

NORTHUMBERLAND

Northumberland County Council

LOCAL AREA COUNCIL MEETINGS 10, 11, 12, 19 AND 20 July 2017

OVERVIEW OF PETITIONS, 2013-17

Report of the Interim Chief Executive

Cabinet Member: Councillor Nick Oliver

Purpose of Report

This report provides an overview of petitions which have been considered through the Council's petitions protocol from 1 April 2013 - 31 March 2017. This follows on from another report presented to the area committees in April 2013 which included details of petitions considered from 2009-13.

This report does not however include petitions about planning and licensing applications, which are dealt with through a separate quasi-judicial process. Details will also not be provided about any petitions which have been rejected as a result of them not meeting the requirements of the petitions protocol.

Recommendation

Members are requested to note the report.

Link to Corporate Plan

Area Committees link with the Stronger Communities and Families theme and Developing the Organisation themes; our aim is to ensure that all residents genuinely feel safe, belong, and have a say in how the county is run, and to grow a unified council where all staff and elected members understand their role and are collectively motivated to deliver excellent services as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Key Issues

1. A discussion firstly took place at the Area Committee – North on 11 February 2013 about the council's petitioning process. Following this it was requested that a report be produced giving an overview about petitioning during the 2009-13 council term. The three area chairs (as was then, as there is now four) agreed afterwards that a report be presented to all three area committees giving an overall overview of petitioning for the whole of the county. It has been agreed

again to do a further overview now for the 2013-17 council term.

2. During 2013-17 petitions have been considered by either area committees, the Petitions Committee or planning committees depending on the subject matter of each petition.
3. The petitions procedure has been revised several times since 2009 but the requirements for publishing details of petitions, inviting lead petitioners to meetings and informing other interested parties (such as the portfolio holder, the local county councillor and the local town/parish/community council for comment) and sending the lead petitioner details of decisions taken has remained unchanged since April 2009. The petitions procedure was designed to listen to petitions about issues that are the responsibility of the County Council, but some will be fed into established consultation mechanisms where they exist (such as planning applications and traffic regulation orders).
4. One change to the petitions procedure in 2015 was to amend the threshold for the number of signatures requiring a formal committee response. 50 signatures are required in response to local issues (which are considered by an area committee or the Petitions Committee in exceptional circumstances) and 100 for a issue with policy/countywide implications (considered by the Petitions Committee). If petitions fall short of these thresholds, the issue will be referred to the respective head of service's attention. Petitions are considered here to represent a wider view about a topic; residents have a number of other ways of raising issues if their petition falls short of reaching the thresholds: speaking to their local member, respective portfolio holder, asking questions at public question times before County Council or at area committees, writing to officers, etc.
5. Appendix A includes the latest version of the protocol agreed by Cabinet in February 2017. Appendix B contains the subjects and initial resolutions taken on all qualifying petitions considered since April 2013.
6. In summary, 82 petitions were considered through the petitions protocol during 2013-17. Of the petitions listed in Appendix B, 11 are about issues in the north area, 33 the south, 11 the west and 10 the central. 17 had countywide/policy implications. Please note that some petitions listed at the end of Appendix B are being investigated by officers at the time of writing (as they were received during March 2017) and no decisions have thus yet been taken on them at the time of writing.
7. 19 petitions received by Democratic Services did not qualify under the petitions protocol and were either referred elsewhere or the lead petitioner advised of why the petitions would not receive either an area committee or Petitions Committee response. These petitions concerned live planning applications, planning policy consultation, staffing matters, traffic regulation order consultation, contained false or inaccurate statements or had commercial implications. A log of all petitions rejected can be accessed at:

<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Councillors-and-Democracy/Petitions/Logs/Other-Petitions-not-addressed-through-Petitions-Log.pdf>

8. Other petition requests did not qualify for a response as a result of not containing the minimum number of signatures.
9. Some petitions are received in response to ongoing consultation processes; they are not reported through this procedure. They are considered with other responses received, for example other letters of representation. Some such petitions were received at an area committee meeting then referred on elsewhere. Other petitions were received when an update was due on an ongoing process, in which case the progress report made reference to the petitions received.
10. Some petitions have been received about issues the council is not responsible for. These have either been referred to the appropriate organisation, or members have decided to make representations to such organisations about the issue raised in the petition.
11. Appendix B is not exhaustive of all records that Democratic Services retain about petitions, but their records do not include an ongoing record of every action undertaken in response to a petition in the longer term (due to the resource implications that this would require). The log is intended to provide a title/brief description of each petition and what was agreed by the respective committee when it considered each petition and any other immediate actions that followed, where appropriate. Some petitions have simply been noted or their request has been resolved by officers before being presented to committee.
12. The most regular issues petitioned about are:
 - Road safety/speed limits/road furniture (21)
 - Parking (14 petitions received)
 - Bus services/stops (7)
 - Road conditions (4)
 - Requests to save buildings (4)
 - School closures (3)
 - Footpath repairs (2)
 - Antisocial behaviour (2)
 - Street lighting (2)
 - Other transport (2)
 - Leisure facilities (2)
 - Environmental work (litter/bottle banks) (2).
13. The petitions process has its advantages and disadvantages. The advantages are that it can;

- Allow grievances to be aired and resolved
- lead to improvements in service delivery
- allow greater understanding of an issue
- improve customer satisfaction/relations

Alternatively, petitions can

- lead to greater customer dissatisfaction if an issue is not resolved
- be politically motivated
- lead to 'queue jumping' in terms of service provision.

