

# E-PETITION GUIDANCE

This guide contains some general information for people who wish to submit a petition using the e-petitions system on the Council's website. Further information is available in the guidance on submitting petitions.

## 1. What is an e-petition?

An e-petition is a petition where the signatures are collected online. The advantage of an e-petition over a paper petition is that a petition hosted on the Council's website is potentially available to a wider audience.

## 2. Who can create an e-petition?

An e-petition can be created by a person of any age who lives, works or studies in Brent. You will need to become a registered user of the Council's website: to do this, you will be asked for some basic information, so that we can contact you if we need to discuss your petition.

## 3. How do I create an e-petition?

After becoming a registered user of the website, click on "Submit a new petition" and follow the steps from there. Once you have completed all of the steps, your petition will be checked by a member of the Governance team who may contact you to discuss it before it goes live.

## 4. What information does my e-petition need to contain?

Your e-petition needs to contain:

- A title.
- A statement which clearly explains what action you would like the Council to take.
- Some background information about the issue, explaining why you feel the proposed action is necessary.
- A starting date and a closing date for the period during which you would like your petition to be open and collecting signatures. The Council will usually host your petition for up to three months.  
Please note: if your petition relates to a decision being taken by one of the Council's committees or the Cabinet, the closing date for signatures needs to be at least eight working days before the meeting in which the decision is to be made.

## 5. What kind of issues can my e-petition relate to?

Your e-petition should relate to an issue on which the Council has powers or duties or for which the Council shares responsibility with a partner organisation. Please see the guidance on submitting petitions for further information about the subjects of petitions and the types of petitions which would usually be rejected.

If the e-petition refers to an application for planning permission, the signatures may count as objections to the application, in which case the Planning

Committee will receive the e-petition when considering the application. Further information is contained in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

If the e-petition refers to any aspect of an alcohol or entertainment licence, then it shall be dealt with as set out in the procedures for Alcohol and Entertainment Licensing Sub- Committees. Further information is contained in Part 7 of the Council's Constitution.

### [Council's constitution](#)

If the e-petition is a statutory petition (for example, a referendum on having a directly elected Mayor) or if it refers to a matter where there is an existing right of appeal (such as council tax banding), special rules apply. Please contact the Head of Executive and Member Services for further information (contact details below).

#### **6. Who can sign an e-petition?**

An e-petition can be signed by a person of any age who lives, works or studies in Brent. You do not need to be a registered user of the Council's website to sign a petition, but you will be asked for some basic information, such as a valid e-mail address, for verification purposes. We will only publish the names of people who sign petitions on the Council's website. Please note: you may only sign an e-petition once. Duplicate names will be removed.

#### **7. Promoting your e-petition**

The Council will host e-petitions on its website, but it will generally not promote individual e-petitions. However, promoting your e-petition is quite straightforward: you could decide to feature it on your weblog, an internet forum or a community website, by providing a little information about the issue and directing people to your e-petition on our website.

#### **8. What happens when the e-petition's closing date has been reached?**

After the e-petition reaches its closing date, no further signatures will be added to it. A member of Governance team will then send an acknowledgement to the petition organiser within ten working days which will explain what will happen next.

##### **a) If the e-petition has between five and 50 signatures:**

The e-petition will be sent to the relevant Council department where it will receive a considered response.

##### **b) If the e-petition has 51 signatures or more:**

Those e-petitions which contain 51 or more signatures will be brought to the attention of the Chair of the relevant scrutiny committee and the relevant director. The next meeting of the Full Council will also be informed of the e-petition, so that all councillors are made aware of residents' views on the issue.

Any e-petitions relating to specific decisions that are planned to be made will be referred to the decision maker. If the decision maker is a Council committee or sub-committee or the Cabinet, then one person representing the petitioners will be entitled to address the planned meeting for up to five minutes about the e-petition. If an e-petition does not concern a specific decision about to be made, it will be referred to the committee, sub-committee or Cabinet within whose terms of reference the subject matter falls.

### **9. Privacy policy**

Only the names of e-petition organisers will be published on the Council's website, although we will ask you for more details when you submit an e-petition, so that we can contact you if necessary. If you have signed an e-petition, only your name will appear on the website.

### **10. Can I submit a paper version together with an online version of my petition?**

You can collect names for the same petition on paper and online at the same time, although both versions will need to be submitted together (that is, the paper version should be sent to the Council on the closing date of the e-petition version). When you are setting up the e-petition version, please let us know that you are organising a paper petition as well, and we will highlight this on our website.

Please note that people should not sign both versions of the petition, and any duplicate names will be removed.

### **11. Can I still submit a paper petition on its own?**

The Council is pleased to accept petitions in paper form, and you can submit them by post or by hand. It is also possible to e-mail a scanned copy of a paper petition. A printable template for paper petitions is available from the Council's petitions website

Paper petitions should be sent to the address below. Paper petitions will then be processed in the same way as e-petitions (see section 8 above).

### **12. Further information**

Further information about how the Council responds to petitions is available in the guidance to submitting petitions. If you have any questions, please contact:

Governance Team  
4<sup>th</sup> floor  
Brent Civic Centre  
Engineers Way  
Wembley HA9 0AJ  
Telephone: 020 8937 2063  
E-mail: [committee@brent.gov.uk](mailto:committee@brent.gov.uk)