



**Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru  
The National Assembly for Wales**

**Y Pwyllgor Deisebau  
The Petitions Committee**

**Dydd Mawrth, 24 Tachwedd 2009  
Tuesday, 24 November 2009**

**Cynnwys**  
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Cofnodir y trafodion hyn yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynddi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal,  
cynhwysir cyfieithiad Saesneg o gyfraniadau yn y Gymraeg.

These proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee.  
In addition, an English translation of Welsh speeches is included.

**Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol**  
**Committee members in attendance**

Andrew R.T. Davies	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Bethan Jenkins	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Val Lloyd	Llafur (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) Labour (Committee Chair)

**Swyddogion y Cynulliad yn bresennol**  
**Assembly officials in attendance**

Joanest Jackson	Uwch-gynghorydd Cyfreithiol Senior Legal Adviser
Andrew Minnis	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Naomi Stocks	Clerc Clerk

*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 9.29 a.m.*  
*The meeting began at 9.29 a.m.*

**Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau, Dirprwyon a Datgan Buddiannau**  
**Introduction, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest**

[1] **Val Lloyd:** Good morning and welcome to this morning's meeting of the Petitions Committee. I have an apology from Mike German, and there is no substitute this morning. We are not expecting a fire alarm test today, so if you hear one, it is the real thing, and please exit via the door. Please switch off all BlackBerrys, mobile phones and any other such devices because they interfere with our broadcasting equipment. I remind everyone that you can hear the interpretation on channel 1 of the headsets and that there is amplification of the verbatim proceedings on channel 0.

9.30 a.m.

**Deisebau Newydd**  
**New Petitions**

[2] **Val Lloyd:** We have four new petitions this morning. We will start with the first, P-03-244, which calls on the Assembly to urge the Welsh Assembly Government to create a register of local authority road safety schemes. This petition was raised by Vivienne Hadley and collected 124 signatures.

[3] As Chair of the committee, following our agreed protocol, I have written to the Deputy First Minister to notify him of the petition and to ask for any plans to address the issues raised. Do Members have any other response?

[4] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** The petition is well intentioned and it focuses on something that many Members deal with daily—concerns about road safety and projects that may have

been held in abeyance or that have been pending for some considerable time and have become lost in the administrative process. It is good to hear that the Deputy First Minister will come back to us on this, as in the normal course of events. However, from the administrative point of view, would it be appropriate for the Welsh Local Government Association to be approached about this so that we could hear its view on such a collation of information, because this is a local government issue?

[5] **Val Lloyd:** Yes, it is a local government issue. Would you prefer to wait until we get a reply from the Deputy First Minister? I agree that it is a WLGA matter.

[6] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** It would be good to try to get that information so that we can progress the petition. We only have one more meeting before the Christmas recess.

[7] **Val Lloyd:** Yes, so it would be a good idea to get things started before the recess. Bethan, are you happy with that?

[8] **Bethan Jenkins:** Yes.

[9] **Val Lloyd:** Fine. We will take that course of action.

[10] Our second new petition is P-03-246. It was raised by Arfon Hughes and collected 53 signatures. It asks the Assembly to urge the Welsh Assembly Government to conduct a review of the need for a 50 mph speed limit between junctions 24 and 28 of the M4. Again, I have written on the committee's behalf to the Deputy First Minister in his role as the Minister for the Economy and Transport. Are there any comments or suggestions? Should we await his reply?

[11] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I would also like to approach the administrative body—I am not sure whether the organisation is called the highways agency Wales or traffic management Wales. The administration of motorways in Wales is slightly different from that in England. It would be good to try to get an idea of why the advice to implement that speed limit was given to the Deputy First Minister from traffic management Wales, or the highways agency Wales, because it is a large stretch of road and we are all aware of some of the horrendous accidents that have taken place on it. In my first year in the Assembly, there were two accidents that completely shut down that part of the M4, so, from a safety point of view, we can well understand that speed limit. However, there must be some interested views on the management side of the motorways in terms of why the Deputy First Minister implemented this speed limit.

[12] **Val Lloyd:** The Minister would have done that on the advice of some body. Shall we wait for his response so that we know exactly who gave him that advice? In this instance, we had better wait for his reply; he could say that he received advice from elsewhere. If he does not include that information in his response, we should certainly investigate further along the lines that you suggested.