14. A more detailed log is maintained by Democratic Services. It is available on the council's website. The petitions page is available at:

<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Councillors/Involve.aspx#petitioninformation>

15. If members wish to receive an update on any petitions listed in Appendix B, they are requested to contact Mike Bird, Senior Democratic Services Officer, who also acts as the Petitions Officer. Arrangements will then be made for the appropriate officer/s to provide a response, or an update to the respective committee if considered appropriate.

BACKGROUND

Copies of petitions and correspondence are stored on file in the Democratic Services department, but access to them is subject to the petition protocol.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy	The Council has the discretion to operate its own petition scheme, although the Localism Act 2011 abolished the previous requirements for all local authorities to operate a policy covering their duties to respond to petitions.
Finance and value for money	None
Legal	As above
Procurement	None
Human Resources	None
Property	None
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	None
Risk Assessment	None

Carbon reduction	None
Crime & Disorder	None
Customer Consideration	None
Consultation	None
Wards	All

Report sign off

	initials
Finance Officer	AE
Monitoring Officer/Legal	LH
Human Resources	N/A
Procurement	N/A
I.T.	N/A
Chief Executive	DL
Portfolio Holder(s)	NO

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Northumberland County Council

PETITIONS PROTOCOL (UPDATED FEBRUARY 2017)

1. Introduction

Northumberland County Council is committed to engaging with its citizens, getting closer to communities and improving services. We particularly welcome petitions as one way in which you can let us know your concerns or ideas. Petitions are commonly used to air an objection or service complaint. They can also be a positive measure. For example, residents or service users may request new facilities and in so doing become more involved in securing benefits for their communities. Even if residents do not get the exact result they want, petitioning ensures that their concerns are listened to and taken seriously.

2. What is a petition?

(i) We treat as a petition any communication which is signed by and sent to us on behalf of a minimum number of 50 individuals for local issues and 100 or more signatures for countywide / corporate issues.

(ii) In the vast majority of cases, the issue will relate to something which is the responsibility of the Council or something over which it has some influence. Valid signatories will be limited to people who live, work, study or use services in Northumberland. There is no minimum age. Democratic Services publicise the procedure and can provide a standard form for petitioners to use; a copy is also available on the Council website. Petitioners can use their own format if they prefer. An officer in Democratic Services will carry out the role of the Petitions Officer.

(iii) Where the petition is in paper form, each person must include their name, address (including postcode) and signature. If the Petitions Officer is not satisfied that these requirements have been adequately met, the petition may be rejected if the number of invalid signatures reduces the total beneath the minimum signature threshold. If there are sufficient signatures to make the petition valid, the Petitions Officer has the discretion to rule that any further signatures will not be counted towards the total if there is no evidence that they qualify as valid.

(iv) Only one signature is allowed per person per petition and people cannot sign on behalf of others. The Petitions Officer will need to be satisfied that petitions contain the minimum number of valid signatures before action is taken to respond. If the

intended petition contains less than the required number of valid signatures, the Petitions Officer will forward the document to the relevant head of service asking them to consider the request outwith the petitions process. This will not necessarily require action to be taken or a formal response provided unless the head of service agrees to do so.

(v) Electronic petitions may be submitted using the Council website. Petitioners are requested to include their postcode, email address and indicate whether they live, work, study or use services in Northumberland. Only one signature is allowed per each individual email address. E-petitions can be open for signatures on the Council's website for two calendar months from first publication date, with the option to allow the lead petitioner to ask to keep it open longer, up to a maximum of six months in total. Petitions may include a combination of both paper and electronic signatures, using the e-petitioning service on the Council's website. The total number of electronic and paper signatures will be combined and recorded. Reports will be produced in response to qualifying petitions whether they contain electronic or handwritten signatures (or a combination of the two).

3. What else should a petition contain?

The petition should include a clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition. It should state what action the petitioners wish the Council to take. In addition to the minimum number of signatures, a petition should include the name and contact details (including a postal or email address) of the "petition organiser" (or "lead petitioner") to which correspondence about the petition can be sent. Due to the costs involved we cannot write to all the signatories on paper petitions, however e-petitioning does enable updates to be emailed to everybody who signs.

4. Who should you send a petition to?

Petitions should be addressed to The Petitions Officer, Democratic Services, Northumberland County Council, County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF; or email scanned copies to Petitions@northumberland.gov.uk. Petitions Officer will lead in the administration of petitions.

5. Types of Petition

How we deal with a petition depends on the subject matter of a petition submitted:

(i) If the petition concerns a local issue, it will be considered by the relevant Area Committee responsible for the local area (subject to the exceptional reasons listed in 5 (ii) below).

(ii) Petitions of a corporate or county wide nature which do not fall within the remit of the area committees, planning and other regulatory committees will be considered by the Petitions Committee, which can make appropriate recommendations to full Council, the Cabinet, or regulatory committees depending upon the subject matter. The committee can also consider petitions about local issues in exceptional circumstances when agreed by the Chair.

