

Petitions Committee

Minutes (PET(3)-15-09)

Date: Tuesday 10 November 2009

Time: 09.30 - 10.18

Venue: Committee Room 1, Y Senedd, National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff Bay

Assembly Members in attendance

Val Lloyd AM, Swansea East (Chair)

Andrew RT Davies AM, South Wales Central

Michael German AM, South Wales East

Bethan Jenkins AM, South Wales West

Officials

Alun Davidson, Clerk

Naomi Stocks, Clerk

Andrew Minnis, Deputy Clerk

Lisa Salkeld, Legal Advisor

Item 1: Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions

Item 2: New Petitions

(i) P-03-255 Special needs education provision in mainstream schools

The Committee considered this petition for the first time and noted the Chair's correspondence with the Minister for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning.

(ii) P-03-262 Academi Heddwch Cymru / Wales Peace Institute

The Committee considered this petition for the first time and noted the Chair's correspondence with the First Minister.

Action

The Committee agreed to:

Contact the petitioner to notify them of the Committee's intention to take evidence at a future meeting following receipt of the First Minister's reply.

Item 3: Updates to previous petitions

(i) P-03-099 Multi-user pathway at Talybont-on-Usk

The Committee considered an update to this petition.

Action

The Committee agreed to:

Write to the Deputy First Minister asking when the decision on whether the scheme will be included in next year's budget will be taken.

(ii) P-03-170 Mencap Cymru

The Committee considered an update to this petition.

Action

The Committee agreed to:

Write to the petitioner notifying them of the Minister's response and seeking their views on whether the reply addresses the issues raised by the petition

Write to the Chair of the Equality of Opportunity Committee asking if they would be prepared to consider the issues raised by the petition.

(iii) P-03-172 Restore the Swansea-Cork Ferry

The Committee considered an update to this petition.

Action

The Committee agreed to:

Write to the Deputy First Minister to request further information on the funding required, in particular whether the additional expenditure is required in Swansea or Cork, and whether it is anticipated that the Irish Government will contribute

Table a question at the British-Irish Assembly to seek their views on the development of the service.

(iv) P-03-181 Pernicious Anaemia

The Committee considered an update to this petition.

Action

The Committee agreed to:

Write to the petitioners notifying them of the Minister's response and asking whether they have taken steps to encourage manufacturers to apply to licence additional products for the treatment of pernicious anaemia.

(v) P-03-188 Special Care Baby Unit

The Committee considered an update to this petition.

Action

The Committee agreed to:

Write to the Minister for Health and Social Services asking for more detailed information on the pressure created on recruitment of doctors by immigration rules, including specific examples of the problems faced, and approaches made to the UK Borders Agency

Write to the UK Borders Agency notifying them of the work of the Petitions Committee and:

Asking when the review of immigration rules will be completed

Asking whether the rules affecting recruitment of doctors from overseas will be reconsidered

Inviting representatives of the agency to give evidence after the Committee has received a further submission from the Minister for Health and Social Services.

(vi) P-03-207 Support for the unemployed in Monmouth

The Committee considered an update to this petition.

Action

The Committee agreed to:

Write to the District Manager of Job Centre Plus, South East Wales notifying him of the petitioner's response and asking how the additional funding has been used to benefit the inhabitants of Monmouthshire, and whether any further action may be expected to increase the service.

(vii) P-03-208 Historic Counties

The Committee considered an update to this petition.

Action

The Committee agreed to:

Write to the petitioner notifying them of the Minister's reply and asking them to provide further information to support the view that the Minister should instigate a review of boundaries.

(viii) P-03-213/235 Abandon the Badger Cull (Secret World Wildlife

Rescue and RSPCA petitions)

The Committee considered an update to this petition.

Action

The Committee agreed to:

Close both petitions as the National Assembly for Wales has fully considered the issue

Write to the Rural Development Sub-Committee notifying them that both petitions have been closed and asking that the Sub-Committee take note of petition P-03-235 in considering the effects of the cull.

(ix) P-03-220 Lower the speed limit on the A40 near Abergavenny

The Committee considered an update to this petition.

Action

The Committee agreed to:

Commission legal advice on the application of newly released guidance on "Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales" to the issues raised by the petition

Write to the Deputy First Minister asking, with reference to his letter of 16 June, whether additional funding is likely to become available before the end of the year.

(x) P-03-234 Wales needs more native trees

The Committee considered an update to this petition.

Action

The Committee agreed to:

Invite the Woodland Trust and the Forestry Commission to give evidence to the Committee at successive meetings.

(xi) P-03-237 Welsh Countryside

The Committee considered an update to this petition.

Action

The Committee agreed to:

Write to the petitioner to seek a response to the Minister's letter.

(xii) P-03-238/241 Pollution of the Burry Inlet / Save Our Sewers - Llanelli Star

The Committee considered an update to this petition.

Action

The Committee agreed to:

Write to the Minister for Environment Sustainability and Housing seeking further clarification of the actions taken to address the issues raised by both petitions

Write to the Chair of the Sustainability Committee asking what action the Committee is taking on the issue.

(xiii) P-03-239 Lifelong Learning in Welsh Universities

The Committee considered an update to this petition.

Action

The Committee agreed to:

Write to the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales notifying them of the petition and asking, in the light of comments from the Minister for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning, how funding is allocated for lifelong learning

Write to Higher Education Wales notifying them of the petition and asking how universities allocate funding for lifelong learning.

(xiv) P-03-240 Improvements to the A40 in Llanddewi Velfrey

The Committee considered an update to this petition.

Action

The Committee agreed to:

Consider the petition in the light of legal advice on the newly released guidance on "Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales".

(xv) P-03-256 Additional Trains to Fishguard

In view of the current Enterprise and Learning Committee inquiry into "The Future of Rail Infrastructure in Wales "the Petitions Committee agreed to consider this petition as an addition to the agenda.

Action

The Committee agreed to:

Write to the Enterprise and Learning Committee notifying it of the petition and asking that it be considered as part of their inquiry into rail infrastructure.

Committee Service

November 2009