

FERRYHILL TOWN COUNCIL



POLICY

PETITIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

Ferryhill Town Council is committed to consulting with the local community to ensure it delivers the best possible and most appropriate services to the people of Ferryhill. Accordingly, as part of its consultation process, the Town Council will consider petitions provided by local groups and members of the public as one means of consultation with the local community. A petition by itself will not be sufficient to change policy or introduce new policies as it is only one means of consultation and other means would have to be undertaken. However, a petition can be used as an indicator for a future policy and therefore can initiate the questions included within any surveys undertaken by the Town Council on local service provision.

2. ESSENTIAL CRITERIA FOR A PETITION TO BE DEEMED VALID

It is essential that any petition submitted to the Town Council follows the following guidelines as failure to do so may well lead to it being declared invalid and not used as a means of consultation by the Town Council. This is to ensure that when questionnaires are completed they are completed in a clear democratic and substantive way to ensure that the Town Council in deciding its policies retains its integrity.

The essential criteria for a questionnaire are as follows:

- i) The nature of the petition should be clearly stipulated in an unambiguous format at the head of each page of the petition.
- ii) The details to be included from every single signatory are as follows; name, address, and an option to tick either in favour or against and a signature.
- iii) Additionally, the organisers of the petition are to sign a declaration at the foot of each page of the petition to state that the signatures have been collected without any form of intimidation or coercion and that the statement at the head of the petition was read out clearly to each of the persons who signed the petition before they agreed to take part and that it was made clear to the people signing the petition that they could either vote in favour or against the petition motion.
- iv) The petition should have a start date and a finish date of a maximum of 4 weeks.

Note: A sample petition format is attached as guidance only.

3. PROCESS TO FOLLOW

It is recommended that before any organisation or individual embarks upon organising a petition they firstly consult with the Town Council with a draft of their petition to ensure that it meets the above criteria. Once they have done this and they begin to collect signatures and then submit the petition to the Town Council it will be received by the Town Clerk who will then submit it to the next appropriate committee or Town Council meeting depending upon the subject matter.

The Town Council will not as a rule make the decision to change policy as a result of a petition alone but this petition may be used as evidence to decide on future policies together with other information collected by the Town Council before deciding upon new policies or amending existing ones.

NATURE OF PETITION:

NAME	ADDRESS	IN FAVOUR √	AGAINST √	SIGNATURE

I/we being the organiser(s) of this petition confirm that the above signatures have been collected without any form of intimidation or cohesion. The statement at the head of the petition was read out clearly to each of the persons who signed the petition before they agreed to take part and that it was made clear to the people signing the petition that they could either vote in favour or against the petition motion.

Name of organiser: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____