



Petitions Policy

LINKS TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN AND DELIVERY PROGRAM:

Direction: **G2 – Our community is actively engaged in well-informed decision processes.**

Strategy: **G2b – Provide opportunities in a variety of forums for all stakeholders to contribute to community decision making.**

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SUB-PROGRAM: **Internal Ombudsman, Governance and Civic**

DATE CREATED: **September 2008**

DATE REVISED: **March 2016**

DATE APPROVED BY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM: **N/A**

DATE ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: **April 2016**

NEXT REVIEW DATE: **March 2020**

TRIM FILE REF: **A08/1339**

1. Petitions Policy

Statement of policy

Council will accept petitions from persons who have an interest in the Waverley Local Government Area as residents, landowners, business people or in some other capacity.

Petitions must concern matters that Council is authorised to determine.

Objectives

Council aims to ensure that the views of the community are effectively communicated to councillors and staff, and considered by them in the decision-making process. This is a core aspect of accountable and transparent local government. One of the ways councillors and staff receive these views is by considering issues raised in petitions lodged by members of the community.

This policy establishes a consistent process to ensure that each petition is treated in a timely manner and effectively comes to the notice of councillors and relevant staff.

This policy seeks to manage risk and prevent corruption by providing a mechanism for open communication of community views to Council.

Scope

This policy applies to all petitions submitted to Council; all persons submitting petitions; and all councillors and Council staff who deal with petitions.

Legislation

Petitions to Council are not specifically covered by legislation. However, the *Local Government Act 1993* encourages and assists the effective participation of local communities in the affairs of local government. Council deals with petitions in keeping with this principle.

Information provided to Council in a petition is protected by the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*. These protections are summarised in Council's Privacy Management Plan 2013, which is available on Council's website. Any questions concerning privacy or the use of personal information may be referred to Council's Internal Ombudsman.

Details of persons signing a petition will generally only be used by Council officers to verify that the signatories have an interest in the Waverley Local Government Area as required by this policy.

2. Dealing with Petitions

Content of petitions

The person lodging a petition ('chief petitioner') must ensure that the petition has:

1. The Petition Lodgement Form containing:
 - a) A clear and concise statement identifying the subject matter of the petition.
 - b) A statement specifying the number of signatories and the number of pages to the petition.
 - c) The full printed name, address, phone number and signature of the chief petitioner, together with the name of the organisation/group they represent if the petition is submitted on behalf of an organisation or group.
2. The following details on each page of the petition:
 - a) The subject matter of the petition and the action requested.
 - b) The name, address and signature of those people who support the petition.

The Petition Lodgement Form and a petition template are attached to this policy.

Electronic petitions

An electronic petition (e-petition) is a petition that is 'signed' online, usually through a website.

A person submitting an e-petition must ensure that the petition has:

1. A clear and concise statement identifying the subject matter of the petition.
2. The total number of people 'signing' the petition.
3. The full name, address and phone number of the person submitting the petition ('chief petitioner'), together with the name of the organisation/group they represent if the petition is submitted on behalf of an organisation or group.
4. The full name, address (including postcode), and email address of those people who support the e-petition.

Receiving petitions

A person may lodge a petition with Council by email at <info@waverley.nsw.gov.au>; via petition websites; or by sending it to a councillor, the General Manager or the Internal Ombudsman.

All petitions received must be forwarded to the Internal Ombudsman, who will ensure the petition is registered in Council's record management system.

The Internal Ombudsman will usually arrange for the petition to be included on the agenda of the next meeting of Council or the Operations Committee. However, a petition will not be included on the agenda if, in the opinion of the General Manager:

- It does not contain the content details outlined above, or
- It is defamatory, or
- It contains threatening statements or offensive material, or
- Any action it proposes is unlawful.

If the petition is not included, the Internal Ombudsman will notify the chief petitioner within 21 days of lodgement, together with the reasons for it not being included.

If the petition is included on an agenda, Council will advise the chief petitioner of the date of the meeting.

Outcome of petitions

Council will decide what action, if any, it will take on the petition. Generally, Council refers the petition to the relevant officer for appropriate action. Council's decision can be accessed in the minutes of the meeting, which are available on Council's website.

The relevant officer will consider the petition, take any action considered necessary and advise the chief petitioner accordingly.

Petition Lodgement Form

SUBJECT OF PETITION:

Number of persons who have signed the petition	
Number of signed pages attached	
Signature of person lodging petition (chief petitioner)	
Name	
Address	
Telephone	
If acting on behalf of organisation/group, name of organisation/group	

PRIVACY STATEMENT

Waverley Council is collecting your personal information solely for the purpose of administering this petition and verifying its authenticity, as required by Council's Petitions Policy. Council will handle your personal information in accordance with the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* and the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*. Questions concerning privacy or the use of your personal information may be referred to Council's Internal Ombudsman.

Petition

SUBJECT OF PETITION:

ACTION REQUESTED. We, the undersigned, petition the Mayor and Councillors of Waverley to:

Name (please print)	Address (please print)	Signature

Maximum of 12 signatories per page (attach additional pages as necessary).

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