



**Non Qualifying Petition - Retention of the TTRO on Montague Street, West Worthing**

**Report by the Monitoring Officer**

**Executive Summary**

**1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1. A Petition has been received by the Monitoring Officer from the Petition Organiser, Sarah Williams.
- 1.2. The petition contains less than 1000 signatures and is therefore a non-qualifying petition in accordance with the Worthing Borough Council Petition Scheme.
- 1.3. The Petition is for the Leader of the Council to determine.

**2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1. The Leader of the Council is recommended to determine the Petition and take what action he sees fit, in accordance with the Worthing Borough Council Petition Scheme.

### **3.0 Context**

- 3.1. The Worthing Borough Council adopted Petition Scheme is available on the Council's website:

<https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/media/Media,155455,smxx.pdf>

The petition is addressed to the Worthing Borough Council.

- 3.2. The details of the petition state:

To reinstate the TTRO on Montague Street, West Worthing, for the benefit of the young families, the elderly and disabled to enjoy the pedestrianised area and for the traders in hospitality to continue their business outdoors.

The purpose of the petition can be found at Appendix 1 to this report. A link to the e petition can be found below:

[https://www.change.org/p/worthing-borough-council-economy-department-keep-montague-street-west-worthing-safe-pedestrianised?utm\\_content=cl\\_sharecopy\\_29331453\\_en-GB%3A6&recruiter=1210459622&utm\\_source=share\\_petition&utm\\_medium=copylink&utm\\_campaign=share\\_petition&utm\\_term=share\\_petition](https://www.change.org/p/worthing-borough-council-economy-department-keep-montague-street-west-worthing-safe-pedestrianised?utm_content=cl_sharecopy_29331453_en-GB%3A6&recruiter=1210459622&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=copylink&utm_campaign=share_petition&utm_term=share_petition)

### **4.0 Background**

- 4.1. Qualifying petitions are defined in the Petition Scheme as those petitions containing more than 1,000 signatures. Non-qualifying petitions are defined in this scheme as petitions with more than 50 signatories but less than 1,000. This petition, which contains 309 signatures, of those living, working or studying within the Borough, is therefore classified as a non-qualifying petition.
- 4.2. The Council's Petition Scheme provides that non-qualifying petitions shall be referred to the relevant decision-maker. Where the decision-maker is an Executive Member or an Officer they shall meet with the Petition Organiser to discuss the contents of the petition. Following which they shall determine how to respond to it. Once a decision is made the decision-maker will notify the Petition Organiser in writing of their decision.
- 4.3. In respect of this petition, retaining/reinstalling the Covid measures TTRO road closure in Montague Street (West) is an Executive function. The petition

fulfills the requirements in the Petition Scheme for being accepted by the Monitoring Officer. The Petition Organiser, Sarah Williams, has been advised that the petition has been accepted and referred to the Leader of the Council as the relevant Councillor.

4.4. The Leader of Worthing Borough Council should therefore meet with Sarah Williams to discuss the contents of the petition. The Leader must then make a decision as to any action to be taken in respect of the decision. The Leader will then issue a decision notice setting out their response to the petition and any action to be taken by the Council. The decision notice will be published within 5 working days of the decision and the Petition Organiser notified of the outcome.

4.5. The Council's response to a petition, whether qualifying or non-qualifying, will depend on what the petition asks for but may include one or more of the following:

- taking the action requested;
- considering the petition at a Full Council meeting;
- holding an enquiry into the matter;
- undertaking research into the matter;
- holding a public meeting;
- holding a consultation;
- holding a meeting with the petitioners;
- referring the petition for consideration by the Overview & Scrutiny or Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee;
- writing to the Petition Organiser setting out the Council's views about the request in the petition;
- deciding not to agree to do what is asked in the petition.

## **5.0 Financial Implications**

5.1. There are no financial implications in the Leader considering the petition. There may be potential financial implications arising out of any action taken in response to the petition.

## **6.0 Legal Implications**

6.1. Full details of the Borough Council's adopted Petition Scheme can be found in Part 5 of the Council's Constitution.

6.2. The requirement to have a Petition Scheme was contained in the Local Democracy, Economic Construction and Development Act 2009 (as amended).

### **Background Papers**

Worthing Borough Council Constitution

### **Officer Contact Details:-**

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## **Sustainability & Risk Assessment**

### **1. Economic**

Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **2. Social**

#### **2.1 Social Value**

Matter considered and no issues identified.

#### **2.2 Equality Issues**

Matter considered and no issues identified.

#### **2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)**

Matter considered and no issues identified

#### **2.4 Human Rights Issues**

Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **3. Environmental**

Matter considered and no issues identified

### **4. Governance**

The Council has a Petition Scheme which has been adopted formally as part of the Council's Constitution. All petitions submitted to the Council should be determined in accordance with the published Scheme.

## APPENDIX 1

It was with considerable surprise that we received news of the removal of the road closure on Montague Street (West Worthing). We had been assured by various departments that it would remain closed until September at least, and possibly beyond; therefore giving us and other hospitality businesses the confidence to spend a lot of money on making the newly licensed pavement areas safe and comfortable for customers. When the TTRO came into being it was met with appreciation and pleasant surprise; partly it was of such great benefit to us personally but also because the West End in general has suffered such neglect over the years/received very little assistance (for instance: the removal of the lighting just before Christmas resulting in a dark and dingy atmosphere which made some of our more vulnerable clients and/or neighbours feel unsafe). Meanwhile, then as now, the Portland Road and Warwick Street areas were given every possible aid; beautifully lit, decorated and pedestrianised.

Although the road closure was soon followed by total lock-down and the near financial disaster for hospitality, the benefits to the non-business/local residents has been stunning. The young families, the elderly and disabled residents (not to mention their carers and the wide array of motorised and non-motorised support vehicles) – have enjoyed the safety of not being narrowly run over by monster vehicles insanely attempting to use this short and narrow stretch of road. We do not believe the continued (or even permanent) closure of Montague Street would effect any of the surrounding roads. We sincerely hope that in event of the road reopening those residents who have got so used to their new found safety can adapt quickly and avoid fatal injury.

The enormous amount of hard work and expenditure over the last two years making this street the popular destination it has become – not just us but also the lovely new Bulgarian restaurant Sofia, Morley's, Yamu Yamu, Whisk[e]y Rooms and Malt etc. – we believe deserves some show of support from our local council. All through the closure we have made the best of what we were given and it truly has been a business game saver; were it not for the two summer months that we benefited from the closure last year I dare say we would have all been bankrupt by now. Consequently we were all hoping for a decision of not only common sense but some recognition and reward for our success in making a tired, neglected end of town so colourful and vibrant.

Hopefully soon we will be able to resume our charity open mic evenings, poetry and word nights, educational art classes and other community events/opportunities; competing with the constant and thunderous flow of needless and dangerous traffic is not something we are relishing and we seriously fear for the survival of the hard working businesses if the street returns to its former state.