

Concise Minutes – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

This meeting can be viewed

Video Conference via Zoom

on [Senedd TV](#) at:

Meeting date: Tuesday, 16 March 2021

<http://senedd.tv/en/11073>

Meeting time: 08.32 – 10.33

Attendance

Category	Names
Members of the Senedd:	Janet Finch-Saunders MS (Chair) Michelle Brown MS Neil McEvoy 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. There were no apologies.



2 New petitions with a response from the Government

2.1 P-05-1104 Make any measures being brought in for Covid be subject to a vote in the Welsh Parliament

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed that there was little further action that it could take at this time due to the fact that this was the Committee's final meeting before the Senedd election and, as outlined in correspondence from the First Minister, public health legislation allows the Welsh Government to make regulations before they are approved by the Senedd. The Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.2 P-05-1106 Introduce Personal Health Budgets and Personalised Care in Wales

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and, in light of the commitment made by the Minister to consider options to address the issues raised, agreed to pass the petition for further consideration by its successor committee following the Senedd election.

2.3 P-05-1107 Allow outside live singers / entertainment to start again

The Committee considered the petition for the first time. In light of the Government's intention to incrementally relax restrictions through the three weekly review cycle, and as this was the last Committee meeting before the Senedd election, the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.4 P-05-1110 Reinstate free swimming for pensioners

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and, in light of the response from the Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism stating that the Free Swimming scheme has been reprioritised following a review commissioned by Sport Wales, agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.5 P-05-1120 The Welsh Government should immediately stop all lockdowns

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and, in light of the Welsh Government's current intention to lift restrictions in a phased way, noted there was little further action it could undertake at this time. As such, the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.6 P-05-1122 Allow new adoptive parents to form a support bubble in alert level 4

The Committee considered the petition for the first time. In light of this being the final meeting of this Committee, and the likelihood that the rules regarding support bubbles will have changed by the time its successor committee is established, it agreed that there was little further action that it was able to take at this time. The Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.7 P-05-1126 Allow organised outdoor sport for under 18s to put Wales in line with England's tier 4

This petition was considered alongside petition [P-05-1149 Resume team sports for children in line with England on March 29th 2021](#).

The Committee considered the petitions for the first time and, in light of the Welsh Government's indication that organised outdoor activities for children will be able to resume from 29 March, the Committee noted there was little further action it could take at this time. It therefore agreed to close the petitions and thank the petitioners.

2.8 P-05-1149 Resume team sports for children in line with England on March 29th 2021

This petition was considered alongside petition [P-05-1126 Allow organised outdoor sport for under 18s to put Wales in line with England's tier 4](#).

The Committee considered the petitions for the first time and, in light of the Welsh Government's indication that organised outdoor activities for children will be able to resume from 29 March, the Committee noted there was little further action it could take at this time. It therefore agreed to close the petitions and thank the petitioners.

2.9 P-05-1133 Adapt the teacher training syllabus to include Transformational Coaching and Emotional Intelligence

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to the Education Workforce Council to highlight the petition and the further information and questions raised by the petitioner, and seek its response to the proposals made.

2.10 P-05-1134 Cap all Welsh county council tax at 3%. A referendum of the public must take place to exceed 3%

The Committee considered the petition for the first time. In light of the fact that individual local authorities and councillors are responsible for setting council tax, and the rejection by the Welsh Government of the proposals made in the petition, the Committee concluded that there is little more that it could achieve at this time and agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.11 P-05-1138 COVID-19 Weekly testing for staff caring for people with complex medical health needs

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and, in light of the information provided by the petitioner, agreed to write back to the Welsh Government to seek further clarification regarding the provision of lateral flow testing for social care staff who work in the private sector.

2.12 P-05-1140 Revise the guidance for Free School Meals, removing the option for delivery of food parcels

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write back to the Minister for Education to ask her to consider whether the guidance for local authorities can be updated to clearly specify that they should operate a number of systems for the provision of free school meals in parallel, including cash or voucher payments.

2.13 P-05-1142 Workout To Help Out Scheme

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to refer the petition for further consideration by its successor committee following the Senedd election, given the importance of physical activity in preventing physical and mental health problems.

