



## Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

### Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Petition Scheme

The council welcomes petitions and recognises that petitions are one way in which people can let us know their concerns.

#### **What is a petition?**

A petition is a formal written request, typically one signed by many people, appealing to the council in respect of a particular cause, concern or issue.

It might be helpful if you contact the council to discuss your petition before starting to collect signatures. You can contact us by emailing [democraticsupport@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk](mailto:democraticsupport@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk) or by calling 01455 255879.

#### **Who can create and sign a petition?**

Anyone who lives, works or studies in the borough can create or sign a petition about a local issue and submit it to the council. Petition organisers and signatories should be over 18, though there may be exceptional circumstances where a supplementary petition from those under 18 will be accepted in support of the main petition.

#### **What are the guidelines for submitting a petition?**

Petitions must include:

- A clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition and what action the petitioners wish the council to take. This statement should be printed on each page so the signatories can be clear about what they're supporting
- The name, address (including postcode) (this will be the "qualifying address" of the signatory – the address in the borough at which they live, work or study) and signature of any person supporting the petition
- A minimum of 20 signatures of people who live, work or study in the borough.

Petitions should be accompanied by contact details, including a postal address and ideally an email address or contact telephone number, for the petition organiser. If the petition does not identify a petition organiser, we will contact the first ten signatories to the petition to agree who should act as the petition organiser.

## **What matters are excluded from the Petition Scheme?**

Petitions which are considered to be vexatious, discriminatory, abusive or otherwise inappropriate will not be accepted. In the period before an election or referendum, we may need to deal with your petition differently – if this is the case, we will contact you to explain the reasons and discuss a revised timescale.

There are also matters which are specifically excluded under the Petition Scheme:

- Any matter relating to a planning application or decision or consultation carried out in relation to any Development Planning Document. In these circumstances petitions will be considered as responses to the consultation or publicity
- Any matter relating to a licensing decision, including licensing applications under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005
- Any matter which is currently or imminently subject to a consultation exercise
- Any matter which has been subject to a statutory consultation exercise and the consultation exercise has now closed, such as the local plan
- Any matters relating to complaints against councillors under the code of conduct
- Any matter where there is an existing right of appeal (such as council tax banding or non-domestic rates)
- Statutory petitions such as requesting a referendum on having an elected mayor
- Any matter which is substantially the same as a petition submitted in the previous 12 months
- Any matter which is considered to be exempt under the Local Government Act 1972, Access to Information Act 1985, the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

We will notify the petition organiser of the reasons for not being able to accept the petition if it is excluded on one or more of the above grounds.

## **Where should I send my petition?**

Paper petitions should be submitted to the Democratic Services Manager at:

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council  
Hinckley Hub  
Rugby Road  
Hinckley  
LE10 0FR

Email: [democraticsupport@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk](mailto:democraticsupport@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01455 255879

E-Petitions can be created, signed and submitted online via the council's website or via other online sites as long as they meet the qualifying criteria set out above.

Further guidance for submitting an e-petition via the council's website is available on the council's website or on request.

If you are submitting a petition via an external site, please email [democraticsupport@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk](mailto:democraticsupport@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk) with a link to the site, attaching a copy of all signatories downloaded by the petition organiser.

### **What will the council do when it receives my petition?**

Once a petition is received it will be checked to see if it meets the criteria defined in this scheme. We will contact the petition organiser within ten working days of receipt of the petition to acknowledge receipt and provide a timeline for further consideration and action. If the petition is invalid or excluded we will also let the petition organiser know at this stage. Once the petition has been verified and acknowledged, no further signatures can be added.

Details of petitions received will be published on our website, except in cases where this would be inappropriate. Details will be retained on the website for 2 years after conclusion of the petition process.

### **How will the council respond to my petition?**

Our response to your petition will depend on what the petition asks for (as part of the statement) and how many people have signed it. Our response may include:

- Taking the action requested in the petition
- Undertaking research into the matter
- Consideration of the petition at a public meeting (this will be the most relevant meeting according to the subject matter as determined by the Democratic Services Manager)
- Consideration by the council's Scrutiny Commission if it has more than 750 signatures
- Consideration by Council if it has more than 1500 signatures.

If your petition is about something over which the council has no direct control, we will consider making representations on behalf of the community to the relevant body. If we are not able to do this for any reason, we will set out the reasons for this. You can find out more information on the services for which the council is responsible on the council's website.

### **Consideration by the Scrutiny Commission**

If your petition contains between 750 and 1499 signatures and is about a matter for which the council is responsible, you may request that it be considered by the council's Scrutiny Commission. If this is the case, it will be scheduled for consideration at the next appropriate meeting of the Scrutiny Commission. The petition organiser will be invited to attend the meeting and will be allowed five

minutes to present the petition. The senior officer responsible for the service area will be permitted to respond, and members of the Scrutiny Commission will then debate the petition for a maximum of 15 minutes and will decide how to respond to the petition. The petition organiser will receive written confirmation of the decision and it will also be published on the council's website.

### **Consideration by Council**

If your petition contains 1500 signatures or more, and is about a matter for which the council is responsible, you may request that it be considered at a meeting of the Council, which all councillors can attend. If this is the case, it will be scheduled for consideration at the next appropriate meeting of the Council. The petition organiser will be invited to attend the meeting and will be allowed five minutes to present the petition. Councillors will then debate the petition for a maximum of 15 minutes and will decide how to respond. Where the issue is one on which the council's Executive is required to make the final decision, Council will decide whether to make recommendations to inform that decision. The petition organiser will receive written confirmation of the decision and it will also be published on the council's website.

### **What can I do if I feel my petition has not been dealt with properly?**

If you feel that we have not dealt with your petition properly, you should follow the council's complaints procedure.