Guidance on Submitting a Petition

Glasgow City Council

1 Submitting a petition

Glasgow City Council aims to deliver its services in a sustainable, innovative, and efficient way that responds to the needs of our communities. Submitting a petition gives you the opportunity to tell the council what matters to you and to give councillors the opportunity to consider the need for change.

2 What can a petition achieve?

Although submitting a petition does not guarantee the action sought will be achieved, it is an important tool for individuals, communities and organisations to raise awareness of matters that are important to them and to play a role in the policy development process.

It can have a positive outcome by creating informed and open debate on a relevant issue of concern.

3 Things to consider before submitting a petition

Before submitting a petition, you should consider whether there are any other ways in which you can resolve your issue. Have you:-

- Raised the issue with the council directly by emailing the relevant service or by submitting a comment or complaint?
- Raised the issue with the relevant Local Elected Members or with a Member of the UK Parliament or Member of the Scottish Parliament? You can use this toolkit to search for your local councillors, MP or MSPs. You can also find contact details for all elected members in the Glasgow area here.
- Sought assistance from your local Community Council or local Area Partnership?
- Checked whether the council is running a current related consultation exercise or engagement process and, if it is, have you raised your issues directly through that process first?

You may be asked to provide evidence that you have already explored these other avenues and to advise of the outcome when your petition is being considered for acceptance.

4 Who can submit a petition?

You can submit a petition if you are an individual who lives in Glasgow and are entered on the electoral register or are a local business owner, community group or voluntary organisation.

Councillors cannot submit a petition.

5 What issues can your petition raise?

Your petition should refer to services provided by Glasgow City Council or issues that affect your community that the council is involved in.

While we accept petitions about most issues, unfortunately, there are some which we will be unable to consider. Before submitting your petition, please check that it:-

- Raises an issue that falls within the council's current powers and remit.

- Does not relate or refer to any current court, legislative or regulatory proceedings, for example planning or licensing applications.
- Is not the same, or very similar to, a petition the council has already considered within the previous twelve months. The council may however decide to consider your petition if significant new information is available or if there has been a material change of circumstances. Details of previous petitions can be found here.
- Does not relate to any decision the council, a committee, joint committee, board or officer has made in the last six months. You can search council committee documents here.
- Relates to a current or recent proposal that is subject to a specific council consultation or engagement process. Details of current and completed council consultations are available here.
- Relates to individual or personal issues.
- Is a matter that is commercially sensitive, confidential or could cause personal distress or loss.

We will **not** accept a petition that contains:-

- Names of people or details that could be used to easily identify a person.
- Information that is protected by an interdict or court order.
- False or defamatory statements.
- Details that could damage a person's reputation or discriminate against them.
- Offensive language, for example swear words, insulting, sarcastic or provocative language or other terms that could reasonably be considered as offensive by the reader; and
- The names of individual officers of public bodies.

6 How to submit your petition

You can submit a petition at our Online Petitions Hub or by post to:-

Committee Services
Chief Executive's Department
Glasgow City Council
City Chambers
Glasgow
G2 1DU

If you are submitting your petition by post, it is recommended that you retain a copy of the petition for your records.

Once received, we will endeavour to validate your petition within **10 working days**. This time will be used to ensure that the petition is valid and meets the eligibility criteria set out in this Guidance.

7 What should your petition contain?

It is important that both the purpose of your petition and what you are looking to achieve is clear and concise. Your title should aim to grab people's attention, indicating clearly the area or issue your petition covers. The title will probably be what you will use to promote your petition on social media so it should make sense on its own.

Your petition statement should be well structured and tell a story. It should:

- describe the situation/problem/issue
- indicate why it is important to you and to others; and
- suggest what is needed and why.

The petition **must** include your name and address or the name and address of the principal petitioner who must live within the Glasgow City Council area. We may check your eligibility to submit the petition. It should also include the name, address and signature of any person(s) supporting the petition.

In the case of a local business or voluntary organisation submitting a petition, it must have an address entered on the valuation roll for the Glasgow City Council area.

A form for petitions is available on the council's website here. Information on our Online Petitions form is detailed below.

