

Decision Maker: Council

Date: 21st July 2014

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: Petitions

Contact Officer: Graham Walton, Democratic Services Manager
Tel: 020 8461 7743 E-mail: graham.walton@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Mark Bowen, Director of Corporate Services

Ward: All/Cray Valley West

1. Reason for report

1.1 Under the Council's Petition Scheme, if petitioners are dissatisfied with the Council's response to a petition they have submitted they can request that the issue be brought before a meeting of the full Council for consideration, provided that the number of verified signatures exceeds the threshold required (500 signatures). The lead petitioner or their nominee can address the Council for up to five minutes.

1.2 Two petitions have been received –

(a) From Glenn Kelly, Staff-side Secretary, calling on the Council to stop cutting Library services;

(b) From Mrs Susan Sulis, Community Care Protection Group, calling on the Council to let 111 Cotmandene Crescent to Orpington Foodbank at a peppercorn rent rather than the commercial rent, and to investigate the number of Bromley residents referred to foodbanks and the effect of hunger and malnutrition on their health and wellbeing.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

Council is requested to consider the cases made by the petitioners.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy: Petitions are dealt with according to the Council's agreed Petition Scheme.
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council:
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: No Cost:
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable:
 3. Budget head/performance centre: N/A
 4. Total current budget for this head: N/A
 5. Source of funding: N/A
-

Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): N/A
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: None:
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable: This report does not involve an executive decision.
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): N/A
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Ward councillors have been advised of receipt of the Foodbank Petition
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable

3. COMMENTARY

3.1 The Council's Petition Scheme allows for petitioners to present their case to full Council if they are dissatisfied with the Council's response to a petition, provided that the number of verified signatures exceeds the threshold required of 500. The lead petitioner or their nominee can address the Council for up to five minutes. Once Council has considered the matter, it can choose whether or not to recommend that any action be taken. If there are any recommendations for action by Councillors or officers then a report back to the next scheduled full Council meeting is required, setting out the action that has been taken.

3.2 The petition from Glenn Kelly states –

“STOP Bromley Council cutting your Library services

We the undersigned call on Bromley council to drop their plans to cut the opening days and hours of our Libraries and cut the level of staffing.”

The petition has 972 validated signatures. In line with the Council's Petition Scheme, the Director of Environment and Community Services responded to the petition on 4th June 2014 – his letter is set out at Appendix A, but the lead petitioner requested that the petition be referred to full Council. A report on the outcome of consultations on the Library service was considered by Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee on 23rd June 2014 and the Executive on 16th July 2014.

3.3 The petition from Mrs Susan Sulis states –

“SUPPORT BROMLEY'S FOODBANKS

We, the undersigned, petition Bromley Council to:-

“RECONSIDER ITS DECISION TO CHARGE the Orpington distribution centre of Bromley Borough Foodbank the FULL COMMERCIAL RENT of £8,400 p.a. for the shop unit at 111 Cotmandene Crescent, and instead, LET IT AT A PEPPERCORN RENT; this recognises the fact that other charities raise income from their shops whereas their donations come in kind.

INVESTIGATE the number of BROMLEY RESIDENTS referred to and needing FOODBANKS, and the effect of HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION on their health and wellbeing.”

The petition has 1,241 validated signatures. A covering letter expanding on the subject of the petition is attached as Appendix B. The petition was addressed to the Portfolio Holder for Care Services and copied to the Portfolio Holder for Resources. At the time of going to print, a response has not been set, but the Lead Petitioner has stated that she would expect the petition to be referred to Council whatever the response.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Policy/Financial/Legal/Personnel
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	None