[13] Our third petition is P-03-254, on third-party representations at planning meetings. This was raised by councillor Nic Hodges and collected 94 signatures. He asks the Assembly to urge the Welsh Assembly Government to introduce the right for third parties to speak at local planning authority meetings. He has provided us with information on what a range of different authorities do, which is quite helpful. Did that information come from him or from the committee secretariat?

[14] **Ms Stocks:** From him.

[15] **Val Lloyd:** I have already written on your behalf to the Minister for Environment,

Sustainability and Housing, asking for her views on third-party representation at planning meetings. I think that most authorities allow you between three and five minutes in which to speak at such meetings.

[16] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** It is a fine balance between the rights of the local authority—because the members of that authority are elected by the community—and how that authority sees fit to run its affairs and the Welsh Assembly Government taking an active interest in setting guidelines on how certain policies should be pursued at a local level. This is quite an interesting petition in that it strikes a chord in terms of how far the Welsh Assembly Government should go to dictate how local democracy should function.

[17] Looking at the evidence provided, there are obviously differences across authorities in how they take evidence. For example, some allow people to speak, but how long they allow people to speak varies. Others constrain people and do not allow them to speak. I think we should wait for the Minister to come back to us, so that we can see whether he sees that he has a role in this.

[18] **Bethan Jenkins:** This may again be a matter for the Welsh Local Government Association. If there are inconsistencies between councils, the rights of citizens vary between council areas. The WLGA perhaps needs to look at this again in relation to guidance from itself, let alone from the Welsh Assembly Government. I know that we have had useful information provided here from different councils, but perhaps we could consider writing to the councils ourselves because if—and I do not mean to interfere—we write to them as the Petitions Committee, they may be more inclined to respond and to reassess what they are doing or to look at this from a different perspective. Some councils did not give the petitioner any response whatsoever, possibly because they are not in his area. We may get a more holistic view if we contact them.

[19] **Val Lloyd:** I think that you are both absolutely right. We should wait for the Minister to respond, but bearing in mind what Bethan has said—and we have that on record—we may find that we also need to write to the WLGA and/or to all councils. You are right that there should be parity. However, there is a line to be drawn between ensuring parity and allowing individual councils to formulate their own policy.

[20] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** A council might not do the same as other councils in this respect, but how it determines on planning procedure, or how efficient it is in determining applications, might be completely different. So, you have to look at the whole picture of the planning process in a particular unitary authority to understand exactly how it arrives at its decisions. Some councils have far greater officer-delegated powers than others. Others make greater use of committees, and the councillors themselves determine applications. We are all aware of how contentious planning applications can be.

[21] **Val Lloyd:** It is a very difficult issue. This is a very interesting petition, which has raised, in some ways, the principles involved, as well as the specific topic. So, we will wait for the Minister's letter and then we will take things forward.

[22] The final new petition is P-03-256, which we have received from two young people, Sam Faulkner and Joanne Griffiths. It calls upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Assembly Government to provide funding for five additional trains per day to Fishguard—from Carmarthen to Fishguard, rather than from anywhere else, because they are mindful that there is difficulty on the line west of Swansea before Carmarthen. I have, of course, written to the Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy Transport on your behalf.

[23] **Bethan Jenkins:** I know that we were told before the committee started that the

Enterprise and Learning Committee is looking into the issue of rail transport. We should look at what was said in that committee and see whether there is anything that we can gather from that in relation to this particular petition. Perhaps we could then refer this petition to that particular committee at a later stage.

[24] **Val Lloyd:** That is very sensible. We will have that part of the transcript for our next meeting.

[25] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Would I be right in thinking that putting on more trains would come under the Arriva Trains Wales franchise?

[26] **Val Lloyd:** Yes, it would be Arriva Trains Wales for that section.

[27] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** It is the local train, is it not? At one time, it would have been the intercity train, would it not?

[28] **Val Lloyd:** It has been a long time since the intercity train went to Fishguard. There used to be a boat train morning and evening, which was very well used, but times have changed. The intercity 125 stops at Carmarthen; not everyone goes to Carmarthen, but a few do.

[29] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** But this petition is—

[30] **Val Lloyd:** It is a local one, so it would be Arriva Trains Wales.

[31] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** So it is within the competence of the Assembly.

[32] **Val Lloyd:** Yes. Thank you. I will just say, and I am sure that committee members will agree, that it is a pleasure to see young people taking an interest in their community.

9.40 a.m.

