

Report to: Overview Committee

Date of Meeting 20 February 2025

Heading/Title: Online Petition Scheme – Review of Petition Scheme

Cabinet Member(s): Communications & Democracy (Cllr Sarah Jackson) and Council Corporate Coordination & External Engagement (Cllr John Loudoun)

Director: Governance (Melanie Wellman)

Author and Directorate: Andrew Melhuish, Democratic Services Manager

Contact Details andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk

Key decision: No

If a Key Decision has it appeared on Forward Plan: N/A

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The Council currently operates a petition scheme allowing members of the public the ability to submit petitions as a way that people can let the Council know their concerns.
- 1.2 The traditional methods of petitioning can often be time-consuming and inaccessible to many community members. An e-petition platform would modernise this process, making it more convenient and efficient. The ability to submit an online e-petition would ensure that the Council offers the public a range of methods for submitting a petition.
- 1.3 Work is currently underway to develop a solution to include an option for the public to submit petitions electronically through the Council's website. It is hoped that a solution for this will be in place during the summer of 2025.
- 1.4 To ensure that there is a suitable process in place it is necessary to review the current Petition Scheme to meet the needs of a digital petition platform.
- 1.5 The Constitution Working Group is currently working on reviewing the Constitution and have considered an amended wording to reflect that petitions can be submitted through the Council's website.
- 1.6 An updated Petition Scheme is attached to this report and the Overview Committee are invited to review the proposed changes which have been

highlighted in the document and any comments will be submitted to the Constitution Working Group who will make the final recommendations on the Petition Scheme to a future full Council meeting.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Overview Committee review the proposed wording of the petition scheme and to make any comments on the wording of the scheme and to submit the committees feedback to the Constitution Working Group.