

Dealing with Petitions

The purpose of these guidelines is to set out how we deal with Petitions and to make sure that staff deal with petitions in a timely, co-ordinated and customer focused way.

The guidelines apply to all staff who receive petitions either referred to them by the Chief Executive or submitted to them by petitioners.

1 Petitions

1.1 We will treat something as a petition if it:

- is identified as being a petition
- seems to us that it is intended to be a petition

2 Submission of Petitions

2.1 All petitions should be submitted to the Chief Executive, Your Homes Newcastle, YHN House, Benton Park Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7LX.

2.2 Where petitions are received elsewhere within YHN, they should be forwarded immediately to the Chief Executive who will determine how the petition should be dealt with as set out in section 3.

2.2 Petitions should include:

- a clear statement covering the subject of the petition
- state what action the petitioners wish Your Homes Newcastle to take
- the name and address of each person supporting the petition
- the name and contact details, including a postal address, of the petition organiser.

2.3 The petition organiser is the person we will contact to explain how we will respond to the petition. If the petition does not identify a petition organiser, we will contact whoever appears to be first signatory to the petition to clarify and agree who is to act as the petition organiser.

3 Receipt of Petitions

Petitions will be registered through the Letter Monitoring system in the Chief Executive's office.

Petitions will be referred by the Chief Executive to an appropriate officer for investigation and response within 10 working days of receipt of the petition.

Depending on who the petition has been referred to, the Chief Executive might wish to see the response before it is sent to the petitioners.

3.1 Petitions relating to strategic/ policy issues

If the petition is about a matter that relates to Newcastle City Council's strategic responsibilities, the Chief Executive will refer the petition to the City Council to be dealt with through their appropriate procedures. The petitioner organiser will be informed of this by the Chief Executive or by an officer appointed by the Chief Executive.

If the petition is about a matter that relates to the functions delegated to Your Homes Newcastle, the Chief Executive will decide whether the petition is to be responded to by officers and/or referred to the Board.

(a) Petitions dealt with by officers

The Chief Executive will refer the petition to an appropriate officer to investigate and respond to the petition within 10 working days. If the investigation is likely to take longer than this, then the officer should acknowledge receipt of the petition and advise the petitioner organiser that the matter is being investigated.

The officer nominated by the Chief Executive will be responsible for co-ordinating any investigations into the matter. Petitions may involve more than one service within YHN, therefore it is important that the member of staff who has responsibility for investigating the petition co-ordinates a response on behalf of all the services involved and responds on behalf of the Chief Executive.

A copy of the response should be sent to the Chief Executive.

(b) Petitions referred to Board

The Chief Executive will nominate an officer to investigate the matter on his behalf.

The petition and draft response will be presented to Board.

On behalf of the petitioners, the petition organiser will have the right to make representations to the Board on the matter.

The Chief Executive will respond to the petition organiser on behalf of Your Homes Newcastle.

3.2 Petitions relating to operational issues/implementation of policies

The Chief Executive will refer petitions to the appropriate Director of Service or appropriate officer to investigate the matter raised by the petitioners.

The Director of Service or appropriate officer will be responsible for responding to the petition organiser and should follow the arrangements described in 3.1 (a)

3.3 Petitions submitted to members of staff

There are occasions when petitions might be submitted to members of staff (eg staff in our Community Housing offices). The officer receiving the petition should forward it to the Chief Executive together with any supporting/background information relating to the subject of the petition.

The petition will be logged in the Letter Monitoring system and will be dealt with following the arrangements in 3.1 (a).

4 Appeals

- 4.1 Petitioners who are not satisfied with the response have the right to take the matter up through the [formal complaints](#) procedure.

5 Monitoring

- 5.1 Petitions will be dealt with by the Chief Executive's office through the Letter Monitoring system.
- 5.2 All petitions will be reported to Board for information.