(iii) Some issues might have a local element, for example a school closure or repair works to a school, but if it requires a Cabinet decision, or will incur other significant expenditure, it will qualify as a Petitions Committee issue. Any such judgements will be taken by the Petitions Officer in discussion with the Petitions Committee Chair.

(iv) Petitions responding to consultation on licensing, planning applications or rights of way matters will be considered by the relevant planning committee or licensing hearing/subcommittee when they consider the applications in question. In such cases, a petition is classed as one written representation, so the signature threshold identified in section 2(i) above does not apply. This protocol does not apply to planning or licensing consultation petitions.

(v) Petitions in response to planning and licensing policy matters, but not consultations, can be considered by the Petitions Committee when the Chair considers it appropriate, unless there are considered to be quasi-judicial implications in which case they should just be referred to the relevant senior director for their consideration.

(vi) Petitions responding to other consultation processes initiated by the County Council will be reported to the committee responsible for making a decision on the matter in question and will be considered alongside the other letters of representation and correspondence received. Petitions regarding other matters for which the Council has other established processes for considering requests (for example the Local Transport Plan) will be reported to the officer/committee responsible for taking decisions. In this way, petitions feed into the established consultation processes (consultation petitions have no right of veto over any council decision). If a petition is received which concerns an issue that the Council is shortly about to consult on / take a decision about, it will also be considered by the relevant committee amongst the other letters of representation/views received.

If a petition is received after a consultation has closed but before the issue in question has gone to the committee, it should be accepted as another response. Consultation petitions will not automatically require a response to be produced for an area committee or Petitions Committee. If a request is made for one of these committees to discuss a consultation petition due to exceptional circumstances, this decision will be at the discretion of the respective Committee Chair. This will not include planning or licensing applications. If the issue being petitioned about concerns a decision delegated to officers, the petition will be reported to the officer responsible amongst the other representations received. The named officer is responsible for the final decision.

(vii) Where a petition is submitted arising from a specific statute of Parliament, it will be reported to the next meeting of the Petitions Committee. It may need to be referred as part of a report to full Council later, but only if it requires a change in the Council's policy framework, budget or constitution.

6. What happens when a petition is received?

(i) Petitions should be submitted to Democratic Services officers at committee meetings, or presented in person, posted or emailed to Democratic Services. Lead petitioners may wish to hand their petitions in at the council headquarters; petitioners are welcome to have their photograph taken handing a petition in but the Council reserves the right for officers not to be photographed if it is considered inappropriate in the circumstances (one for example being to avoid any possible accusation of bias). The lead petitioner should seek permission from the officer collecting the petition at least one working day in advance of the day they are requesting that the photo be taken. The officer may assist the petitioner by taking a photo of them outside the HQ rather than participate. A response to a petition will not be organised until Democratic Services have received a handwritten petition, or they have been notified directly that an e-petition has closed for signatures. If officers in other service areas receive petitions (excluding ones about licensing and planning applications), they should redirect them to Democratic Services immediately.

(ii) Area Committees have a permanent item on their agendas for both the receipt of and the reporting of petitions. If a petition is handed in at an area committee meeting the petition organiser can introduce it for five minutes, but the Committee cannot debate the issue until an officer report has been produced for a future meeting (petition organisers are advised that there will likely be a minimum of three weeks between a petition being handed in and a report on it being considered at a meeting). The local county councillor may be given a brief opportunity to speak after the lead petitioner has introduced their petition, but this is at the discretion of the Committee Chair. The Petitions Committee meets quarterly; any additional meetings will be organised if it is essential that any petitions need to be considered urgently, subject to the agreement of the Committee Chair.

(iii) After the petitioner has introduced the petition at the Area Committee meeting, the petition should then be passed to the Democratic Services Officer present, who will refer it to the Petitions Officer without any further discussion. Officers can however provide a short statement acknowledging receipt of a petition, with the Chair's permission. If it is subsequently judged to be an invalid petition, this will be dealt with outside of the meeting (see section 10 of this protocol).

(iv) If the petition meets the required criteria for acceptance, the Petitions Officer will ask officers (in the service area responsible) to produce a report responding to the issues raised. This should ideally be considered at the next available meeting of the appropriate committee. Where it is necessary to undertake a significant amount of work to investigate the issue and/or collect information, the issue will be considered at a later meeting instead. If there are other exceptional reasons why the consideration of a petition might be delayed, this should be agreed with the respective Committee Chair.

(v) The Petitions Officer will also send a copy of any petitions about local issues for information/comment to the relevant ward councillor/s, portfolio holder, Area

Committee chair and the local parish/town council. Countywide and corporate issues are sent to the portfolio holder and Petitions Committee chair.

(vi) If there is likely to be a delay in the response being presented to an area committee or Petitions Committee, or an urgent update is considered appropriate, an interim update can be provided to the lead petitioner, and also by email to anybody who has signed the relevant e-petition.

7. Notifications to the petition organiser before the meeting

(i) The Petitions Officer will acknowledge receipt of the petition to the petition organiser (in writing or email) within seven working days of receipt by the authority.

If possible the petition organiser will also be advised which meeting will consider a report on the petition, the date, time and place of the meeting at which it will be considered, and that they may address the meeting for up to five minutes. If at the time of receipt it can't be confirmed which meeting the petition will be considered at, it will be acknowledged and the petition organiser written to again at a later date when details of the meeting are confirmed.

