

Public Involvement at Brighton & Hove City Council

Petitions



Brighton & Hove
City Council

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If you have any questions or feedback contact Democratic Services:

Democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk 01273 291066

Room 167, Hove Town Hall

Norton Road, Hove

BN3 3BQ

Online Petitions

How to submit an online petition

Petitions can be submitted via our [petitions homepage](#).

Petitions submitted to the council must include:

- A clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition.
- What action the petitioners wish the council to take.

Once a petition has been submitted, we will send an acknowledgement to the petition organiser as soon as possible. We aim to provide a response within 2 working days. We will need to know how long you want the petition to run (up to 6 months) and whether you wish the petition to be:

- i) Presented at the next full Council meeting; or
- ii) Presented directly to the relevant committee or
- iii) Receive an officer response to the petition.

Petitions can be signed by entering a name and valid e-mail address.

Petitions must relate to what the council does or relate to an improvement in the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area covered by Brighton & Hove City Council to which any of our partner authorities could contribute.

A petition can be supplemented by a paper petition although repeat names need to be removed (any such occurrences found will be taken out).

When submitting a petition request, please let us know if you are also collecting signatures on a paper petition.

The lead petitioner will be invited to attend the meeting and will have up to three minutes to present the petition or for a councillor or someone else to present it on their behalf. Dates and times of all council meetings can be found in the [calendar of meetings](#).

The petition will run until the day before the meeting although the number of signatures at the time of agenda publication will be included in the agenda for the meeting as a point of reference.

You can tell the committee at the meeting if you have collected any extra signatures in the week before the meeting.

Online petitions hosted on other websites

Whilst we request that petitions be submitted via the council website, petitions hosted on other well-known sites such as change.org and 38 Degrees can be accepted.

If you are running a petition on another site, we request that you notify us of at least the wording and number of signatories and send us a link to the petition by 12 noon 10 working days before the meeting is to take place.

Paper Petitions

The council welcomes petitions and recognises that petitions are one way in which people can let us know their concerns.

How to submit a paper petition

Petitions submitted to the council must include:

- A clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition.
- What action the petitioners wish the council to take.
- The name, address and contact details of the petition organiser so that we can contact them to explain how we will respond to the petition.
- The name, address and signature of any person supporting the petition.

Petitions must relate to what the council does or relate to an improvement in the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area covered by Brighton & Hove City Council to which any of our partner authorities could contribute.

We request that you notify us of at least the wording and number of signatures on the petition by 12 noon 10 working days before the meeting is to take place. You can tell the council if you have gathered any extra signatures at the meeting.

When you tell us about your petition we will ask whether you wish to present the petition to a full council meeting or directly to a committee.

You will be invited to attend the meeting and will be offered the opportunity to either present the petition themselves. A councillor or someone else can present the petition on their behalf. Dates and times of all council meetings can be found in the [calendar of meetings](#).

You will need to contact Democratic Services on 01273 291066 or democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk by 12 noon 10 working days before the meeting if you would like to present your petition to the council.

You can also ask for the relevant officer to respond to your petition without presenting it. If this is what you want to do you will receive a response within 21 working days.

Where to send a petition

Paper petitions can be retained and presented at the appropriate meeting; having notified the Democratic Services Team of the wording and number of signatures by the deadline stated above.

Alternatively, they can be sent or delivered to the Democratic Services, Room 167, Hove Town Hall, Norton Road, Hove, BN3 3BQ by 12 noon 10 working days before the meeting at which you would like the petition to be presented.

Full council debates

If you collect more than 1,250 signatures it can be debated by the full Council. This means that the issue raised in the petition will be discussed at a meeting which all councillors can attend before a decision is made about how it will respond. Petitions that meet or exceed the 1,250 target **must** be submitted or confirmed 10 working days ahead of the meeting in order to verify the number and provide adequate notification.

The council will try to consider the petition at its next meeting. This may not always be possible and the petition will then be considered at the subsequent meeting.

The petition organiser will be given 3 minutes to present the petition at the meeting. The appropriate Committee Chair will then respond before the petition is discussed by councillors for a maximum of 15 minutes. They will then decide how to respond to the petition at this meeting.

Councillors may decide:

- To note the petition and refer it to an appropriate Committee for consideration
- To take the action the petition requests*
- Not to take the action requested for reasons put forward in the debate, or
- To commission further investigation into the matter, for example by a relevant committee.

