



Briefing: Responding to Petitions

1 The Framework for Dealing with Petitions

- 1.1 A report of the Council Business Management Committee to the City Council on 15 June 2010 sets out the full provisions of the revised Birmingham City Council Petitions Scheme. This revised scheme was developed in response to the Government's statutory guidance on the duty of Councils to respond to Petitions.
- 1.2 The key provisions of the City Council Petitions Scheme are as follows:
 - A petition that is submitted which has collected 20,000 signatures (2% of the population) will automatically trigger a debate at City Council;
 - **If the petition has collected 10,000 signatures** (1% of the population of the City) **it will be referred to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee;**
 - If a petition over 5,000 signatures is submitted it will be considered by the Council Business Management Committee to determine whether the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee should debate it.
- 1.3 The petition for consideration at your meeting today (the front sheet is attached to your agenda papers; the full petition is available for inspection on request) has a total number of 4,994 signatories (excluding those from locations outside Birmingham).
- 1.4 Whilst the petition fell just short of the 5,000 signatures trigger, the Council Business Management Committee considered the petition anyway, and agreed to refer it to the Health and Social Care O&S Committee.

2 How should O&S Committees handle Petitions?

- 2.1 The proposed approach for handling the item at Committee which draws from the established approach for Call in meetings:
 - The Chair should introduce the item;
 - The Petitioner/Councillor sets out the case and required action (if attending);
 - Cabinet Members/Officers should be asked to respond to the petition with reference to their report;
 - Committee members have the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the petition and response;
 - It may be appropriate at this point to seek any further comments from the petitioner although this is not a requirement;



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- Once the discussions have reached a close the Chair should formulate a clear formal resolution on the matter for agreement. This may include a letter or recommendations to the relevant Cabinet Member.
- 2.2 After the meeting, the Committee's resolution will be posted on the Council's website as part of the notes of the meeting; and:
- A letter is sent to the lead petitioner / presenting Councillor confirming the resolution;
 - Committee Services are notified so that progress on resolving the petition can be reported to the City Council as part of their regular reports.

3 The Petition

3.1 The petition before the committee today is:

We the undersigned are calling on Birmingham City Council to step in and secure the long-term future of Norman Laud a charity that has been providing respite care for people with profound learning difficulties, and/or complex physical needs since 1961.

For years Birmingham City Council have been considerably underfunding the cost of respite care, particularly for adults with severe disabilities from 18-65 years old by 50%, compared to children's services in the city for overnight respite.

We are calling on Birmingham City Council to properly fund the cost of respite care for children and adults with profound learning difficulties enabling families to have that vital support with their care, enabling positive social experiences, growing their independence, privacy, dignity and equality. We also call on the Cabinet Member and officers to work with families, the Norman Laud Management Team and supporters to urgently establish an emergency rescue package, especially following difficulties with COVID, to secure the future of this service for families across our city, the 40+ employees at the centre and the many users who have their lives enriched by the support.

Especially in these unprecedented times, the respite care provided by services like Norman Laud provide a vital lifeline for families already struggling with caring for loved ones with often profound and/or complex needs in very difficult times. Birmingham City Council must step up and commit to secure its long term for the most vulnerable and in need members of our society.

3.2 Cllr Alex Yip is the lead petitioner.

3.3 The petition has two broad asks:

- To properly fund the cost of respite care for children and adults with profound learning difficulties enabling families to have that vital support with their care, enabling positive social experiences, growing their independence, privacy, dignity and equality.
- Cabinet Member and officers to work with families, the Norman Laud Management Team and supporters to urgently establish an emergency rescue package, especially following difficulties with COVID, to secure the future of this service.



- 3.4 Cllr Paulette Hamilton, Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care will attend with officers from Adult Social Care. An Executive Response has been provided and is included in the agenda papers.

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