(ii) A week in advance of the meeting, the Petitions Officer will send a copy of the report to the lead petitioner for their information and ask them to confirm whether they wish to attend.

8. Procedure to be followed at the Area Committee or Petitions Committee meeting

(i) The petitioners may present their petition at either at an area committee or the Petitions Committee in person and speak about the matter for a maximum of five minutes. The Chair may curtail a petitioner's speech in exceptional circumstances if the petitioner is disclosing information that should not be heard in public as defined by the Access to Information Act. Petitions will be considered in the order in which they were received, unless the Chair determines otherwise. The time taken by the committee to discuss reports on petitions will be at the Chair's discretion.

(ii) The Chair will firstly invite the lead petitioner to speak. Committee members may then ask questions of the lead petitioner. The Chair will then invite a relevant officer(s) to respond, after which the matter will be open for debate among members. The area committee or the Petitions Committee will decide on the appropriate action to take in respect of the petition. This may involve making recommendations to full Council, Cabinet, a regulatory committee or another body, or to officers.

(iii) There may be limited circumstances following a petition being considered by either an Area Committee or Petitions Committee, whereby the issue in question is referred for further consideration to another committee. For example, if a local issue is considered by an Area Committee following which corporate, countywide or budgetary implications arise, it may then be referred on to the Petitions Committee. Any such possible further referrals will be at the discretion of the Business Chair or Council Leader.

9. Required actions following the meeting

(i) After the meeting, the Petitions Officer will notify the lead petitioner of the decision by sending an extract from the draft minutes on the matter.

(ii) The lead petitioner will also be advised to contact the Petitions Officer for any further updates, particularly if they have petitioned about an issue which needs longer term action/investigation. The responsibility for the action in response to the petition lies with the council service which is responsible for the subject matter of the petition.

(iii) There is no right of appeal to another committee. If a petition organiser is dissatisfied with how their petition has been handled, they should resort to the corporate complaints process.

(iv) From September 2016 onwards, once a petition has been considered (not including planning or licensing petitions), it will be retained by Democratic Services for the same timescales as committee minutes and reports. Once the petition has been considered, the personal information contained will not be made public due to the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

10. Petitions that will be rejected / for which a report will not be produced

a) Issues not within the remit of Northumberland County Council

Where a petition relates to a matter which is within the responsibility of another public authority or organisation, the Petitions Officer will either suggest redirection of the petition to that other authority or forward the petition on to the other authority when appropriate. A report will not be produced. However, if the Petitions Officer considers it appropriate, the committee responsible for considering petitions may consider making representations to another authority on the petitioner's behalf. It may also consider the petition if it is felt to be an important local issue. This will be at the discretion of the Chair of the respective committee.

b) Duplicate Petitions

Where more than one petition is received in time for a particular area committee or Petitions Committee meeting, each supporting the same outcome on one matter, each petition organiser will be treated as an independent petition organiser. However, the right for more than one lead petitioner to address the relevant meeting will be at the Chair's discretion. (There are separate public speaking arrangements for planning committees and licensing hearings/sub-committees.)

c) Repeat Petitions

A petition will not normally be considered by an Area Committee or the Petitions Committee if it is received within 12 months of the meeting where another petition on the same matter was considered. In such cases, the petition will be reported for information to the relevant head of service.

d) Counter Petitions

Petitions should be considered in a timely process, irrespective of whether the matter concerned is the subject of wider controversy or other petitions.

Counter-petitions must close five days before the published meeting of the relevant committee in order to be considered at that committee (and for the lead petitioner to have speaking rights). Considering counter arguments is a normal part of the petitions process, and should be covered by the officers report, so the 12 month rule (for repeat petitions) shall apply to prevent further consideration of the topic once a petition has been considered by the relevant committee.

e) Rejected Petitions

Petitions will not have a report provided in response at a committee meeting if in the opinion of the Petitions Officer, they are offensive or use other inappropriate language which might offend, include false, misleading, inaccurate or defamatory statements. Petitions will not be considered if they concern categories of Freedom of Information/Access to information exemptions, such as any considered commercially sensitive or disclose confidential material, include complaints or other issues about individuals whether employed by the authority or not, or include issues which are the subject of judicial proceedings. They will not be considered if they concern appeals or enforcement matters. Petitions will not be responded to separately if they are received whilst also being addressed through the corporate complaints process.

If a petition is subsequently rejected following its presentation, the Committee Chair and ward member will be advised as to why it is not being considered. In limited circumstances a petition or an e-petition request may be dealt with by a written response when there is a simple explanation to be provided, if the appropriate chief officer considers this appropriate (in consultation with the Petitions Officer).

f) Requests with less than 50 signatures

By definition, communications which include less than 50 signatures are not petitions so will not be dealt with through this procedure. The Petitions Officer will treat any such correspondence as a 'written request' which will in the first instance be sent to the respective head of service for their attention. Such requests may also be progressed through other means such as discussion with the local elected member or the responsible portfolio holder.

g) Late Petitions

If a petition is received whose subject matter relates to a decision imminently due to be taken by the Council, and the subject matter would usually require consideration by the Petitions Committee or an Area Committee, reference will be made to the petition at the committee meeting taking the respective decision. If it is an officer decision, details of the petition will be reported to the officer responsible.

h) Insufficient detail included on paper petitions

Petitions must include the details required detailed in 2 (ii) and (iii) above. If the Petitions Officer is not satisfied that these requirements have been met, the petition may be rejected.

i) Petitions about Planning and Licensing Applications

These must be treated separately and will be reported direct to the planning and licensing committees where applications are considered.

