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| Version | Date | Author(s) | Comments |
| 1 st commenced | 07 December 2015 | SM | Draft for feedback |
| 2 nd | May 2016 | SM | Reviewed by ET |
| 3 rd | June 2016 | SM | Feedback from Commissioners. |
| 4 th | Jan 2020 | Gavin Dawson | Review with amendments to reflect section 17 of current Standing Orders |

1 Background

Local democracy in New Zealand not only provides for community members to elect representatives, but also for community members to have a say in shaping the policies that affect the community they live in. This involvement sometimes includes Council receiving petitions from the public. Community input into local government is an important element in the Governance process and in the democratic life of the country.

2 Objective

To strengthen and improve Council's decision-making through community involvement.

3 Definitions

A petition is a document addressed to Kaipara District Council, signed **by twenty (20) or more people**, that requests Council to take action on a matter of Council policy, or to redress a local or private grievance. The Chief Executive will determine whether the correspondence submitted qualifies as a petition under this policy.

Petitions are required to be in a format that is easily read and understood. This will enable a petition to be more effective and its recommendations or suggestions to have a greater impact on Council.

4 Policy Statement

A public petition will not be accepted by Kaipara District Council where:

- The petition is not addressed directly to Kaipara District Council;
- The matter should be addressed by the Ombudsman however has not been sent to an Ombudsman. The public can obtain advice on whether a matter is within the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman from the Office of the Ombudsman <http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/>;
- The petition contains multiple issues;
- Council has received a petition on this issue, or a similar issue, during the current Council's term (**Note: Council addressing one petition for and one against is appropriate**);
- The petition does not meet the guidelines contained within this policy.

When a petition is ready the public are required to request through the Chief Executive for arrangements to be made for it to be presented. The principal petitioner presents a petition by delivering it to the Chief Executive. It can be delivered in person, by mail or by e-mail.

The Chief Executive will ensure the petition is checked and if it complies with Council guidelines it is to be presented and included as an agenda item at the next Council meeting. If the petition does not comply it will be returned to the principal petitioner with an explanation.

The Chief Executive will refer the petition to Council with recommendations. Council must report on what decisions, if any, it has taken to implement the recommendations. The report will be contained in Council's minutes and the outcome will be reported back to the petitioner.

A summary of all petitions received and the recommendations will be placed on Kaipara District Council's website.

Guidelines for submitting a petition.

The principal petitioner is the individual or person representing an organisation whose name appears at the head of the petition. The principal petitioner is usually the person who has initiated or organised the petition and will be the contact person for the petition.

If the petitioner wishes to be heard, this needs to be stated clearly when submitting the petition. Speakers will be allocated five (5) minutes.

The petition needs to clearly identify the principal petitioner and relate to a single issue.

The petition must be no more than **one hundred fifty (150) words** and must not be disrespectful or use offensive language or statements with malice. It must contain at **least twenty (20) signatures**.

The petition may be presented in either English or Māori **at least five (5) business days before the Council meeting it is to be presented to**. The Chair may order that any petition be translated and/or printed in another language.

Unless incapacitated, a person must sign a petition personally (a person signing on behalf of an incapacitated person must state this fact).

Signatures must be original, and signatories must include their full names and addresses.

Petitions that relate to a submissions process are not covered by this policy and must be submitted through that specific submission process.