### **Y Wybodaeth Ddiweddaraf am Ddeisebau Blaenorol Updates to Previous Petitions**

[33] **Val Lloyd:** We have 10 updates this morning. The first one is P-03-205, on keeping Abergavenny livestock market, which has generated a lot of action. We have received an update from the Minister for Social Justice, and he indicates that an amendment to the Abergavenny Improvement Acts, extending their scope to cover Monmouthshire as a whole, may be possible, but he stresses and reiterates that no detailed consideration has been given to it as no application for repeal has been made. The Minister's reply has been included.

[34] This petition has been ongoing for some time, and we have collected evidence from both sides, so to speak. I wonder whether it would be helpful if we were to write to the Minister, enclosing all the submissions made by all the relevant parties, and to ask that the committee be notified once an application to repeal the Acts is received. I do not think that there is anything else that we can do until an application is made. What are your views?

[35] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** The thing is that we cannot predetermine an application, if one is made at all. I note from the papers that the petitioner takes issue with the petition procedure. I am not sure whether the lead petitioner is speaking on behalf of the group or speaking as an individual petitioner, but he seems to have a grievance with how the petition process has evolved, and I am not sure whether that is due to a misconception about what this committee has the power to do, because, in one of his letters, he was talking of wishing the Petitions Committee to make a recommendation should an application be forthcoming. We

need to be bold in saying that that clearly cannot be done. It is disappointing to read of a petitioner having reservations or doubts about the petition process, but we have gathered a weight of evidence, some of which I notice contradicts the evidence that the petitioners presented, as the Farmers' Union of Wales has clearly stated its support for the building of a new market, despite being used by the petitioners as an example of those that want to maintain Abergavenny market.

[36] I hope that the clerk will contact the petitioners to explain that we have done what we can within our remit as the Petitions Committee, because it is always regrettable to hear people say that they feel that the process has perhaps let them down. I generally feel that, in gathering the evidence from all the interested parties, we have done what we can in the absence of an actual application to repeal or amend the legislation that they want to see amended.

[37] **Val Lloyd:** Thank you, Andrew; I am glad that those comments are on record. Bethan, do you want to add anything?

[38] **Bethan Jenkins:** I concur with Andrew. I am concerned about the suggestion in the e-mail that discussions have taken place behind closed doors, as that is certainly not the case. We have received all the evidence and considered it. It is not for us to make a suggestion, and it would be pre-emptive for us to do so anyway, so I would like it on record that we are looking at this matter holistically, and we will assess all the evidence neutrally.

[39] **Val Lloyd:** I concur with what both of you have said, and I am pleased that that will be on the record. Shall we also write to the lead petitioner to notify him of our decision, and ask him to contact the committee should he become aware of any further plans by the council to request a repeal of the Acts, which is within our remit? I see that you agree.

[40] The next petition is P-03-216, on IVF treatment. This petition attracted over 4,000 signatures and asks us to urge the Welsh Assembly Government to set out a formal process that will lead to the implementation of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidelines on fertility that three full cycles be made free of charge. Matters have moved on slightly, because the Minister announced last week that, from April next year, two free cycles will be available on the NHS.

[41] **Bethan Jenkins:** I am happy for us to write to the petitioners to seek their views on what the Minister has done, but I am mindful of the fact that the Minister, while under massive financial constraints, has put another cycle on offer, and that is a lot more than people expected at this time in the campaign. I am happy to seek the petitioners' views, but it is important to note that the Minister has taken all the campaign's considerations on board. I am sure that, if she could, if she had the money, she would put the three cycles in place.

[42] **Val Lloyd:** I am sure that she would.

[43] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I was at the event last Tuesday, sponsored by Angela Burns, where this announcement was made. One thing worries me, and perhaps we can seek clarification on that matter. We can understand the financial implications of implementing the guidelines, but what procedures can the Minister put in place so that the two cycles will be made available and can go some way towards meeting what this petition asks for?

[44] It is not just the announcement; it is the logistical exercise of ensuring capacity in NHS Wales to meet the two cycles. I was led to believe that one of the obstacles here, along with finance, was ensuring sufficient staff and clinics to deal with the increased numbers coming forward for the second cycle, after the first had failed. If we could get some clarity on exactly how this announcement could be implemented, that might go some way towards

satisfying the petitioners. The petition is asking for three cycles, as NICE guidelines recommend, but we all understand that that would be quite challenging to implement in Wales. So, we have the letter of 3 November from the Minister, and it would be helpful to go back to the petitioners to reassure them of what will happen and of the protocol that will make it happen in Wales, rather than finding in six, eight or 10 months' time that the second cycle cannot be delivered.

