

MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL

SCHEME FOR PETITIONS

Petitions

The Council welcomes petitions and recognises that petitions are one way in which people can let it know of their concerns.

All petitions sent to the Council will receive acknowledgment from the Council. This acknowledgement will set out what the Council plans to do with the petition.

The Council will treat something as a petition if it is identified as being a petition, or if it appears that it is intended to be a petition.

Petitions can either be sent to:

The Committee Services and Scrutiny Manager
Milton Keynes Council
1 Saxon Gate East
Central Milton Keynes
MK9 3EJ

or be created, signed and submitted online.

Petitions can also be presented to a meeting of the Council or the Cabinet. Dates of these meetings are available on the Council's website, but generally happen monthly. On presenting your petition to a meeting you will be given up to a minute to present it and outline its purpose. Councillors will only discuss the subject of your petition if there is already an item on the Agenda for the meeting. You can contact your local Councillor well in advance of the meeting and ask him or her to place an item on the Agenda. If you present the petition to the Council and there is not an item already on the Agenda the petition will be referred for consideration at a future meeting of the Cabinet, by a Cabinet Member, or by one of the Council's officers to deal with. If you present the petition to the Cabinet and there is not an item already on the Agenda it is likely that the Cabinet will call for a report on the subject of the petition to a future meeting.

If you would like advice on the procedure please contact Simon Heap on 01908 252567 at least ten working days before the meeting and he will talk you through the process.

What are the Guidelines for Submitting a Petition?

Petitions submitted should include:

- (a) a clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition. It should state what action the petitioners wish the Council to take; and
- (b) the name and address and signature of every person supporting the petition.

Petitions should be accompanied by contact details, including an address, for the petition organiser. This is the person the Council will contact to explain how it will respond to the petition. If the petition does not identify a petition organiser, the Council will contact the first signatory to the petition.

Petitions which are considered to be vexatious, abusive or otherwise inappropriate will not be accepted. If a petition does not follow the guidelines set out above, the Council may decide not to do anything further with it. In that case, you will be told the reasons.

What will the Council do when it receives my Petition?

If the Council can do what your petition asks for, the acknowledgment may confirm that the action requested has been taken and the petition will be closed.

If the petition applies to a planning or licensing application, is a statutory requirement (for example, requesting a referendum on having an elected mayor), or is on a matter where there is already an existing right of appeal, such as Council Tax banding and non-domestic rates, other procedures apply. Further information on all these procedures and how you can express your views is available from the following contacts:

- (a) Planning – Planning Enquiry Desk: 01908 252358
- (b) Licensing – Senior Licensing Officer: 01908 252409
- (c) Elected Mayor – Elections Officer: 01908 252529
- (d) Council Tax – Enquiries: 01908 253794

E-Petitions

The Council welcomes e-petitions which are created and submitted through its website. E-petitions must follow the same guidelines as paper petitions. The petition organiser will need to provide the Council with their name, postal address and e-mail address. You will also need to decide how long you would like your petition to be open for signatures. The maximum time that a petition may remain open is six months.

When you create an e-petition, the Council will check that the content of your petition is suitable before it is made available for signature. If the Council feels it cannot publish your petition for some reason, you will be contacted you within this time to explain why not. You will be able to change and resubmit your petition if your wish.

When an e-petition has closed for signature, the petitioner will be contacted to be advised how many signatories there are and enquired of whether s/he wishes it to be submitted. In the same way as a paper petition, you will receive an acknowledgement within ten working days. If you would like to present your e-petition to a meeting of the Council, please contact Simon Heap on 01908 252567 within ten working days of receipt of the acknowledgement.