Action taken on rejected petitions

Where the petition is not accepted for consideration, the Petitions Officer will advise the petition organiser, local councillor and area committee / Petitions Committee Chair of the rejection and the grounds for it.

SUMMARY OF PETITIONS AND DECISIONS 2013-17

1. Request for 20mph speed limits in Wylam - the Area Committee – West recommended the Policy Board/Area Chairs Working Group request a more flexible approach to the priority given and areas in which 20mph limits could be provided. The Policy Board/Area Chairs Working Group then agreed (at their meeting on 19 June) to recommend to the Policy Board that the 20mph policy be looked at. The Policy Board then agreed at their meeting on 8 July 2013 that a small member working group visit other local authorities, with an officer, to investigate effective and affordable solutions to this particular issue. The Petitions Committee meeting met on 23 July 2013 and noted the arrangements for taking the work forward, including the formation of the working group.
2. Condition of roads in Elsdon Parish, especially the B6341 to Rothbury - the work being done to address the situation was noted.
3. Public highway at Doddington Farm North - the work being done to address the situation was noted.
4. Rothbury First School – kitchen refurbishment project - Update to be provided for the committee following a meeting with the chair of governors and headteacher. This update was provided on 2 August, details of which were included in the letter sent to the lead petitioner. Further report to be discussed by the Petitions Committee at its meeting on 30 October 2013: the committee noted progress on the agreement to refurbishment as the way forward and the next steps for appointing a designer and contractor.
5. Darras Hall First School – Crossing Patrol - Position Current situation noted, committee supported the petitioners
6. Northumberland County Council to acknowledge Dyslexia - the committee's comments, with particular reference to (a) their support for referring to literacy difficulties rather than dyslexia; (b) the difficulties in defining learning difficulties as a condition, and (c) focusing on the provision of support for children affected and not labelling them, be communicated to the petitioners.
7. Speed Humps in Ord - it was resolved that officers be asked to consult the whole estate and issue a press release explaining why only Dene Drive was

being included.

8. Parking/litter/anti-social behaviour problems in Amble - the recommended actions in the report were agreed: surveys be undertaken to determine the extent of the parking problem and to ascertain whether residents' permits were a suitable and viable option; to note that local police patrols had been briefed to assess the problem of antisocial behaviour and take action where necessary; and discussions take place with Amble Town Council to ensure the provision of 'gull-proof' bins.
9. Cambois bus services - Officers were aware of concerns and the Transport Support Manager said he was in consultation with the petitioner and was visiting Cambois Residents' Association the following evening to see if changes could be made and to discuss the community transport fund.
10. Supply of mains electricity to off-grid properties in the Upper Coquet Valley and other remote rural areas in Northumberland - the Petitions Committee resolved that (1) the petition be noted; (2) the response of the Corporate Director of Local Services be noted; (3) the Council continue to facilitate and provide officer advice/support to the groups concerned to achieve the end goal to result in providing electricity to residents.
11. Move bus stop on Fifth Avenue, Ashington - the site constraints mentioned within the report rule out any relocation of the bus stop. The long established bus stop location provided wider community benefit, which could not be effectively replaced by the remaining southbound bus stops within Milburn Road. Relocation would be to the detriment to those residents of limited mobility, which the Local Sustainable Transport Fund Grant was intended to assist.
12. Save Northumberland's Badgers From Culling - it was confirmed that the Council recognised that badgers were protected and culling in any circumstances would only be considered as a last resort; the lead petitioner informed that the Council's position had not changed.
13. Hexham bus station: retain on site and follow previous decision - the petition was noted; (2) the response of the Corporate Director of Local Services noted; and (3) the Lead Petitioner be provided with the consultation document at the earliest stage. A further report on the issue would be considered by the Council's Policy Board on 11 February.
14. Save Guidepost Middle School from Closure in 2014 - that: 1) the Executive

Director of Wellbeing and Community Health review all the consultation documents in consultation with the lead petitioner to ensure that the council has received all the information sent in; 2) written clarification be sought regarding the timescales for closure and all the options available; and 3) the Policy Board take into account the petition and comments of the lead petitioner when taking their decision.

