

CONSTITUTION & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Date of Meeting	Wednesday, 26 January 2022
Report Subject	Draft Petitions Scheme
Report Author	Chief Officer (Governance)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Members may recall from previous reports that Section 42 of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021, which comes into force with effect from 5th May 2022 places a duty on principal councils to make and publish a petitions scheme. Council has previously supported this, in principle, when consulted on the contents of the Local Government & Elections Bill.

Members will be aware that we have a 'Petitions' item on the agenda for each ordinary meeting of Council. That is for Members to bring to the Council's attention petitions which have been raised within their ward. This is recognised as being an important part of the relationship between a Member and the people who live and/or work in their ward. Because of that, Members should be assured that no changes are proposed to that process.

The officers have drafted a petitions scheme, based on the criteria of suitability for questions at Council. This has been in place for some years and following review is still considered to be suitable for our purpose. The Petitions scheme is to enable members of the public to organise and submit petitions directly to the County Council. The submission of electronic petitions can be managed using the Modern.gov software which supports the committee system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the Committee considers and comments on the draft Petitions scheme.
2	That subject to the Committee's approval for the Petitions scheme, that it be submitted to Council for formal adoption.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE NEED FOR A PETITIONS SCHEME
1.01	Section 42 of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021, which comes into force with effect from 5 th May 2022 places a duty on principal councils to make and publish a petitions scheme.
1.02	This is in addition, rather than as a replacement of the current facility for Members to submit petitions at Council meetings. Those arrangements will continue, and still be subject to an annual report. As in previous years, such reports would be made to the last scheduled council meeting of a municipal year.
1.03	The officers have prepared a draft Petitions scheme, which is attached as appendix 1. The parameters for acceptability are based on those which we have had for some years for public questions to Council.
1.04	The Committee is invited to consider and comment on the draft Petitions scheme. Subject to the Committee's approval of the scheme, it will be submitted to Council for formal adoption.
1.05	Once adopted by Council, the Petitions scheme will be published on the Council's website.
1.06	The submission of electronic petitions can be managed using the Modern.gov software which supports the committee system.
2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	It is anticipated that the introduction of this statutory scheme will have few resource implications.
3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	This report is being published for consultation purposes.
4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	The adoption of a Petitions scheme is a statutory requirement.
5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	App 1 - Draft Petitions Scheme

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None Contact Officer: Gareth Owens, Chief Officer (Governance) Telephone: 01352 702344 E-mail: Gareth.legal@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	None