[45] **Val Lloyd:** I would be perfectly happy to write to the Minister, but I would have thought that she would have discussed the capacity issue with officials.

[46] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I very much hope so, but if she could put that in writing, it would be helpful.

[47] **Val Lloyd:** Yes, we can ask for confirmation.

[48] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Let us hope that that is the case. I am sure that, as AMs, we do not want our constituency postbags full of letters saying—

[49] **Val Lloyd:** It is an emotive and personal subject, and I am delighted with the announcement. We will ask about capacity. Thank you for raising that.

[50] We move on to petition P-03-217, on Saturday opening at the National Library of Wales. We have had an update from the Communities and Culture Committee, which is included in our papers. Shall we write to the Minister for Heritage, notifying him of the librarian's statement that the library cannot commit to reopening until it has been notified of its budget settlement, and asking when a decision is likely?

[51] **Bethan Jenkins:** I appreciate that Janice Gregory has responded as committee Chair, but I also sit on that committee, and I know that we did not have enough time to scrutinise the Minister fully, so we had to ask some questions via a letter. Therefore, I think that there is scope for that committee to probe further, to be honest. I suggest that we write back to Janice Gregory to ask whether there is scope for that, or whether she could write a letter outlining the concerns raised by the petition, as it is within the remit of that committee to scrutinise the budget. I make that point purely because I know that we did not have enough time to scrutinise the Minister fully. We could also write to the Minister.

[52] **Val Lloyd:** So, would the Chair of that committee have to write to the Minister as well, to ask for extra scrutiny time? I would be quite content to do that, but I am just wondering what the process would be.

[53] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** It would be helpful. I pay tribute to the Minister for Health and Social Services for her helpfulness, because once a term she comes to the Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee for a general scrutiny session. I have not been here that long, but it is the first committee that I have sat on where the Minister affords it that opportunity without having to be asked. That was certainly never the case with the Enterprise and Learning Committee. Ministers came in, but it was at the request of the committee. I am not sure whether the Communities and Culture Committee has a scrutiny session with the appropriate Minister on an agreed basis.

[54] **Bethan Jenkins:** I am not sure, as I have not been on the committee that long. I have not experienced that. Perhaps we could suggest that.

[55] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** We need to point out to the Chair of the Communities and Culture Committee that this petition is still alive, as it were, and that we would be grateful if it would scrutinise the Minister on this matter. As an AM, I have received quite a bit of



correspondence on this subject and I have raised it in the Chamber. Coming from South Wales Central, I often hear how difficult it is for people to travel to Cardiff to access facilities, but people wishing to go to the National Library for Wales in Aberystwyth will very often plan to go on a Saturday, and they cannot do so if it is shut.

[56] **Val Lloyd:** I do not wish to be obstructive. As you know, I like us to explore all avenues. However, if we are writing to the Minister for Heritage, I do not see the point of writing to the Chair of another committee to ask her to do the same thing. We are writing to the Minister on that particular point, because there is a fine line between writing to ask and telling a committee how it should conduct its business. It is the right of the committee and the committee members to decide that.

9.50 a.m.

[57] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Would it be appropriate to inform the Chair of the committee that we are awaiting a ministerial response and that the petition remains open for consideration? If the opportunity afforded itself, the committee could use the petition as part of a scrutiny session—

[58] **Val Lloyd:** That is a little softer, is it? *[Laughter.]*

[59] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** If the committee has responded to the petition, it might think that it has been closed and so there is no point in following it up.

[60] **Val Lloyd:** That is fine. Perhaps it is a softer approach, but committees are autonomous, and it is committee members in conjunction with the Chair who decide how to conduct their business. I would not want any committee to think that we were trying to ‘interfere’. However, I am anxious to get to the bottom of it, so if we can soften the approach in some way, all the better.

[61] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** We can place it on the record so that it knows that we are still dealing with the petition.

[62] **Bethan Jenkins:** In the letter to the Minister, perhaps we could mention the statement on libraries in Wales that was made about two weeks ago in Plenary, asking how this fits in with the Government’s long-term strategy. That might have a bearing on the fact that the library is closed on a Saturday.