15. Bus service 685 between Newcastle and Carlisle - Arriva and Stagecoach would be invited to a future meeting to report on progress, complaints received and remedial action taken.
16. Against the Closure of County Hall, Morpeth - it be noted that a report on the future of County Hall is due to be considered by Policy Board on 7 October and to be scrutinised by the Economic Prosperity and Strategic Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 September, which will provide opportunities for questions to be raised and for members to debate the options under consideration; (2) it be noted that the report will provide information referred to the petition including: a report by independent consultants on the options for the future of the town council and the financial case for each option confirmation of the inclusion of the county hall site in the emerging Local Development Framework as a site that may become available for development an economic impact assessment of the effect on Morpeth of a potential move from County Hall; (3) it be requested that the report include details about possible different scenarios and full details of the value of the current site; (4) it be requested that the report include details of the carbon footprint and environmental implications of the move/any proposed change; and (5) Councillor Parker be written to inviting him to the Economic Prosperity and Strategic Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 23 September.
17. Regeneration of The Paddlers, Amble - report noted, which detailed aims to provide better recreational facilities for families/additional facilities for families and not increase the call on local precept payer, and that possible funding sources were being investigated. The committee would receive an update within six months time.
18. Speed Bumps at Longhirst Colliery - further options were being considered and being discussed with the local member.
19. Traffic Concerns, Riverview, Bedlington - It was agreed that the Head of Development Services ascertain if planning permission had been granted for the wall to be built and if any enforcement action could be taken.

20. Bus stop, Woodhorn Road, Ashington - It was agreed that officers meet with the Lead Petitioner and the Ward Councillor to discuss the matter further.
21. Proposed Closure of St Cuthbert's RC First School, Amble - that 1) the Policy Board be recommended to receive the HMI report in terms of the school's most recent judgements and also be presented with the Ofsted attainment figures to see what had been achieved for when making its judgement; and 2) the Policy Board hear and listen to the views of the petition and what was presented at this meeting when taking a decision. The issue was then pre-scrutinised by the Family and Children's Services OSC on 24 April, after which the Policy Board agreed (on 29 April) that the proposal to close St Cuthbert's RCVA First School, Amble with effect from 31 August 2014 should be adopted and implemented.
22. Ponteland Bottle Bank Facilities - the existing site was relocated to Merton Way on 26 March 2014 (supported by the lead petitioners) with signs detailing the new location erected at the Village Hall to redirect residents.
23. Getabout Northumberland Service - that: (1) the extension of the current Getabout contract, so that the service continues at least until March 2015, be noted; (2) the work undertaken by officers to deliver the scheme for a reduced cost rather than removing the facility be noted; and (3) the Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee be recommended to receive an update report about the service in the autumn.
24. Against the proposal for Resident Permit Parking and No Waiting Restrictions to Station Road, Cramlington - It was agreed that the petition be referred to the Petitions Committee, and upon further clarification it was later instead referred to the Streetcare, Infrastructure and Culture (Urban) Working Group
25. Parking on Wright Street and Maddison Street, Blyth - that the proposal to undertake a scheme in light of the recent Morrison's development to prevent parking in locations where it is deemed unsuitable be supported.
26. Speed, volume and size of vehicles travelling through the Wansbeck residential estate via Ashington Drive, critically on the bend at the T junction to Ringway - that various surveys be carried out along designated sections of Ashington Drive to ascertain the level of vehicular traffic using the road and their associated speeds; and the requests be added to the Directory of Requests Database where it would be considered for funding from the Local Transport Plan in a future

years programme – the surveys would assist in informing this process.

27. Post 16 Transport - following consideration by the Petitions Committee on 30 April, Family and Children's Services OSC on 29 May, the policy was agreed by Policy Board on 29 May.
28. No to residents' parking scheme near to Alnmouth railway station (petition 1) - public meeting took place on 17 September 2014 to discuss the matter further. Update report considered by the North Area Committee on 12 January 2015.
29. No to residents' parking scheme near to Alnmouth railway station (petition 2) - public meeting took place on 17 September 2014 to discuss the matter further. Update report considered by the North Area Committee on 12 January 2015.
30. Request for parking scheme at Kingsgate, Hexham - that further surveys to be organised by Sustainable Transport, and an update be provided to the committee's September meeting.
31. Road safety, Stakeford Lane, Half Moon - a report had been produced which suggested a range of possible improvement options along with cost estimates. The next step was to discuss the options with Members and Choppington Parish Council.
32. East Hartford, Road Safety Issues - 1) Speed surveys be carried out on the A192 on both east and westbound approaches to East Hartford to ascertain the level of vehicular traffic using the road, and their associated speeds
2) Given recent accident history, it is recommended that a local safety scheme be considered for inclusion in the 2015/16 LTP Programme.
33. Tree trimming at Masters Crescent, Prudhoe - the proposal submitted by the Tree and Woodland Officer to coppice all vegetation between the fences of property at Masters Crescent and the woodland footpath on the edge of Bullshaugh Wood in order to address the issues raised by local residents, be supported.
34. Traffic Calming, Alexandra Road, Ashington - since the receipt of this petition, the remaining traffic calming measures due for the location had been implemented in accordance with the original proposals in order to address local concerns.
35. Pothole – Lovaine Terrace/Northumberland Avenue, Berwick upon Tweed - work undertaken to resolve the issue was noted, the lead petitioner had

confirmed he was happy with it.

