

Concise Minutes – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

This meeting can be viewed

Video Conference via Zoom

on [Senedd TV](#) at:

Meeting date: Tuesday, 2 March 2021

<http://senedd.tv/en/11072>

Meeting time: 09.04 – 10.12

Attendance

Category	Names
Members of the Senedd:	Janet Finch-Saunders MS (Chair) Michelle Brown MS Jack Sargeant MS Leanne Wood MS
Witnesses:	
Committee Staff:	Graeme Francis (Clerk) Kayleigh Imperato (Deputy Clerk) Sian Giddins (Deputy Clerk)

1 Introduction, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Neil McEvoy MS.



2 New Covid 19 petitions

2.1 P-05-1118 Allow parents of under 1 year old to form a support bubble in new Tier 4 Covid restrictions

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and in light of the recent announcement by the Welsh Government to ease restrictions in Wales to allow families with babies to form a bubble with one other household, it agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.2 P-05-1123 Raise the priority of non-NHS public facing key workers in the roll out of the Covid-19 vaccine

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and, in light of the latest advice provided by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) about the second phase of the vaccination programme, specifically that the programme should continue to be prioritised according to age and clinical vulnerability, it agreed that there was nothing that it could achieve on the petition at this time. The Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.3 P-05-1124 Allow two individuals from two different households to meet for exercise in alert level 4

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and noted that the action called for by the petition has now been achieved. Members agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.4 P-05-1127 Reduce the fee limit for all Welsh universities due to COVID-19 requirement of distanced learning

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed that there was little further action that could take at this time due to the fact that the petitioner has

no further comments and the Welsh Government does not have a role in setting tuition fee rates, other than establishing a maximum. The Committee agreed to advise the petitioner that this issue could be a focus for the students' union movement going forward and closed the petition.

2.5 P-05-1128 Cancel externally set 'assessments' in 2021 for AS and A levels and only use teacher assessed grades

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to note the petition and the decision since taken by the Welsh Government to cancel externally set assessments for 2021. In light of this decision, the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

In addition, the Committee agreed to close two other petitions currently collecting signatures due to the requested action having already been taken: Cancel external exam style assessments for GCSEs in 2021 and trust our teachers and Re-evaluate and clarify the GCSE, AS, A-Level assessments situation.

2.6 P-05-1135 Targeted funding for residential outdoor education centres, now unable to operate for 12 months

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to seek a response to the petitioner's further questions and proposals from the Government and, given the imminent end of this Senedd, pass the petition to the next Petitions Committee to consider further in light of the situation then.

2.7 P-05-1136 Allow Welsh residents to travel for fishing the same as our counterparts in England

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed, in light of the fact that the views expressed have been raised with the Welsh Government and that this

Committee's final meeting will take place shortly after the next review of the regulations, that there is little further action that they could take at this time. The Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.8 P-05-1139 Extend stamp duty relief following the announcement of a further lockdown

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed, in light of the Minister's re-statement of the current deadline of 31 March and the imminent end of this Senedd, that there is no further action that the Committee could take at this point. The Committee therefore agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

Nb. Shortly following the meeting the Welsh Government announced that an extension to the Land Transaction Tax (LTT) temporary tax reduction period for transactions that complete from 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021, following a similar decision taken in England as part the UK Government's budget announcement.

2.9 P-05-1111 Put the £7 million back into the Mental Health Transformation fund

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to provide the petitioner with a further opportunity to comment on the Welsh Government's response, with a view to closing the petition at its final meeting on 16 March if none are received.

2.10 P-05-1125 Petitions with more than 5,000 signatures should be debated not just considered for debate

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and, in light of the imminent end of this Senedd, to consider this issue as part of their legacy work and recommendations for the Sixth Senedd, close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.11 P-05-1129 Apply legislative measures now to enact the Law Commission's recommendations to abolish Leasehold

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and noted the petition and the Minister's response, including that she is awaiting the publication of research into the experience of leasehold in Wales before making further decisions. Given this, and the imminent Senedd election, the Committee agreed to pass the petition for further consideration by its successor committee in the Sixth Senedd.

2.12 P-05-1130 The Welsh Government should re-purchase and refurbish Coleg Harlech

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to the petitioners to note the extremely limited time remaining in the current Senedd term and to pass the petition for further consideration by its successor committee in the Sixth Senedd.

2.13 P-05-1131 Immediate cessation of dredging operations off the Gower coast pending evaluation of adverse effects

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to provide the further information received from the petitioner to the Marine Licensing Team at NRW and request that they look into the observations made and to liaise directly with the petitioner.

As monitoring and enforcement is the role of NRW is the Committee agreed that there is little further action that the Committee could take beyond that and therefore agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.14 P-05-1132 Instigate an Independent Judicial Inquiry into Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to await the views of the petitioner on the response provided by the Minister for Health and Social Services before considering whether there is further action that it could take on the petition.