2.14 P-05-1143 Fully re-open all schools immediately after February half-term

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and, in light of the current phased return of pupils to schools, the Committee noted there was little further action it could undertake on the issue at present. It therefore agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.15 P-05-1144 Re-open garden centres in Wales as soon as it is possible

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and noted the strength of feeling demonstrated by the petition. However, in light of the Welsh Government's recent announcement that it intends to allow garden centres to reopen from 22 March, the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.16 P-05-1145 Allow parents of young children to drive to use local parks and playgrounds during tier 4 lockdown

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and noted that travel to local parks and playgrounds is now permitted as a result of recent move to 'stay local' guidance. As the aims of the petitions have been met the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.17 P-05-1146 Provide a road map for how weddings can progress in Wales

The Committee considered the petition for the first time. In light of this being the Committee's final meeting before the 2021 Senedd election, the three weekly review of restrictions and the fact that discussions are held with a Weddings Stakeholder Group, the Committee concluded that there was little further it could achieve at this time and agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.18 P-05-1147 Require all schools to provide daily live / recorded teaching to all pupils not returning to school

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to provide the petitioner's further correspondence to the Minister for Education and, with the agreement of the petitioner, details of schools not providing any live or recorded lessons, and ask the Minister to consider what options there are for raising this issue further with the school or the local education authority concerned.

2.19 P-05-1103 Stop applying the same Covid 19 restrictions across the whole of Wales

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and, given that this is the Committee's final meeting ahead of the Senedd elections and the likelihood that circumstances will continue to change by the time its successor committee is established, the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.20 P-05-1141 Make the Senedd election fair – allow political leafleting during lockdown

Neil McEvoy MS declared the following relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A:

The police have attempted to issue him with a caution and a fine for leafleting.

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and

noted the announcement made by the Welsh Government on 12 March that leafletting will be able to resume on a local basis, following the change in advice to 'stay local'. In light of this, and because this is the Committee's final meeting before the election, it agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.21 P-05-1148 Fully open schools for all ages in Wales as the next step from 15th March

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and, in light of the fact that this petition has been raised with the Government and all pupils are due to be back in school from 12 April, it agreed that there was little further action it could take and that it would thank the petitioner and close the petition.

2.22 P-05-1150 Provide business rates holiday to holiday home sites in wales, the same as England

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and

agreed to write to the Welsh Government to seek a response to the issue raised, so that this can be shared with the petitioner and the petition considered further in the next Senedd term.

2.23 P-05-1151 Provide a date for the return of Organised Children's Activities for Babies & Toddlers

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to the Welsh Government to seek a response to the issue raised and further clarity about when baby and toddler classes will be able to resume, so that this can be shared with the petitioner and the petition considered further in the next Senedd term.

2.24 P-05-1152 Close the schools! Keep our children safe. Due to the rise in covid. Save our future

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and noted that the action requested by the petition was taken by the Welsh Government in December 2020. In light of this, and the lack of contact from the petitioner, the Committee agreed to close the petition.

2.25 P-05-1153 To open outside gyms and sport in Wales the same as England March 29th

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to the Welsh Government to seek a response to the issue raised and further clarity about when it considers that gyms and children's sport will be able to resume, so that this can be shared with the petitioner. In doing so, the Committee agreed to thank the petitioner and close the petition given the likelihood that the position will have changed by the time a new committee is established following the Senedd election.

2.26 P-05-1154 Re-open the Welsh hospitality sector by 12 April 2021

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to the Welsh Government to seek a response to the issue raised and further clarity about when it considers that businesses in the hospitality industry will be able to resume, so

that this can be shared with the petitioner and the petition considered further in the next Senedd term.

2.27 P-05-1155 Allow safe, socially-distanced watersports during coronavirus lockdowns

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to the Welsh Government to seek a response to the issue raised, so that this can be shared with the petitioner. In doing so, the Committee agreed to thank the petitioner and close the petition given the likelihood that the position will have changed by the time a new committee is established following the Senedd election.

2.28 P-05-1156 Match the funding for small businesses during lockdown with England – including the restart grant

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to the Welsh Government to seek a response to the issues raised, so that this can be shared with the petitioner and the petition considered further in the next Senedd term.

