Tawstock Parish Council
Petition Policy

Tawstock Parish Council (The Council) welcomes petitions and recognises that they are one way in which people can let us know their concerns. All petitions sent or presented to The Council will receive an acknowledgement which will set out the action we plan to take.

Guidance for Submitting a Petition

Petitions submitted to The Council must be in regard to an issue it can potentially action and should include :

- A clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition and what action the petitioners would like The Council to take
- The name and address and written/electronic signature of any person supporting the petition
- Only the names of those people who live, work, or who own property within the Parish boundaries shall be accepted
- Have a minimum of 20 or 10% of the ward population as valid signatures
- Petitions should be accompanied by contact details, including postal address of the petition organiser. This is the person we will contact to explain how we will respond to the petition. The contact details of the petition organiser will not be placed on the website or otherwise be publicly published. If a petition does not identify a petition organiser, we will contact the first Five (5) signatories to the petition to agree on who should act as petition organiser.

How to Create a Petition

You can create a petition to be submitted by gaining "wet" signatures on a traditional paper petition, or by using an online e-petition platform. There are numerous ready-made petition websites available on the internet, and advice can also be found on https://campaignbootcamp.org/resources/how-to-set-up-apetition.

How to submit your petition

Petitions should be sent to the Clerk of The Council via email to tawstockparishcouncil@gmail.com. If you wish to submit a hard copy of a petition you should in the first instance email the clerk who will confirm such arrangements. Parishioners who are unable to sign the petition may also write to The Council in support of the petition, and their details will be added to the petition by The Clerk.

When to submit a petition

All business for inclusion on the agenda for The Council should be made at the meeting prior to the Council meeting it is to be discussed at. If members of the public wish to present a petition to The Council during public question time they may do so, but such discussion of

the petition will be included on the agenda for the following meeting. If you wish to have a petition discussed at a particular meeting, thought should be given to the appropriate notice needed for it to be included on the agenda. Details of our meeting dates can be found on our website.

What will the council do when it receives a petition?

The Clerk will send an acknowledgement to the Petition Organiser within 5 working days of receiving the petition. It will let them know what The Council plans to do with the petition and when they can expect to hear from the Council again.

Such acknowledgement will either state:

- What action has already been taken in relation to the Petition, and if such action is satisfactory as to cause it to be, the petition will be rendered as closed and resolved
- If the petition is to be discussed at a council meeting, when that meeting will take place and a reminder of public questions and involvement during Council Meetings
- If the petition needs more investigation before being discussed by The Council, what steps we plan to take

If the petition is about something over which The Council has no control, for example the state of local roads, we will consider whether we can make representation on behalf of the petitioners to the relevant council or organisation. This could consist of merely forwarding on the petition to the relevant body, but could include other steps. We will notify the Petition Organiser of any steps taken.

To ensure that people know what The Council is doing in response to the petitions we receive, the details of all petitions submitted will be published on our website, along with any action we have taken in relation to any petition, except in cases where this would be inappropriate. Wherever possible we will also publish all correspondence relating to the petition.

The Council will check all petitioner's details and will erase or strike off any duplicated or invalid petitioners listed. Such details will be made available to the petition organiser.

Discussion of a Petition at a Council Meeting

The petition organiser shall normally be invited to speak for no more than 5 minutes as part of the discussion. Parish Councillors shall not be entitled to speak during this time except at the discretion of the Chair.

Following the presentation of the petition, The Council will discuss the petition for no more than 15 minutes (unless the council agrees to discuss the matter for longer). The council shall also decide how to respond to the petition during such discussion. Such action could be:

- The petition may be accepted by The Council and such action may be taken in support of the desire of the petition
- The petition may be rejected because an equal or greater number of parishioners have submitted their opposition to the petition or after validation the petition is found to not have reached the level of support set out in this policy

- A petition could be rejected by The Council as it is materially the same as a previous petition already received and considered by The Council within the previous 12 months

The petition organiser shall receive confirmation of the action taken within Seven (7) working days of the decision being taken.

Petitions which are considered to be vexatious, abusive, or otherwise inappropriate will not be accepted. If a petition does not follow the guidelines set out in this policy The Council may decide not to discuss any such petition further. In these cases, acknowledgement of the petition will contain such details.

What can you do if you feel your petition is not being dealt with properly?

If you feel that we have not dealt with a petition in a proper manner, you can complain to the Council in accordance with our Complaints Procedure which can be found on our website.

Adopted 18th March 2025