

Petitions Committee – Membership and Terms of Reference

Report by John Blair, Director, Corporate Resources

1 Purpose of Report

This report sets out the membership and terms of reference of the Petitions Committee.

2 Membership

- 2.1** On 25 September 2012, the Council agreed that a Petitions Committee be established with a membership of six, comprising 2 SNP, 2 Labour, 1 Independent and 1 Green. This is based around the model in use at Renfrewshire Council. In establishing the Petitions Committee, Midlothian Council agreed that this would be for the period to the end of 2013 and that the process be reviewed thereafter.

- 2.2** The full membership of the Committee is as follows:-

Councillor Rosie (Chair)
Councillor Baxter
Councillor Coventry
Councillor de Vink
Councillor Muirhead
Councillor Russell

3 Terms of Reference

The terms of reference of the Petitions Committee are stated in the Scheme of Administration (appended to Standing Orders). An extract is shown at **Appendix 1** hereto.

4 Arrangements for Dealing with Petitions

- 4.1** The arrangements for dealing with petitions are set out in the following documents:-

Appendix 2 Midlothian Council - Procedure for Dealing with Petitions

Appendix 3 Submitting a petition to Midlothian Council (extract from Council Website)

Appendix 4 Putting forward a petition to the Council's Petitions Committee – What you need to know – questions and answers.

4.2 Having considered a petition the Committee can take one of the following actions:-

- No action, in which case reasons will be given.
- Pass the petition to the relevant director or other Council Committee to look into, with or without any specific recommendation.
- If the petition relates to another public organisation, the Committee may pass it on to that organisation with or without any specific recommendation.

5 Timescale for Lodging Petitions Prior to Meeting

5.1 To allow sufficient time for validating and processing petitions following receipt, the Committee is invited to recommend to Council that a deadline of 10 working days be set in advance of each meeting for receipt of petitions for the meeting otherwise the petition be carried over to the next meeting of the Committee.

5.2 Given that agendas require to be issued 5 working days in advance of each meeting, this allows the officers 5 working days to process the petition between the receipt deadline and agenda issue.

6 Report Implications

6.1 Resource

There are no resource implications arising from this report.

6.2 Risk

There are no risk implications arising from this report.

6.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☐ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☐ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☒ None of the above

6.4 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

Not applicable.

6.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Not applicable.

6.6/

6.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The availability of a Petitions Committee allows stakeholders to raise issues for consideration by the Council.

6.7 Ensuring Equalities

Not applicable.

6.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

Not applicable.

6.9 IT Issues

Not applicable.

7 Recommendation

The Committee is invited:-

- (a) to note its membership and terms of reference; and
- (b) to recommend to Council that a deadline of 10 working days be set in advance of each meeting for receipt of petitions for the meeting otherwise the petition be carried over to the next meeting of the Committee.

12 March 2013

Report Contact:

Jim Clifford Tel No 0131 271 3155

E-mail jim.clifford@midlothian.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

Committee	Membership/Notes
(x) Petitions Committee	<p>Will comprise 6 Members on the following basis:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 SNP • 2 Labour • 1 Green • 1 Independent <p>Will have a Chair.</p>

4.x Petitions Committee

Business – The Petitions Committee will be responsible for considering and dealing with petitions in accordance with procedures agreed by the Council from time to time.

Meetings – The Committee will normally meet on a six weekly cycle (subject to breaks for the summer recess, Christmas/New Year and school holidays).

Quorum – The quorum for meetings of the Committee will be 3 Councillors.

Minutes – The Minutes of the Committee will be submitted to the next ordinary meeting of the Committee for approval. They will also be submitted to the Council both for information and to allow the Council to consider any recommendations contained in them.