organiser with an explanation for that decision. Where a petition relates to a matter which is within the responsibility of another public authority (e.g. Lancashire County Council), we will ask the petition organiser whether s/he would like us to redirect the petition to that other authority.

#### **2.2 A statement of what action you would like the Council to take**

What would you like the Council to do?

#### **2.3 The name and contact details of the "petition-organiser"**

Or someone to whom you would like any correspondence about the petition to be sent. Contact details must be a postal address and/or an Email address.

#### **2.4 The names of at least 10 petitioners**

This can include the petition organiser. Where the petition is in paper form, this must include the full name, postal address and actual signature from each petitioner. Where the petition is in electronic form, this must include the full name, postal address and e-mail address of each petitioner.

### **3.0 Who should you send the petition to?**

3.1 Paper petitions should be sent to:

Member Services  
West Lancashire Borough Council  
52 Derby Street  
Ormskirk  
West Lancashire  
L39 2DF

Or alternatively you can complete your petition using the e-petition facility (see paragraphs 8 and 9 below) or you can electronically scan your petition and e-mail it to [member.services@westlancs.gov.uk](mailto:member.services@westlancs.gov.uk)

3.2 Member Services will ensure that an acknowledgement is sent to the 'petition organiser' within 5 working days.

#### **4.0 What steps can the Council take to deal with my petition?**

Steps that may be taken to deal with a petition include:

- Take the action requested
- Give a written response setting out the Council's views about the request
- Refer to Cabinet (executive functions)
- Refer to a meeting of the Council, a Committee, Sub-Committee or Working Group (as appropriate)
- Hold a consultation
- Hold a meeting with petitioners

#### **5.0 What happens to my Petition when it is submitted?**

When a petition is received by Member Services it will be circulated to the Chief Operating Officer and relevant Corporate Director/Head of Service, the relevant Cabinet Member(s) and relevant Ward Councillors. The relevant Corporate Director/Head of Service will consider what steps should be taken to deal with the petition request and advise the 'Petition Organiser' and Member Services within 20 working days from the date the petition was acknowledged.

Copies of the response will also be sent to the relevant Cabinet Member(s) and the relevant Ward Councillors.

#### **6.0 E-Petition**

6.1 The e-petition facility enables people to create, submit and sign petitions through the Council's website. E-petitions follow the same guidelines as paper petitions as detailed above. The 'petition organiser' will need to register on the site before he/she can create a petition on line and will need to provide their name and contact details. S/he will also need to decide how long the petition should be open for signatures. Six months would probably be sufficient, but a shorter or longer timeframe can be chosen, up to a maximum of 12 months.

6.2 Once you have created your online petition, you will then submit it. When you submit an e-petition, it may take up to 5 working days before it is published online before other people can sign it. This is because we have to check that the content of your petition is suitable before it is made available for signature. If we feel we cannot publish your petition for some reason, we will contact you to explain.

6.3 When an e-petition has closed for signature, the Petition Organiser is required to submit to Member Services, either by printing the petition on paper or by

submitting electronically via the e-petition facility, and it will be dealt with in the same way as a paper petition as detailed above.

## **7.0 How do I 'sign' an e-petition?**

- 7.1 E-petitions available for signature will be available on the website at [http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/council\\_democracy/democracy\\_and\\_decision\\_making/petitions.aspx](http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/council_democracy/democracy_and_decision_making/petitions.aspx). Petitioners will be asked to provide their name, address and a valid email address. Once this step is complete the petitioners 'signature' will be added to the petition. People visiting the e-petition will be able to see the petitioner's name and town/city in the list of those who have signed it but other contact details will not be visible. Once a response is prepared an automated e-mail will be sent to the Petition organiser and all petitioners who have made a request on line to be informed of the outcome.