Where the issue is one on which the relevant committee are required to make the final decision, the council meeting will decide whether to make recommendations to inform that decision.

The petition organiser will receive written confirmation of this decision. This confirmation will also be published on our website.

* It is a mandatory requirement that the council receives a report for consideration if there are any financial or legal implications to the request/action. A report would be submitted to a subsequent meeting of the committee.

Exceptions

If the petition applies to a planning or licensing application, is a statutory petition (for example requesting a referendum on having an elected mayor), or on a matter where there is already an existing right of appeal, such as council tax banding and non-domestic rates, other procedures apply and the petition cannot be presented at the council and/or committee meeting.

We will not take action on any petition which is considered by the council's Monitoring Officer to be vexatious, abusive or otherwise inappropriate and, if this is the case, we will explain our reasons in our acknowledgement of the petition.

In the period immediately before an election or referendum we may need to deal with a petition differently – if this is the case we will discuss with the petition organiser the revised timescale which will apply.

If a petition does not follow the guidelines set out above, the council may decide not to do anything further with it. In that case, we will write to the petition organiser to explain the reasons.

How the council will respond to a petition

The council's response to a petition will depend on what it asks for and how many people have signed it. Among the options that we may consider are:

- Taking the action requested in the petition
- Considering the petition at a council meeting
- Holding an inquiry into the matter
- Undertaking research into the matter
- Holding a public meeting
- Holding a consultation
- Holding a meeting with petitioners
- Calling a referendum
- Writing to the petition organiser setting out our views about the request in the petition

If a petition is about something over which the council has no direct control (for example the local railway or hospital) we will consider making representations on behalf of the community to the relevant body. The council works with a large number of local partners and where possible will work with these partners to respond to a petition. If we are not able to do this for any reason (for example if what the petition calls for conflicts with council policy), then we will tell the petition organiser the reasons for this.

If a petition is about something that a different council is responsible for we will give consideration to what the best method is for responding to it. This might mean simply forwarding the petition to the other council, but could involve other steps. We will always notify the petition organiser of the action we have taken.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I start and online petition?

On the petitions homepage, select the 'submit a new e-petition' option.

Enter your petition title which the system will automatically check against existing e-petitions to allow you to see if a similar one has been considered recently.

You will then need to fill in the online form. This will be submitted to the council's Democratic Services team who will contact you to discuss your e-petition before it goes live.

How is the petition promoted?

It is down to you to spread the word about your petition in order to get as many people as possible to sign up. Raising awareness of it could be done in a number of ways such as promoting it on community websites or Facebook groups, social media or newsletters.

You can link people directly to your petition. You can make the link shorter by using a service such as 'tinyurl.com' or similar which will make your link easier to type in from a newsletter or poster.

How do I sign an online petition?

You can see all the petitions currently running on the current petitions page of our website.

- You can only sign an e-petition once.
- When you sign an e-petition you will be asked to provide your name and valid email address.
- When you have submitted this information you will be sent an email to the email address you have provided. This email will include a link which you must click on in order to confirm the email address is valid. Once this step is complete your 'signature' will be added to the petition.
- People visiting the petition will be able to see your name in the list of those who have signed it but your contact details will not be visible.
- From time to time, the council may also submit a petition itself to gauge public feeling on a particular issue.

What can I do if I feel my petition has not been dealt with properly?

You can make a complaint about the council's conduct through our [Customer Feedback team](#).

customerfeedback@brighton-hove.gov.uk

01273 291229

Customer Feedback Team,
Hove Town Hall, Norton Rd, Hove
BN3 3BQ

Who are the council's partner organisations?

For the purpose of this scheme, each of the following is a partner authority:-

- East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (East Sussex Fire Authority);
- South Downs National Park Authority;
- East Sussex Police;
- a chief officer of police;
- a joint waste authority;
- The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA);
- National Health Services for Brighton & Hove;
- Kent, Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company;
- South Downs National Health Service Trust;
- the Arts Council of England;
- the English Sports Council;
- the Environment Agency;
- the Health and Safety Executive;
- the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission;
- the Education Funding Agency;
- The Skills funding Agency
- the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council;
- Natural England;
- the Secretary of State, in relation to functions which he carries out—
 - for securing local employment under section 2 of the Employment and Training Act 1973; and
 - as highway and traffic authority for trunk roads (such as the A27 Brighton bypass) and special roads.