

Paper Petition Details

Huntercombe Lane North Parking Bays

We the undersigned residents have concerns regarding lack of parking facilities and the speed of the traffic on Huntercombe Lane North (Top End). The traffic enters the road extremely fast from the top roundabout making parking dangerous; we also have a bus stop in front of our flats which was going to be removed over a year ago. Due to the above many cars have also been damaged while parking on this road causing scratches, dents and mirrors to be smashed and found on the other side of the road. Personal injuries could easily occur while trying to get into the cars and many children have to do this on a daily basis.

We are requesting future funding to be made available to install similar parking bays which are communal and subject to first come first serve basis on the eastside of the grass verge, similar to the newly installed bays at the bottom end of Huntercombe Lane North. Could you please take this into consideration? We look forward to hearing from you and thank you in advance.

This petition was received on 7th December 2011.

This petition was passed to the Assistant Engineer Highways Maintenance on 7th December 2011.

This petition was responded to on 19th December 2011 by the Assistant Engineer Highways Maintenance.

Final Results

Number of Signatures	34
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Council Response

The Highways department do not have a dedicated budget to construct parking bays or convert grass verges into hard standing areas for parking purposes. The recent construction of parking bays at Huntercombe Lane North was funded by the use of Environmental Enhancement Budget, which was authorised by the Deputy Leader / Commissioner for Neighbourhoods and Renewal.

Given that your petition has more than 25 signatures, please see below a copy of petition scheme currently operated by the Council. Section (E) of the scheme should be noted - please read the details of the scheme carefully before considering your next course of action.

PETITIONS SCHEME

The Council welcomes petitions and recognises that they are one way in which people can let the Council know of their concerns. This Scheme, made under Section 11 (1) of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, is intended to establish a clear process for how petitions submitted to the Council will be dealt with.

A. INTRODUCTION

1 The Scheme was approved by the Council on 21st July 2010 and is available on the Authority's website: www.slough.gov.uk.

2 The Scheme covers:

- What constitutes a petition
- how people who live, work or study in the Authority's area can organise or sign a petition and secure a statutory response
- how specific responses can be triggered by achieving prescribed levels of Signatory support
- *who* will do *what* and to what performance standards
- how petition organisers can seek a review of the Council's response
- how the Council will monitor the effectiveness of this Scheme.

3 The officer responsible for this Petitions Scheme, and its operation is the Deputy Borough Secretary whose contact details are as follows: Democratic Services, Town Hall, Bath Road Slough SL1 3UQ email Catherine.meek@slough.gov.uk

B. WHAT ARE THE GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING A PETITION

4 Something will be treated as a petition if it is identified as being a petition, or if it seems to the Council, that it is intended to be a petition.

5 A valid Petition must:

- Be initiated by a Petition Organiser whose details have been supplied to the Council.
 - Relate to the Council's functions or to the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area to which any of the Council's partner authorities could contribute.
 - Contain a clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition and should state what action the petitioners wish the Council to take.
 - Include the name, address and signature of any person supporting the petition.
- In the case of ePetitions, the Council requires signatories to append their email addresses and their postcodes; failure to provide this information may lead to the signature not being counted.
 - Not be vexatious or abusive

- Not be related to matters excluded from the Scheme. These include any matter relating to individual planning or licensing decisions, for which other established processes exist. See paragraph 13 below
- Obtain a minimum of 10 valid signatories, including verifiable details that they live, work or study in the Council area.
- Not be a duplicate or near-duplicate of a similar petition received or submitted under 6 months ago.

6 Petitions may be submitted to the Authority in the following ways:

- On paper
- Electronically, through the Council's own ePetition facility *
- Electronically by e-mail

C. WHAT WILL THE COUNCIL DO WHEN IT RECEIVES A PETITION

7 The Council will acknowledge Petitions that meet the criteria shown in Paragraph 5 of this Scheme within **10 working days of receipt**.

8 For ePetitions, the Council will issue a formal acknowledgement within **5 working days** of its initial submission. Note that during this period, the ePetitions Facility Administrator will act a 'moderator' and establish that there are no problems that might prevent the system from hosting the Petition. If there are difficulties, the Scheme Administrator will contact the Petition Organiser and use their best endeavours to resolve matters so that the Petition can be open for signatures. Where such a dialogue occurs, the formal acknowledgement will be sent within **5 working days** of the resolution of the difficulty.

9 The acknowledgement will indicate how the Council proposes to handle the issue, the name of the officer dealing with the petition and, where appropriate, outline what it may be possible for the Authority to do in response. If the Council is able to do what the petition asks for the Petition Organiser will be informed and the petition closed. If the petition has enough signatures to trigger a Council debate or a senior officer giving evidence the acknowledgement will confirm this along with the meeting date and time.