3 Updates to previous petitions

3.1 P-05-934 Public Transport in Blaenau Gwent

The Committee considered the correspondence received and agreed, due to the fact that local support and policies for public transport services in Blaenau Gwent are a matter for the local authority and would be better taken forward through scrutiny by its own members and committees, to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

In doing so, Members agreed to provide the petitioner's further questions to Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and request that the Council engages directly with the Ebbw Fawr Business Community on the matters raised.

3.2 P-05-1067 Allow all non-essential retail shops to continue to trade whilst under the 17 day lockdown

The Committee considered the correspondence received from the Minister and in light of the fact that no responses have been received from the petitioner, and the indication that non-essential retail is being considered for reopening in March, the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

3.3 P-05-942 The Golden Hour when Suffering a Stroke – Ambulance Response Times to be recategorised from Amber back to Red Status

The Committee considered the correspondence received and agreed to close the petition at this stage in light of the information received from the Stroke Association, and to thank the petitioner.

3.4 P-05-974 Ensure the technology of prosthetic limbs provided within the Welsh NHS is equal to the rest of the UK

The Committee considered the correspondence received and agreed to hold the petition so that it, or its successor committee, can consider a further update from the Minister for Health and Social Services following his consideration of new advice.

3.5 P-05-1117 Give Police Officers the Covid Vaccination as a priority

This petition was considered alongside petition P-05-1119 Prioritise teachers, school and childcare staff for COVID-19 vaccination.

The Committee considered the correspondence received ahead of the upcoming Plenary debate scheduled for 3 March and agreed that the petitions should be closed following the debate, given that the Committee will have done all it can to raise the profile of this issue and in the context of the advice and recommendations being provided by the JCVI.

3.6 P-05-1119 Prioritise teachers, school and childcare staff for COVID-19 vaccination

This petition was considered alongside petition P-05-1117 Give Police Officers the Covid Vaccination as a priority.

The Committee considered the correspondence received ahead of the upcoming Plenary debate scheduled for 3 March and agreed that the petitions should be closed following the debate, given that the Committee will have done all it can to raise the profile of this issue and in the context of the advice and recommendations being provided by the JCVI.

3.7 P-05-1052 Give Nurses a pay rise in line with other frontline staff during COVID-19 pandemic

This petition was considered alongside petition P-05-1089 Wales should lead on bringing NHS pay back in line with inflation costs over the last 10 years.

The Committee considered the correspondence received, the further response from the Minister and his commitment that the Welsh Government will keep all options open for when the recommendations of the independent pay review are made. However, given the fact that this is not expected until May 2021 and the timescales are set by UK Government, there is little further action that the Committee could take at this time. Therefore, Members reiterated their support and agreed to close the petitions and thank the petitioners.

3.8 P-05-1089 Wales should lead on bringing NHS pay back in line with inflation costs over the last 10 years

This petition was considered alongside petition P-05-1052 Give Nurses a pay rise in line with other frontline staff during COVID-19 pandemic.

The Committee considered the correspondence received, the further response from the Minister and his commitment that the Welsh Government will keep all options open for when the recommendations of the independent pay review are made. However, given the fact that this is not expected until May 2021 and the timescales are set by UK Government, there is little further action that the Committee could take at this time. Therefore, Members reiterated their support and agreed to close the petitions and thank the petitioners.

3.9 P-05-1032 Legislate to prevent people from changing Welsh house names

The Committee considered the correspondence received and, in light of the Plenary debate held on the subject, the scrutiny being applied by another Senedd committee and the imminent end of this Senedd, Members agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

3.10 P-05-1081 Ensure owners of second homes & holiday lets in Wales register to vote only at their primary address, in devolved and local elections

The Committee considered the correspondence received and, in light of the fact that it is too late for any changes to be made in relation to the 2021 Senedd election and the responses received, including that the Electoral Commission will produce a statutory report following the election containing recommendations for future polls, agreed that there is little further action that the Committee could take at the present time. It therefore agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioners.

3.11 P-05-949 SAVE COWBRIDGE OLD GIRLS' SCHOOL FROM DEMOLITION

The Committee considered an update from the petitioner. In light of the decisions made by Cadw and the Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism not to support the listing of the building as requested by the petitioners, and the answers provided to its previous correspondence on this issue, the Committee concluded that there was likely to be little further action that it could take on the petition. It agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

3.12 P-05-1075 Don't impose a 15 person limit on organised indoor activities, such as swimming lessons and fitness classes, after firebreak lockdown

The Committee considered the correspondence received. In light of the ongoing restrictions and the recent indications that these may be lifted over the coming weeks, as well as the information provided in response to the Committee's previous question

and the lack of further contact with the petitioner, Members agreed to close the petition.

4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the following business:

The motion was agreed.

5 Consideration of draft report – P-05-805 Fair Deal For Supply Teachers

The Committee considered the draft report, agreed some amendments and that it would agree a final version of the report outside of Committee.