

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday, 8 October 2013

Religious Observance from Non-Denominational Schools

– Referral from the Petitions Committee

Item number	8.2
Report number	
Wards	ALL

Links

Coalition pledges	See attached report
Council outcomes	See attached report
Single Outcome Agreement	See attached report

Carol Campbell

Head of Legal, Risk and Compliance

Contact: Hannah King, Committee Officer

E-mail: hannah.king@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 529 4121

Contact: Stuart McLean, Committee Officer

E-mail: stuart.mclean@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 469 4106

Terms of Referral

- Religious Observance from Non-Denominational Schools

Terms of referral

On 3 June 2013 the Petitions Committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate Governance outlining 2 petitions 'Remove Religious Observance from Non-Denominational Schools' and 'Retain Religious Observance in Non-Denominational Schools'

The Committee also heard a deputation in regard to both petitions from the Church of Scotland Standing Committee on Education.

The Petitions Committee agreed:

- 1) To refer the Petitions to the Education, Children and Families Committee; and
- 2) To ask the Director of Children and Families to provide further information on:
 - i) the estimated cost of holding a referendum.
 - ii) the current position for religious observance in schools in Edinburgh.
 - iii) what constitutes religious observance.
 - iv) details of the training that Head Teachers were provided on religious observance.
 - v) details of the organisations that visit schools in relation to religious observance and what activities they provide.
 - vi) details of further discussions with both sets of petitioners, the deputation and other interested groups.

For decision/action

The Petitions Committee has referred the actions noted above and the petitions entitled 'Remove Religious Observance from Non-Denominational Schools' and 'Retain Religious Observance in Non-Denominational Schools' outlined in the attached report to the Education, Children & Families Committee.

Background reading / external references

Petitions Committee 3 June 2013

Links

Coalition pledges	See attached report
Council outcomes	See attached report
Single Outcome Agreement	See attached report
Appendices	Report by the Director of Corporate Governance

Petitions Committee

10.00am, Monday 3 June 2013

Petitions for Consideration: Overview Report

Item number	■
Report number	
Wards	City Wide

Links

Coalition pledges	
Council outcomes	CO23 & CO26
Single Outcome Agreement	

Alastair D Maclean

Director of Corporate Governance

Contact: Hannah Scott, Committee Officer / Jody Mackay, Project Officer

E-mail: petitions@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 529 4121

Executive summary

Petitions for Consideration: Overview Report

Summary

The Committee is asked to consider two petitions at this meeting.

Valid petitions –

Remove Religious Observance from Non-Denominational Schools

A valid petition entitled 'Remove Religious Observance from Non-Denominational Schools' has been received. The petition received 1092 signatures online. Of these signatures, 896 were considered valid and 196 were considered invalid. Signatures were considered invalid as the signatory was not registered on the electoral roll in Edinburgh.

Details of this petition are set out in Appendix one.

Retain Religious Observance in Non-Denominational Schools

A valid petition entitled 'Retain Religious Observance in Non-Denominational Schools' has been received. The petition received 1852 signatures online and three written submissions. Of these 1855 signatures, 1522 were considered valid and 333 were considered invalid. Signatures were considered invalid as the signatory was not registered on the electoral roll in Edinburgh.

Details of this petition are set out in Appendix one.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to consider the petitions:

- 1.1 'Remove Religious Observance from Non-Denominational Schools' as set out in 5.1(a) of Appendix one.
- 1.2 'Retain Religious Observance from Non-Denominational Schools' as set out in 5.1(b) of Appendix one.

Measures of success

There are no immediate measures of success applicable to this report.

Financial impact

There is no financial impact arising from the consideration of these petitions.

Equalities impact

There is no equalities impact arising from the consideration of these petitions.

Environmental impact

There is no environmental impact arising from the consideration of these petitions.

Consultation and engagement

There are no consultation or engagement requirements at this part of the process.

Background reading / external references

[Petitions webpages](#)

[Council Webcasting](#)

Links

Coalition pledges

Council outcomes

CO23 Well engaged and well informed – Communities and individuals are empowered and supported to improve local outcomes and foster a sense of community

CO26 The Council engages with stakeholders and works in partnership to improve services and deliver on agreed objectives

Single Outcome

Agreement

Appendices

Petitions for Consideration

Appendix 2

Item Number	Date Received	Petition Title and Petition Statement	Wards affected	Total Number of Signatories
5.1(a)	1 February 2013	<p>Remove religious observance from non-denominational schools</p> <p>In accordance with Section 8 of the Education (Scotland) Act of 1980, the City of Edinburgh Council is requested to organise a poll of electors in the city on a proposal to discontinue religious observance in non-denominational schools in the city.</p>	Citywide	896 signatures
5.1(b)	25 February 2013	<p>Retain religious observance in non-denominational schools</p> <p>We wish the council to consider this counter petition where we would like to retain religious observance within our non-denominational schools.</p>	City Wide	1522 Signatures

