

By: Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager  
To: Corporate Policy Overview Committee - 25 January 2008  
Subject: **Local Petitions and Call for Action**

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## Introduction

1. (1) The Department of Communities and Local Government has recently published a consultation document "Local Petitions and Calls for Action" attached as an appendix to this report.

(2) The consultation document raises a number of consultation questions and invites responses by 20 March 2008.

## Consultation Questions

2. (1) The Committee are invited to express their initial views on the consultation questions:-

### *Petitions*

(a) The Government believes there should be a statutory duty on local authorities to respond to local petitions. What conditions must be met before a local authority is required to respond formally to a petition? (*Paragraph 19*)

(b) In particular, how should we define the level of support required before a petition must get a formal, substantive response?

- By a fixed number of signatures
- By a percentage of the electorate in the area?
- By a hybrid of the two?
- or in some other way (*paragraph 25*)

### *Calls for Action*

(c) What if any matters should be excluded from the call for action? (*Paragraph 40*)

(d) What guidance should Government provide on the operation of the councillor call for action? (*Paragraph 41*)

### *Overall*

(e) Taken together, would petitions and calls for action sufficiently empower communities to intervene with their elected representatives? Should we contemplate other measures? (*Paragraph 43*)

(f) Do you have other views on the operation of the new duty to respond to petitions and the call for action?

### **Way Forward**

3. The Committee are asked to establish an Informal Member Group (5:2:1) to prepare a response for the Cabinet's consideration on 17 March 2008.

### **Recommendations**

4. The Committee are asked to express its initial views on the consultation questions and are invited to establish an Informal Member Group to prepare a proposed response to the consultation for the Cabinet's consideration on 17 March 2008.

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Background Information: *Nil*