[63] **Val Lloyd:** That is fine, because that is a strategic question on policy. So, we can take the suggestion in our paper, the extra suggestion that you made regarding the Minister, and also write a letter to the Chair of the committee.

[64] We now move to petition P-03-221 on improved NHS chiropody treatment. We have had this since June. It is a scoping report, is it not?

[65] **Bethan Jenkins:** There has been a stall in its progress in different NHS trusts, because the scoping exercise has not happened yet. The trusts do not know the details, and they do not want to pre-empt any discussions with the petitioners before the scoping exercise comes about. So, perhaps we should write to the Minister again to ask about that.

[66] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** There is a comprehensive series of letters on this petition— with no end of letterheads, I note, which are quite impressive to see. I stand to be corrected, but in the letter dated 30 June, the Minister refers to the fact that the scoping exercise is nearing completion. However, in the letter dated 20 October, the same scoping exercise, I presume, is still ‘nearing completion’. So, there seems to be a little difficulty in understanding

what is going on with that scoping exercise, given that on 30 June it was nearing completion, but on 20 October it was still only nearing completion.

[67] **Val Lloyd:** We should write to the Minister asking when it will be completed, and whether she will let us know as soon as it is. Are you happy with that? I see that you are. Thank you.

[68] We now move to petition P-03-222 from the National Osteoporosis Society, which asks us to urge the Government to fully implement the falls and fractures standard. Should we write to Healthcare Inspectorate Wales to ask whether its review of the national service framework will address the issues raised? Should we also write to the petitioners notifying them of the Minister's reply and asking for feedback? I see that you are content with that. Thank you.

[69] The next petition is P-03-224 from Stepping Stones Nursery.

[70] **Bethan Jenkins:** A childcare strategy is out for consultation at the moment. Perhaps we should write to the Minister asking whether the petitioners can be included in that, because it seems that the basis of the strategy is now being scoped. I have not heard much about what consultation will happen with the public, so perhaps we can ask that question, as well as whether the petitioners could be included in the consultation.

[71] **Val Lloyd:** I am happy with those two ways forward. Thank you, Bethan.

[72] The next petition is P-03-225 from Gorseinon College, which asked us to urge the Government to provide extra funding to the college to keep courses and classes open and running. We received this petition in July. We had a reply from the Minister on 6 November. Shall we write to the college, notifying it of the Minister's response and drawing its attention to the Welsh European Funding Office guidance to which she referred?

[73] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** There is a legitimate concern about the European funding coming through. This debate seems to go on time and again, with the Government quite legitimately pointing out that there is European funding available, but Fforwm and further education colleges saying that the funding does not seem to be arriving. So, perhaps the true situation is somewhere in the middle, and we need to find out why the funding is not coming through.

[74] **Val Lloyd:** In his letter, the principal of the college said that access to funding is slow. So, further to your point, Andrew, should we ask him to let us know about any outstanding funding applications and how long the college has been waiting for them?

[75] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I think that that would be beneficial. We could also write to Fforwm, as the overarching body. I am sure that the principal has been in touch with Fforwm—he might even be on the board. It would be good for the Petitions Committee if Fforwm could provide us with information about whether this is happening and provide us with examples that we could use in the wider discussion on this petition.

[76] **Val Lloyd:** I am sure that Mr Bennett, the principal, is well informed.

[77] **Bethan Jenkins:** The Minister has stated that it is not an individual bid from the college, so perhaps there is a difference between individual bids and those that are put in with other organisations. Perhaps there is a time lag if more than one organisation is involved, so could we ask for clarification on that?

[78] **Val Lloyd:** From the Minister, do you mean?

[79] **Bethan Jenkins:** I would have thought so, yes.

[80] **Val Lloyd:** Yes, I would have thought that the Minister would be the best person to answer that question. I see that Members are content.

[81] The next petition is P-03-231 on the proximity of wind turbines to residential dwellings. We have received a letter from Scotland, which did not quite fit with what the petitioners had said. The situation is not as cut and dried as the petitioners had stated. They said that, in Scotland, there was a 2 km separation zone. However, the letter from the Scottish Government's Directorate for the Built Environment quoted from annex A of Scottish planning policy 6, which states that

[82] 'The Scottish Ministers would support this as a separation distance between turbines and the edge of cities, towns and villages so long as policies recognise that this approach is being adopted solely as a mechanism for steering proposals to broad areas of search and, within this distance, proposals will continue to be judged on a case-by-case basis'.

