

**ePetitions Guidance** (to be read in conjunction with the [petitions scheme](#))

### **Who can sign an ePetition?**

An ePetition can be signed by a person of any age who lives, works or studies in Swansea. You do not have to be a registered user to sign an ePetition but you will need to provide a few basic details, including a valid email address, for verification purposes.

You can only sign an ePetition once. The list of signatories will be checked by Officers and any duplicate signatures or inappropriate responses will be removed.

### **Who can submit an ePetition?**

An ePetition can be submitted by a person of any age who lives, works or studies in Swansea. To submit an ePetition you will need to be a registered user. Registration is a simple process that just requires you to provide us with your name, address, postcode & valid email address in case we need to contact you about the ePetition.

From time to time, the Council may also submit an ePetition itself to gauge public feeling on a particular issue.

### **How do I start an ePetition?**

On the ePetitions homepage, select the 'Submit a new ePetition' option. You will be prompted to enter a title which the system will automatically check against existing ePetitions to allow you to see if a similar one has been considered recently.

You will then need to fill in the online form. This will be submitted to the Democratic Services team who may contact you to discuss your ePetition before it goes live. It may take up to 10 days for your ePetition to be published online.

### **What issues can my ePetition relate to?**

Your ePetition should be relevant to some issue on which the Council has powers or duties or on which it has shared delivery responsibilities. It should also be submitted in good faith and be honest and respectful.

Your ePetition may be rejected for the reasons set out in the 8.2 of the [Councils Petitions Scheme](#).

During politically sensitive periods, such as prior to an election, politically controversial material may need to be restricted.

The Council accepts no liability for the petitions on these web pages. The views expressed in the petitions do not necessarily reflect those of the Council.

If your ePetition is about something over which the Council has no direct control (for example the local railway or hospital) we will consider making representations on behalf of the community to the relevant body.

If it is considered that your ePetition cannot be published for any reason, the Council will contact you within this time to explain. You will be able to change and resubmit your petition if you wish. If you do not do this within 5 working days, a summary of the ePetition and the reason why it has not been accepted will be published under the 'Rejected Petitions' section of the website.

### **What information should my ePetition contain?**

Your ePetition will need to include:

- A title.
- A clear and concise statement of the concern and what the Petitioners would like the Council to do in response. Petitions must relate to something for which the Council is responsible for or over which the Council has some direct influence.
- Any information which you feel is relevant to the ePetition and reasons.
- A date for when your ePetition will go live on the website. It may take Democratic Services up to 5 working days to check your ePetition request and discuss any issues with you so please ensure that you submit the request in sufficient time to allow the ePetition to go live on your required date.
- A date for when your ePetition will stop collecting signatures. No Petition will be allowed to be open for 6 months or more.

As lead petitioner, your name will be displayed with your ePetition on the website.

If you are having trouble submitting an ePetition or would like further advice and information then please contact the Democratic Services team (details below) and we will be happy to assist you.

### **Promoting your ePetition**

Whilst the Council will host ePetitions on its website, it is for the lead petitioner to spread the word about their ePetition.

### **What happens when the ePetition is complete?**

When the ePetition reaches its closing date, you will no longer be able to sign it online. The list of signatories will be collated by Democratic Services.

### **What will happen to the ePetition once it is submitted?**

Our response to a petition will depend on what a petition asks for and how many people have signed it, but may include one or more of the following.

- Raising publicity for, and an awareness of an issue.
- Submission of Petition to a Cabinet meeting having regard to Executive functions.
- Taking the action requested in the Petition (either under Officer delegated powers or otherwise as appropriate in all the circumstance).
- Taking the matter to full Council so the Petition can be considered.
- Commissioning research.
- Writing to the Lead Petitioner setting out the Council's views on the request in the Petition.
- Referring the Petition to the Scrutiny Programme Committee.
- Holding a meeting with the Lead Petitioner.
- Forwarding your Petition / Lobbying another Body if it is something that the Council has no direct control.
- In matters that are dealt with by delegated authority, the responsible Officer will respond to the Petition.

If a petition contains 500+ signatures, it will be debated by a full Meeting of the Council. Further information regarding this is contained in the Councils [Petitions Scheme](#).

### **What can ePetitions achieve?**

When you submit an ePetition to the Council it can have positive outcomes that lead to change and inform debate. It can bring an issue to the attention of the Council and show strong public approval or disapproval for something which the Council is doing. As a consequence, the Council may decide to, for example, change or review a policy, hold a public meeting or run a public consultation to gather more views on the issue.

### **Can I still submit a paper petition?**

Yes, you can still submit paper petitions. A petition may also gather names and addresses in both forms - you can have a paper version and an online version, although repeat names will be removed. Both forms should run for the same period of time and must be submitted together. When submitting an ePetition request, please let us know if you are running a paper petition as well and this can be highlighted on the website.

### **Privacy policy**

The details you give us are needed to validate your support but will not be published on the website, other than your name under the list of signatories. This is the same information required for a paper petition. The Council may contact you in relation to any petitions you have signed, unless you have requested not to be contacted when signing the ePetition.

## Contact Details

For more information and advice, or to discuss a potential ePetition, please contact:

Democratic Services: [democracy@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@swansea.gov.uk) / 01792 636923