36. Request for street lighting at Abbeylands, Alnwick - Councillor Bridgett raised the issue at the Policy Board/Area Chairs Working Group on 19 November. Discussion following between officers and local county councillors.
37. BT Phonebox at Shaftoe Leazes, Hexham - information had been published on the Council's planning website and a final decision would be made on 15 December 2014.
38. Bus service 680 - Northumberland County Council offers proactively discuss with Cumbria County Council and the relevant Parish Councils in Northumberland about possible ways forward.
39. CCTV, Benridge Park - the Council was undertaking a review of CCTV provision in Northumberland and would be working closely with Homes for Northumberland. The general approach was evidence based through the LMAPS process. In response to comments it was acknowledged that the Council would need to work with a whole range of partners in order to develop the best strategy and it was confirmed that there would be consultation with Parish/Town Councils.
40. U5040 & U5049 - the Area Committee - West resolved that the Council's response to the concerns raised by residents and road users of the U5040 and U5049, Tasset in their petition and the Council's commitment to continue working with both local community and Forest Management Company, be noted.
41. Request for Road Safety Improvements on the A197 - a survey PV2 had been undertaken and the site met the necessary criteria for a light controlled crossing which would be included in the draft 2015/16 LTP Programme.
42. Electricity at Gypsy/Traveller site, Hartford Bridge - agreed that electricity tariffs are maintained at their current level of £0.13 kw until April 2015, at which point the tariff would be subject to review in accordance with the Council's re-negotiation of bulk electricity purchase contracts. ii) That support and information is provided to residents of the site to help identify opportunities to reduce electricity use and thereby contribute to a reduction in electricity costs.
43. No to Fracking in Northumberland - report noted, which advised that the emerging Core Strategy included a policy that such planning applications

would be assessed against. It would not be appropriate to amend this policy to introduce a blanket ban on shale gas extraction through hydraulic fracturing in Northumberland as it would be contrary to national policy.

44. Investment in Bedlington - the report was noted, which contained details of a number of major projects the council or its subsidiaries Arch, the Northumberland Development Company and Active Northumberland were supporting.
45. Seahouses Middle School: no to reorganisation of Alwick Partnership - Committee's views were forwarded for consideration by Scrutiny and Cabinet.
46. Dog fouling in Cramlington - Officers had visited the lead petitioner to discuss concerns and the Council's response. The area was known to officers and details of fixed penalty notices issued there were provided. If officers received information they could react and this was an example of good intelligence information. The update was noted.
47. Street lighting levels in Maple / Sycamore Street, Ashington - it was noted that there was a new design partner and more robust procedures were now in place. In response to comments, reassurances were given that all faults would be rectified in Ashington, at the contractor's expense, before moving on to another area.
48. Broadband in Colwell - members were pleased to learn that Colwell was included within the programme and noted that it was not possible for all areas to be completed at once.
49. Save The Willows, Morpeth - report noted: no decision had been made by Northumberland County Council in relation to the future of the site at that point in time, it is considered that deciding to retain the dilapidated buildings on the site before options have been developed would be unhelpful and would limit the scope for this key riverside site. Demolishing the buildings would require planning permission and at that stage a decision could be made in line with the appropriate policies and after consideration of any objections.
50. Reconsider the decision to withdraw funding from Hexham Tans Restaurant - Officers asked as a matter of urgency to prioritise working with the interested social enterprise to see if the Tans would be sustainable to keep open, retain the volunteers who worked there, and move it forward in a sustainable way
51. Funfair at Eastwoods Park, Prudhoe - Northumberland County Council and

Active Northumberland to work with Prudhoe Town Council to find a mutually acceptable site.

52. Against closing Prudhoe Waterworld Creche - the Crèche had not been closed as it had been agreed to rationalise the opening hours that were linked with popular sessions. Good feedback had been received to the proposition.
53. Request for installation of controlled crossing at Northumbrian Road between the Westwood Grange and Northburn estates, Cramlington - information to be provided for Cllr Flux regarding date of work to be carried out.
54. Request for 20mph speed limit to be imposed on Parkside Grange and Parkside Glade, Cramlington - the Senior Programme Officer Highways and Transport provided information to the Cabinet Member for Economic Growth regarding how the three year programme was developed.
55. Speeding in St Mary's Field and Spelvit Lane, Morpeth - the request to the re-painting of the lines had been passed to the Area Officer for action. A scheme to introduce a 20mph speed limit in the areas would be considered for inclusion in the LTP 2016-17. Conditions had been agreed to refresh the white lines.
56. Proposed changes to the X13 service – Sandringham Road, Blyth - Arriva agreed to look into the suggestion made regarding the provision of an off peak X2; look at figures for the X13 picking up passengers in Amersham Road and Waterloo Road to see if an hourly service could be provided in Sandringham Road (details of usage figures to be provided to the Policy Officer (Economic and Inclusion)); and provide feedback in January/February next year.
57. Default Speed Limit, Ingoe - it was resolved that the Local Councillor and Highways Officer consult with the village residents to agree a resolution.
58. Reduce the Speed Limit on the C121 Road at Linton - it was resolved that consideration be given to the implementation of a reduced speed limit at that location. A 30 mph speed limit might not meet the necessary Department for Transport criteria but, if that was the case, then other speed limits could be considered. A proposal to look at the feasibility of such a scheme would be considered for inclusion in the Local Transport Plan programme in 2016/17.
59. Request for public footpath to be laid between East Moor Farm and Ellington Village via the Old A1068 Road - it was resolved that the concerns expressed by the petitioners be assessed for possible inclusion in the 2016-17 Local

Transport Plan Programme.

