

## **Council Procedure Rules – Annexe 1**

### **Waverley's Petition Scheme**

This is Waverley Borough Council's Petitions Scheme, which explains how petitions on matters of local importance can be sent to the Council, how we will deal with them and how we will respond to you. The Scheme has been created under Section 11 (1) of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act, 2009.

The Council welcomes petitions as one way in which local people can express their needs and concerns. Before submitting a petition to the Council, the public should be advised that there may be a simpler way to influence decision-making in Waverley (to see the many ways you can influence decision-making, please go to **[www.waverley.gov.uk/consultation](http://www.waverley.gov.uk/consultation)**).

You can submit petitions by email at **[committees@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:committees@waverley.gov.uk)** or you can send them to us by post at:

Waverley Petitions  
Democratic Services  
Waverley Borough Council  
The Burys  
Godalming  
Surrey  
GU7 1HR

### **Criteria for submitting a petition**

Petitions to Waverley must relate to one of its functions. To sign a petition submitted to Waverley, you must either live, work or study in the borough.

Surrey County Council will consider petitions that relate to improvements in the social or economic well-being of the area, which they, or the Primary Care Trust, Police Authority or Fire and Rescue Authority can contribute to. You can use the e-petitions facility to send one of these public bodies a petition or you can send it to Surrey County Council.

## Number of signatures required to submit a petition to Waverley

For a petition to have the desired response (see the table below) it must have the required number of signatures on it.

How many signatures are needed?	How will Waverley respond?	What happens next?
Up to 500. <b>(not treated as a petition)</b>	<b>An officer will respond to you</b> You will receive a response from the appropriate responding officer, who is identified by Democratic Services when your petition is received. The petition will be treated as a <b>Stage One complaint</b> .	
500-999.	<b>A member of the Executive will respond to you</b> You will receive a response from the appropriate portfolio-holder (this is a councillor who is a member of the cabinet and who has special responsibility for certain areas of Waverley's work).	
1,000-1,999.	<b>The Executive will consider your petition at a meeting</b> If you wish to present the petition yourself, you will need to give ten working days' notice to Democratic Services. You will be given a maximum of four minutes to present your petition.	The Executive will decide whether to refer the matter to an appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for further consideration, or whether to make a decision on your demands at the meeting.  Once the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have considered the matter, they will make a recommendation back to the Executive who will make a final decision.
2,000-4,999.	<b>A relevant senior officer will be called to a meeting of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee to give evidence (if you have requested this in your petition)</b> You must explain, when you submit your petition, what	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will make a recommendation based on the evidence given to Executive, who will then make a decision on your petition.

	information you want from the officer. If you want to ask the officer questions yourself, you will need to give ten working days' notice to Democratic Services. You will be given a maximum of four minutes to introduce your petition. Only the Chief Executive, Strategic Directors and Heads of Service can be called to account.	
5,000 or more.	<b>Your petition will be debated at a meeting of the full Council.</b> If you wish to present your petition to the Council, you must give 10 working days' notice to Democratic Services. You will be given a maximum of four minutes to introduce your petition.	The full Council will make a decision on your petition. They could refer it to an appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for further investigation, but this would be unusual.

Waverley may also choose to take additional action where it is considered appropriate. Such action could include:

- Holding a meeting with petitioners.
- Conducting an internal inquiry.
- Holding a public consultation.

### Rejection of petitions

Waverley will not accept petitions which:

- Are considered to be vexatious, abusive or otherwise inappropriate. The Chief Executive will take the decision on whether a petition is any of the above things and will explain this to you in writing.
- Relate to planning or licensing applications (as there are already procedures on how to object to these) or other areas on which there are existing rights of appeal, such as council tax banding and/or business tax rates.
- Are on the same or a similar topic to one that the Council has received in the last twelve months.

### Checklist for submitting a petition to Waverley

Below is a checklist for submitting a petition to Waverley, which may be helpful to ensure you have met all the requirements of the scheme:

- A clear, concise statement at the top of the petition which explains a) the subject of the petition and b) what action you want the council to take
- Identification of the petition organiser using name, address and contact details
- Names and addresses of all signatories. All signatories must live, work or study in the borough and provide the relevant address. Addresses will be checked by

Waverley Borough Council and where they cannot be verified, the signatures will be rejected.

For the petition to be treated as a petition (rather than a complaint), at least 500 signatures.

If the petition has 2,000 to 4,999 signatures– an indication of whether you want to call a senior officer to account, which senior officer you want to call to account and what you want them to tell you.

Ensure your petition is not concerning a planning or licensing application

Ensure your petition does not relate to an issue on which there is already a right of appeal (Housing Benefit decisions, Licensing decisions and Planning decisions)

Ensure your petition doesn't relate to an issue or is on a similar subject to one that the Council has received in the last twelve months.

### **What we will do when we receive your petition**

- We will acknowledge your petition within 5 days if it is submitted electronically (link to Surrey E-Petitions site), and within 10 days from the date of receipt if it is submitted by post.
- The acknowledgement will say what we propose to do with the petition (see trigger thresholds) and tell you the date of the meeting it will go to (if it is to go to a meeting). If appropriate, we will outline what we may be able to do in response to the petition.
- We will publish the petition, acknowledgement and all stages of correspondence relating to it on our website [www.waverley.gov.uk](http://www.waverley.gov.uk) unless it would be inappropriate to do this.

### **What to do if you feel your petition has not been dealt with properly**

- You should submit a complaint in writing (letter or email) to Waverley (if we have dealt with your petition) or Surrey (if they have). The complaint should be submitted no later than 28 working days from receiving the authority's response to your petition. It would be helpful if you would explain in what way you feel the petition has not been dealt with properly, and whether this relates to the decision taken or the process.
- A reviewing officer will be identified by Democratic Services, to consider the way in which the petition was handled. They will normally refer the matter to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which will consider the adequacy of the response.
- The Chief Executive will respond via letter to the petition organiser within 28 days of receipt of the request for review.