[83] So, the situation is not quite as clear-cut as the petitioners had stated. It is not an absolute standard; it can be varied in certain circumstances.

[84] **Bethan Jenkins:** We should ask the petitioners what they think about the letter from the Directorate for the Built Environment, because they seem to be taking for granted that this standard is applied generally in Scotland. This letter suggests that that is not the case, so we need to know what the petitioners' opinion is now that they have that information and whether that changes what they are asking for.

[85] **Val Lloyd:** We could also write to the Minister for Health and Social Services, because the petitioners raised health issues.

[86] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** It is a concern, and it has been raised with me on several occasions. Perhaps I have missed it, and I stand to be corrected, but no-one has offered me hard evidence of the direct health implications. So, it is worth while considering them, because that is one argument that people use to oppose wind turbine proposals for their area, because they are concerned about the noise, I presume. I support what Bethan said about forwarding the letter from Scotland, and we should seek the views of the Minister and her public health officials.

[87] **Val Lloyd:** The petitioners quoted someone's views, but I do not know the basis of that research, and so I agree that it would be useful to find out about that.

[88] **Bethan Jenkins:** They cited the work of Dr Pierpont.

[89] **Val Lloyd:** Yes. It is an American study—not that that invalidates it in any way, but we need to know the background. The Minister's officials will have access to far more research than us.

[90] **Bethan Jenkins:** Perhaps that is part of the question that we could ask. On what research has the Minister based the decision on what happens in Wales in this regard? That would be a matter for the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing.

[91] 10.00 a.m.

[92] **Val Lloyd:** That is right. If you also wish to write to the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing, we could do that, but we were talking about writing to the

Minister for Health and Social Services to ask her for her views on the issues. I know that she will be guided by the research of officials.

[93] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** It would be good to have the public health officials' view on this. Obviously, they are accountable to the Minister for Health and Social Services. Perhaps we could then put the responses of the two Ministers together and form a response to the petitioners to say, 'As the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing has the lead on this, we either have confidence or not in the way that the health issue is addressed here'. It is not just blarney; it is taking into consideration the wider concerns.

[94] **Val Lloyd:** This letter came when I was recovering from surgery, and I am just quickly looking to see what has happened. You did write at the beginning—

[95] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Yes. Sandy wrote. It refers to health and safety legislation.

[96] **Val Lloyd:** At this stage, do we need to write to the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing again?

[97] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** It will be important to have the view of the Minister for Health and Social Services on it first. Then, we could build on that to go back to the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing.

[98] **Bethan Jenkins:** It was only mentioned due to the research on which we might need background information with regard to the determination of when an application is accepted, taking into account the health—

[99] **Val Lloyd:** Let us wait for the response from the Minister for Health and Social Services and then we will be in a better position.

[100] We now move on to petition number P-03-251, which is on banning sunbeds. Andrew and I are on the committee that has just completed—

[101] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** We have not been on one. [*Laughter.*]

[102] **Bethan Jenkins:** On a sunbed.

[103] **Val Lloyd:** I have never been on a sunbed.

[104] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I do not think that there would be one that is big enough for me. [*Laughter.*]

[105] **Bethan Jenkins:** No comment.

[106] **Val Lloyd:** When we took evidence from the Minister at the health committee, of which Andrew and I are members, she said that she was considering taking it forward because the committee, following its review, would perhaps suggest it itself. However, the Minister informed the committee that she would do it; therefore, we need to write to the Minister asking to be kept informed of progress towards outlawing unsupervised sunbeds.

[107] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** It was a comprehensive piece of work, and I am not just saying that because Val and I sit on that committee. However, this inquiry was done in three or four sessions, I think.

[108] **Val Lloyd:** It was very comprehensive.

[109] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Hopefully, from that, discussions can either entail working with the Minister, or if the Minister indicates that the Government's legislative programme is too crowded perhaps, the committee could consider a legislative competence Order. I think that there was widespread support and I hope that the petitioners take comfort from the evidence that was gathered, and the consensus that was arrived at. However, the powers need to be here in Wales so that we can regulate in Wales as the London authorities can do at present.

[110] **Bethan Jenkins:** You sound like a nationalist to me, Andrew.

[111] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** No. You will never get that. You can devolve to the local authorities, not only the Assembly. [*Laughter.*]

[112] **Val Lloyd:** That debate is for elsewhere. We will now move to the final update in this section—we have another section to go through—on petition number P-03-252, which opposes the RAF St Athan northern access road.

