

PETITIONS SCHEME

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Residents, those working or studying in the Borough (including those under the age of 18) are able to petition the Council on a variety of matters.
- 1.2. Petitions are accepted via the Council's e-petition facility or in paper form.

2. RELEVANT PETITIONS

- 2.1. Petitions will be accepted only where they relate to a matter that the Council can affect, for example they call on the Council to take a particular course of action.
- 2.2. Petitions which will not be considered as part of this Scheme include any:
 - a) Petition relating to specific planning or licensing applications because each has statutory processes which must be followed. Those petitions will instead be passed to the relevant Council department for inclusion in the specific case file.
 - b) Statutory petition (for example those requesting a referendum on having an elected Mayor). In such cases the Petitioner should contact the Democratic Services Manager.
 - c) Petition submitted in response to a consultation being carried out by the Council. Those petitions will instead be passed to the relevant Council department for inclusion in that consultation process.
 - d) Petition relating to the responsibilities of one of the Council's partners or West Sussex County Council. Those petitions will be passed to the relevant body for their consideration.
 - e) Petition from a third-party website which do not meet the criteria set out in Paragraph 6.
 - f) Petition relating to other matters where there is already an existing right of appeal or a separate complaints procedure.
- 2.3. The Council holds the right to reject any petition which:
 - a) Is substantially the same as a petition presented within the last six months.
 - b) It deems to be libellous, offensive, defamatory, time-wasting or otherwise inappropriate.

3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN WITH PETITIONS

- 3.1. How the Council deals with a petition will depend on the type of petition submitted. Relevant petitions fall in to three categories:
 - a) **Petitions to Hold an Officer to Account:** If at closure a petition to hold a Chief Officer to account has between 50 and 999 signatures, it will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission before it is reported to the appropriate decision maker for a response directly to the person who submitted the petition.

- b) **Ordinary Petitions:** If at closure a petition has between 50 and 999 signatures, it will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission before it is submitted to the appropriate decision maker for a response directly to the person who submitted the petition.
- c) **Petitions for Debate:** If at closure a petition has more than 1000 signatures, it will be presented at a meeting of the Full Council for debate (*NB. All petitions to hold an officer to account will be dealt with in accordance with the procedure detailed in Paragraph 3.1(a)*).
- 3.2. Where more than one petition is received in time for a particular meeting, each supporting the same outcome, each person submitting the petition will be treated independently. However, only the petitioner whose petition was received first will be invited to address the relevant meeting.
- 3.3. The Petitions Officer may delay the progress of a relevant petition to a formal Council meeting if its consideration would fall during the Pre-Election Period (period of heightened sensitivity) and could be deemed politically sensitive.

4. VALIDATING SIGNATURES AND VERIFYING THE PETITION

- 4.1. A petition will only be accepted if the person registering/submitting the petition (Principal Petitioner) lives, works or studies in the Borough.
- 4.2. A signature is deemed to be 'valid' where the given address is verified as being within the Borough of Crawley's administrative area. The given address can be for a person's home, workplace, or place of study.
- 4.3. The Council holds the right to carry out any checks it deems necessary to verify the number of signatures on a petition. These checks can include verifying addresses, checking the names of signatories, ensuring there are no duplicate signatories, etc, with the view to amending the final signature count as necessary.

5. PAPER PETITIONS

- 5.1. In order for a paper petition to be considered in accordance with this Scheme, the following information must be present and legible:
- A clear statement of the petition's aim on the top of each sheet made available for signing.
 - The name, address and contact details for the person submitting the petition (only the name of the person submitting the petition will be published on the Council's website).
 - A name, address (home, work or study), and signature for each signatory.
- 5.2. The Council recommends that petitioners use the templates provided for both the petition signature sheet and the covering submission sheet. Both templates are available via the Council's Petitions webpage.

- 5.3. Paper petitions must be sent to:
- Head of Governance, People & Performance (Petitions Officer)
Crawley Borough Council
Town Hall
The Boulevard
Crawley
West Sussex RH10 1UZ

6. E-PETITIONS

- 6.1. E-petitions will only be accepted and considered in accordance with this Scheme, when the following information is provided:
- A clear statement of the petition's aim.
 - The name, address and email address for the person registering the petition (only the name of the person submitting the petition will be published on the Council's website).
 - A name, address and postcode (home, work or study) for each signatory (these details will only be visible to the person who registered the petition and the Council officers administering the e-petition facility).
- 6.2. To ensure the validity of the petition signatories, the Council prefers e-petitions to be submitted through its own e-petition facility.
- 6.3. E-petitions created on sites hosted by third parties will be accepted as long as the information in Paragraph 6.1 is provided through a CSV file and is presented to the Council. If the person registering such an e-petition would like the Council to consider their petition, it is their responsibility to submit it (with the CSV file) to the Council.
- 6.4. It is necessary for the Council to check that the content of an e-petition is suitable before it is made available for signatures. Therefore, when an e-petition is created, it may take ten working days before it is published online.
- 6.5. To ensure that e-petitions are dealt with efficiently, only electronic signatures submitted within three months following the publication of the petition will be accepted.

7. ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR PETITIONS

- 7.1. The Council will, from time-to-time, publish or amend additional guidance for the submission of petitions on its website. This guidance must be considered when submitting a petition.

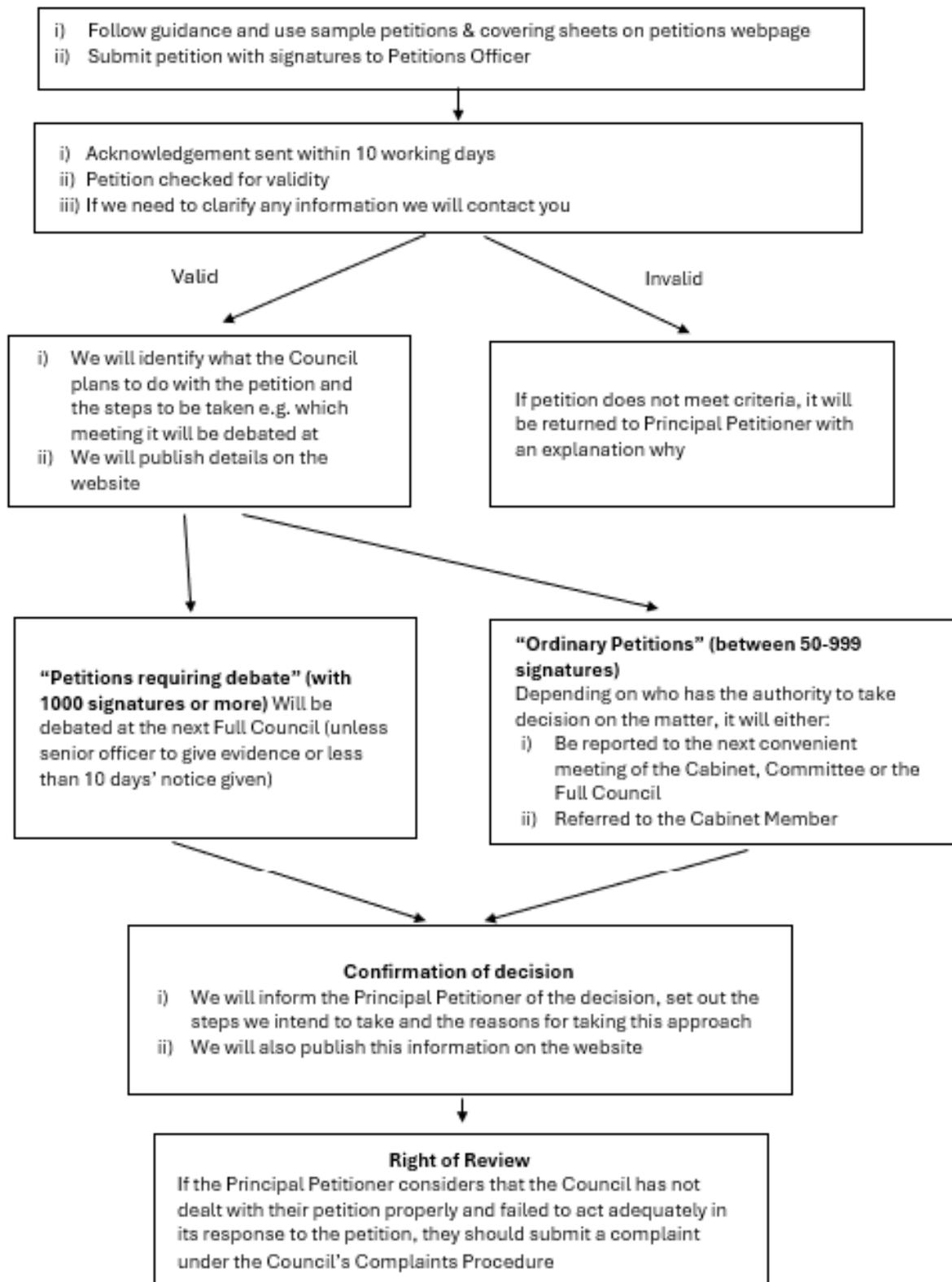
8. APPEAL

- 8.1. If a petitioner considers that their petition has not been administered in accordance with this Scheme, they may submit a complaint under the Council's Complaints Procedure.

9. DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THE PETITIONS SCHEME

- [Council's Petitions Webpage](#)
- [Crawley Borough Council's E-Petition Facility](#)
- [Information on the Council's Complaints Procedure](#)

PAPER PETITIONS FLOWCHART



E-PETITIONS FLOWCHART