60. Parking in Hexham - it was resolved that the concerns raised be acknowledged and it be noted that the Council was working with Hexham Town Council to identify potential solution to work towards a resolution.
61. Request for road crossing at A695, Mickley Square - It was resolved that a new PV2 survey is undertaken at a location to be agreed with the local ward member; and if the value of the new PV2 survey is 0.2 or greater a controlled crossing can be considered as a priority for a future Local Transport Plan Programme.
62. Request for the introduction of a suitable resident parking solution, and 20 mph speed reduction, to Whitelea Glade and Whitelea Grange Estates - it was resolved that Councillor K Graham, Ward Member, was committed to funding a scheme to improve problems in relation to inconsiderate parking at Hareside School. A consultation was currently taking place and once the consultation period had expired the results would be assessed to determine a suitable way forward; Northumberland County Council had a new initiative to ensure that all schools in the County were governed by a 20 mph speed limit. Depending on the location of the school, that may be a permanent or time limited restriction. £200,000 has been allocated in the 2015/16 Local Transport Plan Programme Budget. Similar amounts were proposed to be allocated over the next 5 years or until the programme was complete; and a 20mph speed limit at Whitelea Glade and Whitelea Dale in Cramlington will be considered for inclusion in the 2016/17 Local Transport Plan Programme.
63. Request for 30mph speed limit in Harbottle - the Area Committee resolved that the following be supported: that consideration of speed limits for Harbottle will be considered in conjunction with the 20mph Speed Limits at Schools Programme and a reduced speed limit will be introduced as soon as possible, subject to the necessary assessments, and to give consideration to improving gateway signage into the village which might assist in encouraging motorists to alter their speed and to drive more considerately.
64. Road Safety in Allendale - it was resolved that reducing the crossing distance is registered as a priority for consideration for inclusion in a future Local Transport Plan Programme.
65. Request for change to new road layout, Laverock Road, Blyth - a site visit to be organised – officers, petitioners and Councillors to attend.

66. Anti-social Behaviour and Related Issues, Newcastle Road and surrounding areas, Blyth - the issues raised were being addressed and the situation would be monitored.
67. Parking Parkside Glade, Cramlington - officers would continue to liaise with interested parties to agree a suitable way forward to resolve the issues raised.
68. Malvins Road Closure Order and Surface Water Flooding Problems - discussions were taking place with the developer regarding an option for one-way traffic and to ensure the road was opened as soon as possible. The Ward Member would be kept informed of progress.
69. Parking at Barley Rise, Ashington - residents in the area be canvassed to ensure they knew what the scheme entailed as there were charges involved and parking spaces were not guaranteed. If, after that, there was still support for the scheme it would be taken forward for inclusion in the draft 2017/18 Local Transport Plan Programme or the Ward Member may wish to fund the scheme.
70. Barrels Ale House, Berwick - report and concerns of residents noted. The Council had a statutory legal duty to investigate complaints of 'noise nuisance' including noise under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (s) 79. If the investigation found a noise nuisance existed then the Council was obliged to serve an improvement notice on the person responsible for the nuisance, that was either the owner or occupier of the premise.
71. Secure Sites at Arcot Lane, Cramlington - it was noted that securing the site did not fall within the remit or power of Northumberland County Council; and council officers continued to speak to the landowner and ask them to keep the land tidy, and also provide advice to the landowner about trying to stop the land from becoming encroached again in future
72. Parking outside of Co-op Building, Pegswood - scheme at the design stage; local member to get costings and update to the committee's next meeting on 12 January.
73. Old Cleveland School Building, Newbiggin - both this petition and the 'Save Cleveland School' e-petition be forwarded to Strategic Estates and Planning Services to consider in the next steps for consulting on the future of the site.
74. Closure of footpath known as 'the cut' between Sweethope and Albion Way, Blyth - it was agreed that the situation be reviewed.

75. Save Cleveland School - both this petition and the other Cleveland School petition be forwarded to Strategic Estates and Planning Services to consider in the next steps for consulting on the future of the site
76. Reduce speeding on Edendale Avenue, Blyth - the information was noted and the possibility of publicity being undertaken about 20mph speed zones on residential estates would be explored with the press office.
77. Request for a railway station at Seghill - the Ashington, Blyth and Tyne Project Board would be asked to ratify the recommendation of the Station Assessment Report and that only one station was proposed for the Seaton Valley and that this station is located in Seaton Delaval; as part of the scheme development, Northumberland County Council were to work with Network Rail as part of the GRIP process, to investigate the cost of making passive provision for a station site at Seghill for potential future use. This would enable the Council to understand the financial implications and impact on the business case of doing so.
78. Speed Reduction, Eastfield Estates, Cramlington - at the time of writing, a response was being organised for the 21 June 2017 meeting of the Area Committee - South.
79. Cramlington Village Parking - at the time of writing, a response was being organised for the 21 June 2017 meeting of the Area Committee - South
80. Fair deal for Craster - at the time of writing, a response was being organised for the 21 June 2017 meeting of the Petitions Committee.
80. Request for speed limit reduction in Warden - at the time of writing, a response was being organised for the 20 June 2017 meeting of the Area Committee - West.
81. Westmorland Way Junction, Cramlington - at the time of writing, a response was being organised for the 21 June 2017 meeting of the Area Committee - South.
82. Statutory Notices in Hexham Courant - at the time of writing, a response was being organised for the 21 June 2017 meeting of the Petitions Committee.