

# BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

## PUBLIC REPORT

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>COUNCIL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>City Solicitor</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>11 February 2019</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Park at Smithfield Petition</b>
<b>Wards affected:</b>	<b>Bordesley and Highgate</b>

### 1. Purpose of report:

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of a Petition entitled 'To create a public park in the centre of Birmingham' 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.

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### Signature:

**Chief Officer:** .....

### List of background documents:

Petition presented to City Council on 15 January 2019

## **Background**

At the Meeting of City Council on 15 January 2019 Councillor Jayne Francis submitted a petition (a list of names from an external e-petition site) relating to the creation of a public park in the centre of Birmingham at Smithfield (the former Birmingham Markets site). Following verification, the petition was found to contain 5,203 valid signatures from Birmingham residents; as a large number of the signatures on the e-petition were from outside Birmingham, these were not valid.

The full wording of the e-petition from the change.org petition website is set out in the appendix to this report.

## **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 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 10,675 signatures on the petition which is over the threshold for consideration at an Overview and Scrutiny Committee. However the petition has 5,203 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.