

Witham Town Council: Petitions Policy

Policy Overview

Witham Town Council welcomes community engagement and recognizes petitions as a valuable means for residents to express their concerns. This policy outlines the process for submitting and handling petitions, ensuring a fair and transparent approach to addressing community issues.

Petition Criteria

A petition must have at least 50 signatories to be considered valid.

Signatories must be residents of Witham, or anyone who lives, works, or studies in Witham, unless the petition concerns a service affecting non-residents

Petitions must relate to Witham Town Council services and decisions.

Submission Process

Petitions should be addressed to the Town Clerk and submitted to:

The Town Clerk
Witham Town Council
Town Hall
61 Newland Street
Witham
Essex CM8 2FE
Email: townclerk@witham.gov.uk

Petitions can also be presented during Public Participation at scheduled council meetings.

Petition Requirements

Petitions must include:

- a) A clear statement of the issue and the desired action.
- b) Name, address, and signature of each supporter.
- c) Contact details of the petition organiser.

For online petitions, full names and addresses are required, with a mechanism to prevent fraudulent signatures.

Petitions from under-18s are allowed, provided they live, work, or study in Witham.

Handling of Petitions

Petitions with 500+ signatures:

- a) Will be debated at the next suitable Council or committee meeting.
- b) The petition organiser will have five minutes to present, followed by a 15-minute member discussion.
- c) The Council will decide how to respond at the meeting.

Petitions with 50-499 signatures:

- a) Will be reviewed by the Town Clerk, Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and relevant members (e.g. Ward Members).
- b) May be referred for full debate at the Mayor's discretion.

The petition organiser will receive written confirmation of the decision.

If the organiser is dissatisfied with the response, they can request a review by the Council's Complaints Panel.

General Provisions

An acknowledgment will be sent within ten working days of receiving the petition.

Petition details will be published on the Council's website, excluding organiser contact information.

Similar petitions will not be considered within six months of each other.

Petitions deemed vexatious, abusive, or inappropriate will not be accepted.

Petitions cannot be presented at the Annual Meeting or extraordinary meetings not called for that purpose.

Adopted 16.09.2024

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Next review date September 2027