Petition	Signatory Threshold	Action Required
Any Petition above a set threshold will be able to be presented at a meeting of full Council	25	Petition Organiser invited to present petition at full Council meeting
Any Petition above a set threshold will trigger a debate of full Council	1500	Debate at Council meeting
Any Petition above a set threshold which will call a senior council officer to give evidence at a public meeting	750	Senior Officer to attend Overview & Scrutiny Committee to give evidence
'Standard' Petition Any other petition requesting action or response by the Council	10	Acknowledge and respond in accordance with scheme

10 It may be inappropriate for the Council to deal with certain petitions during periods when they are subject to restrictions immediately before elections or referendums.

In these circumstances the Petition Organiser will be informed of the date when the petition will be considered or when material relating to it will be published on the Council's Website.

- 11 To ensure the Council understands the level of local support for a Petition, it reserves the right to seek to verify each signature appended to a Petition. This can be significant when establishing whether a Petition has obtained the requisite number of signatures to trigger specific processes.
- 12 For any Petition relating specifically to a Council Ward or Wards, the relevant Elected Members will be formally notified and asked for comments.
- 13 The petition will be published on the Council website, except in cases where it would be inappropriate, for example if the petition was considered to be potentially libellous or unlawful. Whenever possible all correspondence relating to the petition (with personal details removed) will be published on the website.
- 14 As each Petition is received or created online, the Council will log each one, and publish details on its website.
- 15 Unless a shorter period is agreed following discussions with the Petition Organiser, an ePetition will remain open for signatures for 90 days.
- 16 If the petition applies to a planning or licensing application, is a statutory petition (for example requesting a referendum on having an elected mayor) or on a matter where there is already an existing right of appeal such as council tax banding and non-domestic rates other procedures apply. Please contact the Deputy Borough Secretary for further information on these procedures.

D. RESPONDING TO PETITIONS

- 17 The Council's 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:-
 - Taking the action requested in the Petition
 - considering the Petition at a Council Meeting
 - Holding an Inquiry
 - Commissioning relevant research
 - Organising a public meeting
 - Mounting a wider public consultation
 - Meeting with the Petition Organiser or representatives of signatories
 - Providing a written response outlining the Council's views on the subject
 - Referring the issue to the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Committee **OR**
 - Referring the issue to the relevant Committee/Cabinet
 - Consulting statutory partners and local service providers
 - Instigating discussions with the voluntary and community sectors
 - Making representations to Commercial or other Interests
- 18 If your petition is about something over which the council has no direct control (for example the local railway or hospital) the Council will consider making representations on behalf of the community to the relevant body. The council works with a large number of local partners and where possible will work with

these partners to respond to your petition. If we are not able to do this for any reason (for example if what the petition calls for conflicts with council policy), the Petition Organiser will be advised of the reasons. .

- 19 If your petition is about something that a different council is responsible for the Council will give consideration to what the best method is for responding to it. This might consist of simply forwarding the petition to the other council, but could involve other steps. In any event the petition organiser will always be notified of the action that has been taken.
- 20 Under normal circumstances, the Council will expect to provide the Petition organiser with a response detailing which of the actions specified above or other initiatives it intends within 28 days of receipt.

E PRESENTING THE PETITION AT A COUNCIL MEETING – 25 SIGNATURES

- 21 If a Petition has 25 or more signatures the Petition Organiser, or someone on his/her behalf, may present the Petition to a meeting of the Full Council. The appointed spokesperson may address Council for a period not exceeding 5 minutes and Members of the Council may, for a period not exceeding 5 minutes, ask questions of the spokesperson. There will be no debate on the petition which will then be dealt with in accordance with the Petitions Scheme.

F. COUNCIL DEBATE – 1500 SIGNATURES

- 22 If a Petition has, or acquires 1500 valid signatures the issue will be debated at a full Council meeting (i.e. a Meeting to which all elected members are invited). The Council will endeavour to consider the petition at its next meeting, although on some occasions this may not be possible and consideration will then take place at the next available meeting.
- 23 The Deputy Borough Secretary, in consultation with the Chief Executive and/or relevant Director will prepare a report detailing the subject of the petition and what action the council and/or partners is being asked to take.
- 24 At such a meeting, the Petition Organiser or someone nominated on his or her behalf will have the right to speak about the petition, normally for up to five minutes; reasonable advance notice will be provided to ensure that any preparation can be undertaken in time.
- 25 The petition will then be discussed by elected members at the meeting for a maximum of 15 minutes. The Mayor has discretion to extend this time taking account of the degree of public interest in the issue, the level of support given to the Petition and the number of elected members wishing to express their views on the subject.
- 26 The Council accepts that it will not normally be sufficient for such a meeting merely to 'take note' of the Petition and that there should be a decision taken as to what other steps (including but not restricted to the actions specified in Paragraph 14) should also be taken as a response.

