



Buckingham Town Council
Petitions Policy/Procedure

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1. Introduction

1.1. The Buckingham Town Council welcomes community feedback and offers many opportunities and ways to do so as a matter of course. The Council recognises that petitions are one way in which residents of the town can let the Council know about their concerns.

1.2. The Council will only treat a document as a petition if it is identified as such.

1.3. Petitions should be addressed to the Council and submitted to:

The Town Clerk
Buckingham Town Council
Verney Close
Buckingham
MK18 1JP

Or by email to office@buckingham-tc.gov.uk with 'Petition FAO of the Town Clerk' in the subject header.

2. Petition Requirements

2.1. Petitions may only be submitted to the Town Council regarding areas of its responsibility.

2.2. Petitions for matters under the control of any other council will not be accepted, and the petitioners will be directed to an appropriate contact at the relevant authority.

2.3. Petitions that are considered to be vexatious, abusive or otherwise inappropriate will not be accepted.

2.4. Signatures must be accompanied by the signatories' full names and addresses. Any signatory must be resident in the parish of Buckingham for their signature to be valid and a minimum of 1% of electors' signatories are required for a petition to be considered under this policy.

2.5. Petitions must include a clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition and the action the petitioners wish the Council to take.

2.6. Petitions must be accompanied by contact details for a petition organiser. This will be the person the Council will contact regarding the petition.

2.7. A petition will not be accepted if a similar petition has been accepted within the previous six months.

- 2.8. Decisions on the validity of a petition will be made in accordance with 2-1-2.6 by the Town Clerk.
- 2.9. The applicant may appeal against a decision that a petition is not valid. Any such appeal will be heard by the Appeals Committee.

3. Process

- 3.1. An acknowledgement of the petition will be sent to the petition organiser stating whether the petition has been accepted or not as valid. This will be as soon as possible and normally within ten working days of the Council receiving the petition. If a petition has been deemed invalid the reasons will be stated.
- 3.2. All councillors will also be informed of the receipt of a valid petition.
- 3.3. If a petition is accepted as valid, the petition organiser will be invited to the next full council meeting to make a presentation to the Council as part of the Public Participation session before the meeting.
- 3.4. If a Councillor makes a written request to the Town Clerk sufficiently ahead of the next full council meeting (in accordance with the applicable Standing Order (s)), the valid petition will be added as an agenda item for discussion and debate at the meeting.
- 3.5. In the event that the Town Clerk reasonably judges that the meeting may be overloaded, the debate under 3.4 may be delayed until the following meeting of the Council.
- 3.6. In the event that a debate is not requested by a member under 3.4, the Town Clerk may (but is not obliged to) respond with one of the following:
 - i. A factual statement of resolved Council policy relevant to the petition
 - ii. A statement of fact(s) relevant to the petition
 - iii. An invitation to engage with one or more officers or members
- 3.7. Wherever reasonably practical the response will be pre-prepared and circulated in advance to members.
- 3.8. Nothing in the above will permit any member or officer to make any decision or imply any commitment (other than a commitment of engagement) in direct response to the petition