

CONSTITUTION PRACTICE NOTE

A GUIDE TO THE CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL PETITIONS SCHEME

1. **How will the Council deal with my petition?**

- 1.1 Chelmsford City Council welcomes petitions and recognises that they are one of many ways in which people can let us know about their concerns and participate in the democratic process. Our petitions scheme sets out how the Council will deal with petitions that meet the criteria set out in the scheme.
- 1.2 Petitions are not the only way to resolve an issue or make your views known. You could also
 - Write to the appropriate Director or Cabinet Member
 - Contact your local Councillor
 - Make a suggestion through the Council's website
 - Respond to consultations
- 1.3 If you submit a petition you should
 - Clearly state that the petition is directed at Chelmsford City Council
 - Clearly identify the petition organiser
 - Indicate which of the Council's functions or powers it relates to
 - Say clearly what you want the Council to do
- 1.4 People signing the petition can be any age and should provide an address or postcode that shows that they live, work or study in Chelmsford.

2. **Petition organiser**

- 2.1 The petition organiser is the person we will contact about the petition. If no organiser is identified we will contact people who signed the petition to agree who should act as the petition organiser. If no such person can be identified the petition may not be accepted.

3. **Sending in your petition**

- 3.1 Petitions can be sent to:

Legal and Democratic Services Manager
Chelmsford City Council
Civic Centre
Duke Street
Chelmsford
CM1 1JE

- 3.2 The Council does not provide an online or electronic petitions system but if you have created a petition by this means its existence and submission should also be notified to the Legal and Democratic Services Manager.

4. What happens next?

- 4.1 We will send an acknowledgement to the petition organiser within 10 working days of its receipt. The acknowledgement will include details of how the petition will be dealt with under the scheme and, where possible, will provide information about the action that will be taken in response to the petition.

5. How will we respond to your petition?

- 5.1 Our response will depend on what the petition asked for and how many people signed it.

<i>Category</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Signature threshold</i>
<i>Petition requiring a debate</i>	A petition above the threshold that will trigger a debate at a meeting of the full Council, if that is what has been requested (or its referral to the Cabinet if it is an Executive matter)	2000
<i>Ordinary Petition</i>	Another non-excluded* petition which requests action or a response within six weeks	50
Petitions below the 50 signature threshold will be referred to the appropriate service for a response		
<p>*Some petitions are excluded from the scheme and will be dealt with differently. For example, we will take no action on your petition if it is vexatious, abusive, causes offence or is otherwise inappropriate. Other exemptions from the scheme include petitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relating to planning or licensing applications • where there is a statutory right of appeal • that do not concern a power or duty of the Council 		

6. Who can I contact?

- 6.1 If you have any questions you can contact the Democracy Team Manager on 01245 606923 or by email to committees@chelmsford.gov.uk
- 6.2 You can download a copy of the full Petitions Scheme here.