8 Online Petitions

The council has an Online Petitions Hub where you can set up your petition and people can sign up in support.

If your online petition is accepted, you receive confirmation from a committee clerk that it will be hosted on the Petitions Hub for a period of 6 weeks. During this time, people wishing to support the petition can do this online by registering their name, address and email address.

Once your petition has been accepted, it will become a public document available to view on the council's website. The online petition will display:-

- The title/subject of the petition
- The Principal Petitioner's name
- The start and closing dates.

You can also collect paper signatures alongside online signatures and these can be submitted by the Principal Petitioner at the contact point detailed in the confirmation from the committee clerk.

If you are going to use both a paper and online version, we ask that you remove any repeat names before submitting it to the council.

9 What happens if your petition is not accepted?

If your petition is not accepted you will be notified of the reasons why it has been rejected.

10 How many signatures in support do you need?

Where you are submitting your petition as an individual or community group, it must be supported by at least **25 people** who are on the electoral register for Glasgow.

If you are submitting a petition by a local business or organisation, it must be supported by at least **5 other businesses or organisations** entered on the valuation roll for Glasgow.

Alternatively, you can provide evidence that your petition is supported by the relevant Community Council. If the petition is supported by a Community Council, a Community Council Office Bearer must countersign the petition and you must submit a copy of the minutes of the Community Council meeting when support for your petition was approved.

11 Other online petition sites

There are a number of other online petition sites which people can use to create a petition. **Unfortunately, we cannot link directly to these sites and we need to ensure that we can verify that the lead petitioner and signatories are Glasgow residents.** As a result of this, we will require you to complete a form or to submit your petition through the Online Petitions Hub in order to collect the required number of signatures.

12 Promoting your petition

We would encourage you to promote your petition to help gather support and achieve the required number of signatures. You can promote your petition on both social media and through email. For example. you can post the link to your petition to all your friends and followers and encourage them to support you. You can also post a link to your petition onto the social media pages of other relevant groups and organisations.

You can also inform local media of your petition as a way of letting more people in your community and across Glasgow know about your petition.

13 What happens next?

If your petition has been accepted and it receives the required number of signatures, your petition will be referred to the next available meeting of the relevant City Policy Committee under the council's Committee Terms of Reference.

Alternatively, we may write to you confirming that the council intends to take the action requested in the petition or to set out other actions or information that may address your issues of concern.

14 What happens if my petition is to be considered by a committee?

The Chair of the committee may invite petitioners to appear before the committee to speak in support of their petition to help the committee reach a decision. As a petitioner you should indicate on the form if you want to make a statement to the committee.

Subject to the discretion of the Chair of the committee, you will be able to speak for up to 10 minutes in support of your petition. You may bring up to two supporters to the committee who may speak on your behalf.

The committee may also hear a report from officers from the relevant council service in response to the matters set out in your petition.

Councillors on the committee may ask you questions relating to the issues that have been raised in the petition.

If you need any help making a statement to the committee - for example translation and or interpretation, please contact the Clerk to the committee.

In considering your petition, the committee will take into account:-

- If there is work already ongoing elsewhere in the council regarding the matter that could ultimately resolve the issue;
- Whether there is an existing council policy on the issue and whether the aim of the petition is contrary to that policy;
- The financial implications of giving effect to the aim of the petition and whether there is a budget available to do so.

As a City Policy Committee, the committee does not have any decision making powers and will not be able to give effect to the aims of your petition.

15 What action can the committee take?

Following the consideration of a petition, the Committee can:-

(a) Agree the issue(s) raised in the petition deserves further action and agree to refer the petition, with recommendations if appropriate, to another council committee, officer or other organisation; or

(b) Agree the issue(s) raised does not merit further action.

You will be advised of the committee's decision in writing within 10 working days.

16 Privacy Policy

Information about any individual will not be used for any other purpose other than in relation to the petition. The Council is now required to process personal information in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). For more information about this can be found here.

17 Support and help with a petition

We will accept petitions in community languages and other formats. We will also arrange for interpretation and translation services, including British Sign Language if you need it. We will take account of your needs when making arrangements to hear petitions.

If you need any support, you or your representative, should discuss these with the Clerk to the Committee.