[113] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Regrettably, this has been determined. It is completely understandable that the local authority has a wider planning application that determined it, but the lateness of the petition did not allow us, as a committee, to get too involved in it. It was literally a week after this petition was presented that the application was determined because it was already part of the wider development in St Athan.

[114] **Val Lloyd:** I am glad of your local knowledge because we were not aware of that.

[115] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** It is all part of the defence training academy. The residents quite rightly have very strong views. Rather than just objecting per se to the road, they came up with a very sensible and comprehensive alternative route. I know that we passed that information to the Minister, and I note that the Minister has sent a comprehensive letter back outlining consideration of various routes, but—and I would stand to be corrected—events now have moved ahead of us and there is little that we can do.

[116] **Bethan Jenkins:** So, has it been accepted?

[117] **Val Lloyd:** The application has been accepted.

[118] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I think that was at the end of September.

[119] **Val Lloyd:** We have had a response from the Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport.

[120] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** There is nothing to stop the developers, of which the Welsh Assembly Government is one, amending the approved applications if they wish to do so. However, one would have thought that if they were minded to amend it, it would have been amended before the approval was given rather than at this stage.

[121] **Val Lloyd:** Is there anything that we can do, apart from close it?

[122] **Bethan Jenkins:** We are basing that on your knowledge. Perhaps we should write to the petitioners anyway.

[123] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** By all means, clarify it.

[124] **Bethan Jenkins:** Yes, because we would then have gone through the appropriate process.

[125] **Val Lloyd:** The last letter that we had was from the petitioner, who responded to the letter from the Deputy First Minister. So, we can write to the Deputy First Minister summarising the concerns raised in the petitioner's letter of 4 November and ask for some clarity on the statistics referred to. It may be that the application is being determined, but that is the only thing that we can do.

[126] **Bethan Jenkins:** It is good to have something on record.

[127] **Val Lloyd:** I think so. The petitioner courteously responded to the letter from the Deputy First Minister.

10.06 a.m.

### **Adolygu Hynt Deisebau Review of Progress**

[128] **Val Lloyd:** We have five petitions under this item. The first is P-03-100 on Tesco junction. We were told in May that the result of the feasibility study would be published in the summer. Shall we write to the Deputy First Minister asking for an update on the feasibility study? I see that you agree that we should.

[129] The next is P-03-150 on national cancer standards. Once again, our last letter from the Minister was received in March. Shall we now write to the Minister for Health and Social Services asking for details of the findings of the cancer services co-ordinating group—the all-Wales summary relating to compliance with the national cancer standards?

[130] **Bethan Jenkins:** Yes.

[131] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** The important word there is 'compliance' because we are all aware of the group, some of the findings and the route map that has been laid out. However, it is about delivering that.

[132] **Val Lloyd:** Fine. Between March and now, there should be some effect on compliance.

[133] The next petition is P-03-153 on body piercing. This is your favourite subject, Andrew.

[134] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** We did not ever visit, did we?

[135] **Val Lloyd:** You were the only person who thought that we should.

[136] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** There was widespread support.

[137] **Val Lloyd:** Again, we received a letter from the Minister in June. Could we write to her again, asking for an update in the assessment of the regulatory options in relation to non-surgical cosmetic treatments provided in the private sector, which is basically body piercing?

[138] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Yes.

[139] **Val Lloyd:** Thank you.

[140] The next petition is P-03-156 on sleep apnoea. We received a letter from the Minister in March. Can we write to her asking for details of the outcome of the audit of the progress of local health boards? The respiratory directives were planned for September 2009. So, we will

also find out whether they have slipped. We need to know that for the purposes of this petition on sleep apnoea.

[141] The final petition is P-03-162 on road safety in Llanspyddid. This related to improvements to the A40 near Llanspyddid. Again, we received a letter in early April from the Deputy First Minister. Can we write to him asking for details regarding the review of safety in that area, which was to be undertaken after the publication of the new guidance setting speed limits in Wales, asking when it will be completed? The last letter was sent in April, so we should have heard something.

[142] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Particularly as the guidelines are out. I think that they were published the Friday before our last meeting.

[143] **Val Lloyd:** So, we should be able to get a response.

[144] Unless Members want to raise any further points, I will close the meeting. Thank you very much.

*Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 10.09 a.m.  
The meeting ended at 10.09 a.m.*