

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

PUBLIC REPORT

Report to:	COUNCIL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
Report of:	City Solicitor
Date of Meeting:	22 January 2018
Subject:	CT Scanner for Birmingham Coroner Petition
Wards affected:	Various

1. Purpose of report:

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of a Petition entitled 'Make CT Scanner available for Birmingham Coroner' that has achieved the threshold of 5,000 signatures that allows it to be submitted to this Committee for consideration.
- 1.2 To seek the view of the Committee as to whether it determines that the petition is relevant to either City Council or an Overview and Scrutiny Committee and should be debated

2. Decision(s) recommended:

- 2.1 That the report be noted;
- 2.2 That, the Committee determines whether the petition should be debated or not and if so, whether that should be at City Council or by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Contact Officer:	Phil Wright Council Team Leader
Telephone no:	675 0216
E-mail address:	phil.wright@birmingham.gov.uk

Signature:

Chief Officer:

List of background documents:

Petition presented to City Council on 5 December 2017

Background

At the Meeting of City Council on 5 December 2017 Councillors Jon Hunt and Zaker Choudhry submitted a petition (both paper and a list of names from an external e-petition site) relating to making a CT scanner available for the Birmingham Coroner. Following verification, the petition was found to contain 6,284 valid signatures from Birmingham residents; as a large number of the signatures on the e-petition were from outside Birmingham, these were not valid.

All the paper and e-petition section of the petition contained the same wording as follows

“Make CT scanner available for Birmingham Coroner

Birmingham Community Forum would like you to sign this petition, requesting that Labour-controlled Birmingham City Council make available to the City Coroner a CT Scanner, resources and additional to introduce non-invasive and speedy post mortems.

Coming to terms with the death of a loved one can be very difficult and stressful. Often it takes weeks before a post mortem is completed.

Today using modern technology, already adopted by some local authorities, post-mortem examinations can be undertaken using a CT scanner. The body is scanned and a 3D image compiled by a computer, that a pathologist can analyse. The pathologist can quickly establish the cause of death and release the body to the family, untouched for burial.

We can only succeed if the public back the cause by sharing and signing this petition.

Young and Old, Men and Women, it is for the benefit of all.

Maximum signatures required. Thanks”

Petition Guidance

The relevant sections of the petition Guidance sets out the following

“If your petition achieves the threshold of 20,000 signatures (subject to verification) this will automatically trigger a debate of the petition at City Council. The lead petitioner will be notified of the date of the meeting.

The lead petitioner will also be offered the option of reading their petition at the beginning of the debate or they may choose to request a local Councillor to present it on their behalf.”

“If your petition achieves the threshold of 10,000 signatures (subject to verification) it will be referred to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for a Senior Officer to attend and answer questions about the delivering of public services”.

“In addition, in event that the a petition with the number of signatures over 5,000 but below the above threshold trigger, is submitted, it will be considered by the Council Business Management Committee to determine whether an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or City Council should debate the petition, if relevant”

Matters for Consideration

The petition, particularly the e-petition part, had a number of signatures from people in other parts of the country and a number from around the world which could not be counted as valid. It is estimated that there were approximately 13,000 signatures on the petition which is over the threshold for consideration at an Overview and Scrutiny Committee. However the petition has 6,284 valid signatures which is over the threshold for consideration at this Committee to determine whether it should be debated at an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or City Council or not.