



CUMBERLAND
CITY COUNCIL

Petition Guidelines

AUTHORISATION & VERSION CONTROL

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PURPOSE

Council expects that the views of the community are effectively communicated to Councillors and Council staff, and considered in decision-making processes. These guidelines aim to establish a consistent approach to the management of petitions, to ensure they are managed in a timely and effective manner.

DEFINITIONS

Petition: A formal written request to Council, typically signed by a number of people, seeking action or special consideration of a particular matter, that Council is authorised to determine.

SCOPE

These guidelines apply to all petitions submitted to Council, all persons submitting petitions, and all Councillors and Council staff managing petitions.

PROCEDURE STEPS

1. Content of Petitions

Petitions on the following matters will be considered by Council, in accordance with these guidelines:

- Matters relating to Council's responsibilities; and
- Matters which affect the Council or communities in the Cumberland Local Government Area (LGA), as long as Council is in a position to exercise a degree of influence.

Where a petition relates to a matter in which Council has no degree of control or influence, the petition can be returned to the main petition contact accompanied by an explanation. However, Council may consider making representations on behalf of the community to the relevant organisation where it sees a significant impact on its communities.

The person lodging the petition, the 'chief petitioner', must ensure the petition meets the following mandatory criteria:

- Be signed by 10 or more persons.
- Be made by persons that have a direct interest in Cumberland City Council, such as residents, ratepayers, business stakeholders, or in some other capacity.
- Is legible and does not contain disrespectful or offensive language.
- If written in a language other than English, the petition must be accompanied by a certified translation (including contact details of the translator).
- Includes a clear and concise statement identifying the purpose of the petition.
- Identifies the subject matter of the petition and the action requested of Council.

- Includes the names, addresses and signatures of the persons who support the petition.
- Includes the name, address and contact details of the chief petitioner / main contact, otherwise Council will assume the first signatory is the main petition contact.

1.1 Online Petitions

Council will consider online petitions signed through a website which contain the following:

- The purpose, subject matter of the petition and the action requested of Council.
- The names and email addresses of the persons supporting the petition.
- Online signatures of the persons supporting the petition – electronic petitions may be signed online, usually through a website.
- Total number of people electronically signing the petition, which must be electronically signed by 10 or more persons.

2. Submitting a Petition

Petitions may be provided directly to the Mayor, Councillors, or addressed to Council's General Manager.

Petitions can be submitted to Council through the following methods:

- Mail – PO Box 42, MERRYLANDS NSW 2160
- Email – council@cumberland.nsw.gov.au
- In Person – via one of our Customer Service Centres located at:
 - 16 Memorial Avenue, MERRYLANDS NSW 2160 – between 8.00am to 4.30pm
 - 1 Susan Street, AUBURN NSW 2144 – between 8.00am to 4.30pm

3. Receiving Petitions

Petitions sent to Council, or addressed to Council's General Manager, will be acknowledged and directed to the relevant section within Council for consideration and action. Petitions may also be provided to Councillors directly.

In some cases, Council may be able to resolve the petitioners' request directly, by requesting the relevant Council staff to take appropriate action. In such cases, Council will notify the main petition contact to notify of the matter's resolution and explain what actions were taken.

In cases where a petition is tabled by a Councillor at a Council meeting, Council will consider the matter and decide what action (if any) will be taken. Any resolutions of Council will be published in the minutes of the Council meeting. The main petition contact will also be notified of the resolution of Council within 10 working days.

4. Excluded Petitions

In some cases, petitions may not comply with Council's Petition Guidelines and will be deemed an 'excluded petition'. The main petition contact will be notified if a petition is deemed an excluded petition, and reasons for the decision will be provided. The types of petitions listed below are deemed excluded petitions:

- Any petition relating to a planning decision already determined by Council staff, a Council committee, or a resolution of Council.
- Any petitions considered by Council to be vexatious, offensive or inappropriate.

5. Information Contained in Petitions

Information contained in petitions, including personal information, is deemed to be voluntarily offered by petition signatories on the understanding that their personal information contained in the petition would be forwarded to Council. Personal information of petition participants is collected by Council in accordance with section 8 of the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)*.

All records will be stored in Council's Electronic Records Management System and may be disclosed to Councillors, Council officers, consultants to Council or members of the public. Council is obligated to allow inspection of its records, in accordance with the provisions of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*.

RELATED DOCUMENTS AND COUNCIL POLICY

Code of Meeting Practice

RELATED LEGISLATION

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009

Local Government Act 1993

Local Government General Regulation 2005

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998