

Petition Procedure Policy

The Petition Procedure Policy was adopted by Full Council at its Meeting held on Wednesday 23rd October, 2019.

1 The requirements for a valid petition

a. Any petition must contain 30 or more signatures of people who are resident in Eglington Parish, including anyone under 18.

b. A petition should include (or be accompanied by written information confirming):

i. A reason for petitioning to the Council (what the Council is being asked to do).

ii. The name, address and signature of any person supporting the petition.

iii. An indication of the person designated as the lead petitioner or petition organiser.

c. A valid petition must:

i. Relate to a function of the Parish Council.

ii. Not be a statutory petition.

iii. Not relate to a lease, contract or permit (but this shall not preclude the Parish Council's acceptance of such a petition as an indication of the views of residents concerning such a lease, contract or permit).

iv. Not relate to a matter where a right of recourse or right of appeal is already provided for in law (but this shall not preclude the Parish Council's acceptance of such a petition as an indication of the views of residents concerning such an appeal).

v. Not be frivolous, vexatious or abusive or otherwise inappropriate.

vi. Not be the same or substantially similar to one that has already been submitted to Full Council within the previous six months (but the Parish Council may waive this restriction if it considers that circumstances have materially changed since any earlier submission).

2 Receipt of Petition

The petition must be delivered to The Clerk of Eglington Parish Council, 25 Blakelaw Court, Alnwick, NE661BY; at least five days prior to a Full Council Meeting for inclusion in that meeting.

3 Procedure

The clerk will:

a. Arrange for details of the petition to be communicated to all councillors for all valid petitions.

b. Forward the petition onto the relevant Body if it is outside the Parish Council's remit.

c. Within five working days, formally acknowledge receipt.

d. Petitions must be presented at full Council meetings, once they have been first sent-in as correspondence to the Clerk in time for them to be distributed to the Councillors prior to date of the relevant meeting. Details of dates and times of the Full Council meetings can be found on the Eglingham Parish Council website/noticeboards.

e. The provisions of clause 5, below, will govern the Parish Council's actions following such a presentation to a full Council meeting.

d. The role of the Parish Council in considering any petition shall be quasi-judicial and individual Parish Councillors will, in accordance with normal procedures, be expected to declare any interest in the matter in question.

4 Response of Eglingham Parish Council

a. Within a further ten working days from the period referred to in 3 c. above, the lead petitioner will be informed of the date of full Council when the petition will be discussed.

b. Normally, within four weeks of a petition being presented and discussed at a full Council meeting, the lead petitioner will be informed by the Clerk of the Council's decision.

5 Examples of the Main Actions that the Parish Council May Take

- i. Where a petition is to be discussed by full council in open session (other than only for noting) the lead petitioner (or substitute) will, at the Chairman's discretion, be permitted to speak for up to 3 minutes before the report is debated. In the interests of fairness, the Chairman may also invite one other speaker from the public to speak for up to 3 minutes against the petition. The Council will not normally delay considering a matter if the petitioner does not attend the meeting to speak;
- ii. take the action requested in the petition or a variation of it;
- iii. commission further research;
- iv. refer the petition to a Sub-Committee /Working Party;
- v. take such other action as it shall deem appropriate according to the circumstances.

6. Action taken or proposed to be taken in response to a petition and brief reasons for that action will be communicated in writing by the Clerk to the lead petitioner/petition organiser and to all Councillors.

7. If the subject matter of a petition is included in the papers already published for a meeting of the Council by the time the petition is received then the petition will be circulated at the meeting at which the report is considered (along with any written comments on the petition that councillors may wish to make).

8. The Full Parish Council will make the final decision.

To be Reviewed: October 2020