

**Birmingham City Council**  
**Council Business Management Committee**

18 December 2023



**Subject:** Petitions Update  
**Report of:** Marie Rosenthal, Interim City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer  
**Report author:** Ben Patel Sadler  
Senior Committee Manager  
[Ben.Patel-Sadler@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:Ben.Patel-Sadler@birmingham.gov.uk)

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

If relevant, state which appendix is exempt, and provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential :

**1 Executive Summary**

1.1 To update the Committee on progress made in responding to petitions presented to full Council and to provide an update in relation to the continuing management of petitions.

**2 Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the progress made in relation to the responding to and discharging of petitions.
- 2.2 That the Committee determines if any additional measures are required to ensure the continuing progress relating to the responding and discharging of petitions is maintained.

**3 Background**

3.1 During recent meetings of the Committee, Members have expressed concern with regards to the amount of time taken to respond to and subsequently discharge petitions submitted by Councillors.

- 3.2 The Interim City Solicitor has liaised with department Directors, via consultation with the Chief Executive, to emphasise the importance of responding to petitions submitted by Members in a timely manner.
- 3.3 Following these discussions, Committee Services have recorded a month on month increase of the number of petitions being responded to and subsequently discharged.
- 3.4 At the Council Business Management Committee held on 23 October 2023, Members agreed that a petitions update should be submitted to each meeting of the Committee until further notice due to the number of petitions which had not yet been discharged.
- 3.5 Following the Council Business Management Committee meeting held on 20 November 2023, Committee Services contacted all directorates to further emphasise that all petitions submitted at City Council meetings must be responded to and discharged within the agreed timescales set out at 4.2 of this report. If a petition(s) was not responded to and discharged within these timescales, then senior officers from those directorates would be invited to future meetings to outline the reasons behind any delays.
- 3.6 Appendix 1 to this report outlines the number of outstanding petitions as of the 5 December 2023 City Council meeting.
- 3.7 Between the 7 November 2023 and the 5 December 2023 City Council meetings, approximately 9 petitions have been responded to and subsequently discharged.

#### **4 Options considered and Recommended Proposal**

- 4.1 Committee Services are in regular contact with all directorates to seek updates on any outstanding petitions to ensure they are progressed and discharged in a timely manner.
- 4.2 The following protocol applies to all petitions submitted by Members:
1. Petition presented at City Council.
  2. Petition referred to the appropriate Director for response within 3 working days.
  3. Director to write to the Councillor presenting the petition and the first named petitioner to acknowledge receipt within 14 days of the City Council.
  4. Progress of investigation into petition to be notified by the relevant Director to Committee Manager for inclusion in the monthly Petitions Update by no later than 10 working days before the next City Council.

5. Final response to petition included in Petitions Update by the Committee Manager.

6. Director to notify the Councillor who presented the petition and the first named petitioner of the outcome within 14 days of the relevant City Council meeting discharging the same.

4.3 It should be noted that the protocol applies only to petitions sent internally and not to those which are referred to outside bodies for action.

4.4 The Committee may wish to agree a set period of time to monitor the progress of and discharging of petitions.

## **5 Legal Implications**

5.1 There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.

## **6 Financial Implications**

6.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report.

## **7 Public Sector Equality Duty**

7.1 There are no immediate equality implications arising from this report.

## **8 Other Implications**

8.1 None.

## **9 Background Papers**

9.1 None.

## **10 Appendices**

10.1 Appendix 1: Outstanding petitions as of the 5 December 2023 City Council meeting.