

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

18 April 2012

Report of the Director of Legal Services

RECEIPT OF PETITION

Purpose of the Report

To note the receipt of a petition for debate by Full Council and consider the appropriate action to be taken.

Information and Analysis

A petition entitled "Save our Youth Services", containing in excess of 7,500 signatures, has been received by the County Council. An on-line petition relating to the same subject is also on-going with a closing date of 10 April 2012.

The petition states that:-

"We the undersigned oppose the County Council's plans to close its Youth Centres and make up to 157 Youth Workers redundant – Under the Conservative led government young people are at risk of becoming a lost generation, being the target of national and local spending cuts. Young people are facing the highest unemployment levels in decades, the trebling of tuition fees, the abolition of the Education Maintenance Allowance and in Derbyshire are having to pay more for public transport because of the b_line cuts. They now face the loss of youth services which provide access to a wide range of social and cultural activities, health advice and general support".

The County Council's Petition Scheme sets out how the Council will respond to petitions both in terms of the timescales for responses and also the specific action it may take.

The Scheme stipulates that where a petition contains more than 7,500 signatures it will be debated by the Full Council. This petition has exceeded the required number of signatures to trigger a Full Council debate. The final number of signatories to the petition will be reported to the meeting once the signatures have been checked and verified.

The Constitution provides that the petition organiser (or their nominee) will be given five minutes to present the petition at the meeting. The petition will then be discussed by Councillors for a maximum of 15 minutes. It is for the Council to decide how to respond to the petition. The Council may decide to take the action the petition requests, not to take the action requested for reasons put forward in the debate, or to commission further investigation into the matter, for example by a relevant committee. Where the issue is one on which the Council's Cabinet is required to make the final decision, the Council will decide whether to make recommendations to inform that decision. The petition organiser will receive written confirmation of the decision. This confirmation will also be published on the Council's website.

Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered; financial, legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health and transport considerations.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

To note the receipt of a petition and consider the appropriate action to be taken.

John McElvaney
Director of Legal Services