

**PROCEDURE RULES 28/93/217**  
**SUBMISSION OF PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS**  
**FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

**1) General Issues common to all Petitions, Deputations and Questions**

- a) Subject to paragraph 4 of this Procedure Rule any person may present a petition, deputation or question to an Ordinary Meeting of the Council which is relevant to some matter in relation to which the Authority has functions, or which affects Rutland or any of its inhabitants. See also Procedure Rule 24 for provisions relating to a Special Meeting.
- b) The Chief Executive shall not accept a petition, deputation or question from a member of the public which:
  - a) is not about a matter for which the Council has a responsibility or which affects Rutland;
  - ii) which is offensive, frivolous, defamatory or is of a personal nature;
  - iii) is substantially the same as a petition, deputation or question which has been put at a meeting of the Council within the previous six months;
  - iv) appears to be from a staff group which has an alternative consultative forum;
  - v) is about any matter where there is a right of appeal to the courts, a tribunal or to a Government Minister or on any matter which, in the opinion of the Chief Executive, is of a quasi-judicial nature;
  - vi) is about any specific matter which would require confidential or exempt information to be divulged as defined in the Access to Information Rules (Rules 230 to 269).
- c) Any decision not to accept a petition, deputation or question shall be reported by the Chief Executive to the **Council/Committee/Scrutiny Panel** together with a reason for refusal.

**2) Petitions**

- a) Full details on the format and submission of petitions can be found in the Rutland County Council Petitions Guidance under Section 5 of the Rutland County Council Constitution *[link]*
- b) A person wishing to submit a petition to a specific meeting of the Council, or any Scrutiny or Committee meeting shall give notice in writing of his intention to do so to the Corporate Support Team providing details of the subject matter and number of signatures by no later than 4.30 pm on the second working day before the meeting (e.g. for a meeting on a Monday, by 4.30 pm on the preceding Thursday). The person submitting the petition must also indicate who will present the petition to the meeting.

- c) The person presenting the petition will read out, or summarise, the prayer of the petition, indicate the number of signatories, and make further supporting remarks relevant to the petition. **The time for this shall be a maximum of three minutes.** The Chairman will refer the matter to another appropriate body of the Council within whose terms of reference it falls without discussion and in accordance with the Council's petition guidance, detailed in Part 5 of the Constitution, unless a relevant item appears elsewhere on the Agenda
- d) If a petition is presented to a meeting at which there is an agenda item on the same subject, a Member may propose that the item and the petition should be considered together and that the item be moved forward on the agenda.
- e) Petitions may be referred to the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee without debate. If after the meeting it becomes apparent that the petition is more relevant to some other Committee or Sub-Committee, the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chairmen of all the Committees and Sub-Committees involved, may refer it to another Committee or Sub-Committee.
- f) When a petition has been referred to a Committee or a Sub-Committee, a report shall be submitted to the Council on the action taken as soon as practicable and in any case not later than the second Ordinary Meeting after the meeting at which it was presented. The person submitting and presenting the petition shall be informed of the response and the date of the meeting at which it will be considered.

PR 217 Only

- g) Any petition presented to an Officer shall be reported to the appropriate Scrutiny Panel either individually or as part of a report on the same topic as the petition.

PR28 Only

- h) A valid petition containing more than 1500 signatures and in accordance with the RCC Petitions Guidance will trigger a Full Council Debate. The petition organiser will be given **5 minutes** to present the petition. The Members of the Council may discuss the petition and/or ask questions of the petition organiser for a further period of not more than **15 minutes**.

## **PROCEDURE RULE 29**

### **TIME ALLOWED FOR PETITIONS DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

- 1) The maximum time allowed for presenting petitions, deputations and questions at meetings shall be 30 minutes.
- 2) In addition to the time limit in (1) above, the maximum time allowed for valid petitions containing over 1500 signatures which have been accepted for a Full Council Debate shall be 20 minutes. The petition organiser will be given 5 minutes to present the petition. The Members of the Council may discuss the petition and ask the petition organiser questions for a further period of not more than 15 minutes.

- 3) Petitions, deputations and questions from members of the public shall be considered in the order in which they have been received. When a member of the public wishes to submit more than one petition, deputation or ask more than one question (not including a supplementary question) at the same meeting, paragraph 3) will apply to determine the order in which they will be considered.
- 4) A second petition, deputation or question from the same person will only be considered when the first petition, deputation or question of all the other petitioners, deputations or questioners have been received, and so on for any subsequent petitions, deputations or questions.