

COUNCIL

26 SEPTEMBER 2023

REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A.2 E-PETITION TO COUNCIL: 'BRIGHTLINGSEA STENCH'

(Report prepared by Ian Ford)

In accordance with the Council's approved scheme for dealing with petitions, I formally report the receipt of an e-petition submitted by Matthew Court, as lead petitioner on 31 August 2023. The e-petition is validly signed by 110 persons and states:-

"We the undersigned petition the Council to:-

- Immediately reopen the investigation into the persistent stench issue in Brightlingsea.*
- Engage external environmental experts, if necessary, to support and expedite the investigation into the source and nature of the problem.*
- Provide regular, transparent updates to the public on the progress of the investigation, findings, proposed solutions, and expected timelines.*
- Actively coordinate with the Environment Agency and any other relevant authorities to advocate for the needs of Brightlingsea residents and seek their intervention if required.*
- Implement temporary measures to mitigate the impact of the stench on the residents of Brightlingsea while a long-term solution is being found.*
- Form a community task force, including residents, council members, and experts, to ensure direct community participation in the ongoing efforts to resolve this issue.*
- Carry out a comprehensive assessment to understand the potential health impacts of the stench on Brightlingsea's residents."*

The petitioners' justification for this e-petition is that:-

"The persistent stench that has plagued the residents of Brightlingsea for over a year is more than just a nuisance; it's a matter of public health, well-being, and the quality of life for every person living and working in the affected area, including the school which has its main playing field nearby. It has turned what should be a pleasant environment into a place where people cannot even open their windows or spend time outside without discomfort.

The initial investigation by Tendring District Council was a step in the right direction, but the premature closure of the investigation without finding a source or solution is deeply disappointing and frankly, unacceptable. This decision gives the impression of a council that is either unable or unwilling to fully address the problem, which is a disservice to the people it is supposed to represent and protect.

This e-Petition is not just about the stench; it's about the role of Tendring District Council and councillors as our elected representatives. It's about how we, as a community, expect our concerns to be addressed, our voices to be heard, and our

wellbeing to be prioritised. The actions listed in this petition reflect those expectations.

We understand that finding a solution may not be easy or immediate, but we insist that the council take these necessary steps, engage with the necessary bodies, utilise all available resources, and provide the leadership and representation that Brightlingsea needs and deserves. We look forward to seeing a renewed effort from the Council in tackling this ongoing issue and restoring the quality of life in this part of our beloved town.”

In accordance with the Council's approved scheme for dealing with petitions, this matter will now be investigated and a report will be prepared and presented to the Cabinet on the basis that it contains between 30 and 500 signatures and relates to a matter that is an Executive function under the law.

Members will be aware that the next practicable ordinary meeting of the Cabinet is on 6 October 2023.

At that meeting, and in accordance with the Council's approved scheme, Mr Court, the lead petitioner, will be invited to address the Cabinet, explain the petition and outline the action that the petitioners would like the Council to take. Members will then discuss the petition and decide what action, if any, should be taken. Cabinet's decision will be confirmed in writing to Mr. Court and the decision will be published on the Council's website via the Minutes of that meeting.

As the sole purpose of this report under the Petitions Scheme is to inform Council of the receipt of Mr. Court's petition, it is therefore:-

RECOMMENDED - That the contents of this report be received and noted.

**IAN
DAVIDSON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS LIST FOR
REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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E-Petition received from Matthew Court on 31 August 2023.