27 Where the issue is one on which the Council's Executive (Cabinet) is required to make the final decision the Council will decide whether to make recommendations to inform that decision.

28 The Petition Organiser will be notified of the decision taken at the Council meeting within 5 working days of the meeting.

F. OFFICER EVIDENCE – 750 SIGNATURES

29 Petitions may request that a senior Council Officer be required to appear and give evidence on an issue for which he or she is responsible as part of their job. If such a Petition has, or acquires 750 valid signatures, the relevant senior officer will give evidence at a public meeting of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, though the Council reserves the right to substitute a more appropriate officer for the name referred to in the Petition.

30 Officers who may be called to give evidence in this way as a result of a Petition are the Chief Executive and Directors or their nominees. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may also decide to call the relevant Commissioner to attend the meeting.

31 If in the opinion of the Council, an issue raised in a petition seeking to call a Senior Officer to account would be better considered through the attendance of relevant Senior Officers from a Partner Authority, the Council may, at its discretion request that such an individual be invited to give evidence to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee,

32 The Petition Organiser will be given reasonable notice of the meeting, and will be able to address the Committee for up to 5 minutes. There is no right to question the officer directly – this would be at the discretion of the Chair. The meeting Chairperson will normally be prepared to consider suggested lines of questioning from the Petition Organiser or Signatories and these would need to be notified to the Deputy Borough Secretary up to three working days before the meeting.

33 The Deputy Borough Secretary, in consultation with the Chief Executive and/or relevant Director will prepare a report detailing the subject of the petition. Following the meeting the Committee will prepare a report and/or make recommendations. These will be sent to the Authority Chief Executive and to the Leader of the Council, and a copy sent to the Petition Organiser. Unless the issue raises matters of confidentiality, the Council will normally publish this document on the Council's website.

G. FORMAL RESPONSE

34 At the end of the process of considering a Petition, the relevant Director (or nominated officer) will write to the Petition Organiser with a formal response. This communication will normally outline the steps taken by the Council to consider the issue and will refer to the involvement (where applicable) of the Authority's elected members.

35 This Formal Response will be despatched within one month of receipt or submission of a Petition if possible but no later than 90 days, and a copy will be published on the Council's website and included in the monthly Significant Decision schedule to Members.

In the case of ePetitions which will be expected to remain open for some time, the response will be within 28 days of the closing date for signatures, or a date requested by the Petition Organiser, whichever is the earlier.

A copy of the response to all petitions will be posted to the publicly accessible website and available to view for a period of 6 months from closing the petition. For ePetitions this will include the names of signees.

H. REVIEWING THE RESULTS

- 36 If a Petition Organiser is not satisfied with the Council's response to the Petition, he or she may request a Review. Such a request should be made in writing within 28 days of the despatch of the Formal Response to the Petition Organiser and should give a short explanation of the reasons why the Council's response is not considered to be adequate.
- 37 Upon receipt of such a Request the Deputy Borough Secretary will identify a Reviewing Officer from among Senior Officers at the Council. This Officer will be given wide scope to reconsider whether the Authority should, in all the circumstances take additional steps to respond to the Petition. This will normally include reference to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee which will itself consider the adequacy of the initial response.
- 38 On some occasions, such as where the initial response took the form of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's taking evidence from a Senior Officer it may be inappropriate for the same Committee to review the issue. The Deputy Borough Secretary will ensure that a suitable alternative process is followed to engage elected members in reviewing the petition.
- 39 At the end of the process of reviewing the Petition the Council's Chief Executive will formally write to the Petition Organiser to inform him or her of the results of the Review. This communication will normally outline the process followed to establish whether the initial response had been adequate and outline any additional steps taken by the Council as part of the Review. It will also refer to the involvement (where applicable) of the Authority's elected members. The letter will also identify the Reviewing Officer who handled the issue and highlight his or her involvement where appropriate. This Review Response will be despatched within 28 days of receipt or the request for Review and a copy will be published both on the Council website.

I. REPORTING

- 40 The Council will prepare an Annual Summary detailing all petitions submitted under this Scheme, the signatures each attracted, and the Council's response to each. This Report will be presented to the Overview & Scrutiny each year and published on the Council's website. A list of petitions submitted under the Scheme will also be included in the Members' Weekly Bulletin.
- 41 The Council will report progress in addressing issues raised through Petitions by updating the ePetitions system regularly, and by ensuring that the status of each Petition is accurately shown.