3 Updates to previous petitions

3.1 P-05-856 Ban the sale of puppies by pet shops and all commercial 3rd party dealers in Wales

This petition was considered alongside petitions [P-05-915 Call for better enforcement of puppy farms in Wales](#) and [P-05-939 Immediate embargo on new dog breeding licences, licence renewals and planning applications until regulations are fit for purpose and enforceable](#).

The Committee noted the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Wales) Regulations 2021 that have been proposed for agreement by the Senedd on 23

March, and agreed to pass the petitions for further consideration by its successor committee in the next Senedd term.

3.2 P-05-915 Call for better enforcement of puppy farms in Wales

This petition was considered alongside petitions [P-05-856 Ban the sale of puppies by pet shops and all commercial 3rd party dealers in Wales](#) and [P-05-939 Immediate embargo on new dog breeding licences, licence renewals and planning applications until regulations are fit for purpose and enforceable](#).

The Committee noted the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Wales) Regulations 2021 that have been proposed for agreement by the Senedd on 23 March, and agreed to pass the petitions for further consideration by its successor committee in the next Senedd term.

3.3 P-05-939 Immediate embargo on new dog breeding licences, licence renewals and planning applications until regulations are fit for purpose and enforceable

This petition was considered alongside petitions [P-05-856 Ban the sale of puppies by pet shops and all commercial 3rd party dealers in Wales](#) and [P-05-915 Call for better enforcement of puppy farms in Wales](#).

The Committee noted the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Wales) Regulations 2021 that have been proposed for agreement by the Senedd on 23 March, and agreed to pass the petitions for further consideration by its successor committee in the next Senedd term.

3.4 P-05-895 Rosa's Legacy: Introduce a scheme to help people access veterinary care for their companion animals

The Committee considered an update from the Minister and the desire of the petitioner to provide further information in the future, and agreed to pass the petition for further consideration by its successor committee in the next Senedd term.

3.5 P-05-1003 Demand an EIA now on the dumping of radioactively contaminated mud in Welsh waters

The Committee considered further correspondence. Given that this is the Committee's final meeting prior to the Senedd election, and the public consultation due to be held on the marine licencing application, it agreed to pass the further information received to NRW for their consideration and to ask its successor committee to consider the petition further in light of the situation after the Senedd election.

3.6 P-05-1010 An independent inquiry into the 2020 flooding in Rhondda Cynon Taf so that lessons are learned

Leanne Wood MS declared the following relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A:

The Petitioner is known to her and she has been involved with the campaign.

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to pass the petition for further consideration by its successor committee in the next Senedd in light of the situation at that time, including in relation to the publication of Section 19 reports.

3.7 P-05-1079 Safeguard Kenfig Nature Reserve using compulsory purchase powers

The Committee noted the further responses received and the satisfaction of NRW with the steps that have been taken to establish a Management Agreement and the recent appointment of a Reserve Manager. Given this, the Committee concluded that

compulsory purchase does not appear to be an appropriate solution at this time and agreed to thank the petitioner and close the petition.

3.8 P-05-1097 Ban game bird cages

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to refer the petition to the next Senedd and ask its successor committee to consider the call for the use of game bird cages to be banned and the review of the Code of Practice for the Welfare of Gamebirds in light of the context then.

3.9 P-05-960 Fund the funeral costs of all NHS staff who die from or with Covid-19

The Committee expressed its disappointment that the Government has not agreed to establish a scheme of the type proposed by the petition. The Committee concluded, with regret, that there was little further action that it could take to progress the petition in light of the responses received. It agreed to thank the petitioner for raising the issue and closed the petition.

3.10 P-05-964 Extend covid-19 financial support and paid leave to vulnerable and pregnant NHS wales bank workers

The Committee considered the further response received from the Minister for Health and Social Services and noted that the Government has asked Health Boards and Trusts to consider the individual circumstances of NHS bank workers in this situation. In light of this, the Committee concluded that there is little further action that it could take at this point in time and agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

3.11 P-05-1029 The Welsh Government should introduce mandatory testing of all passengers arriving at Cardiff Airport

The Committee considered correspondence from the Minister, the changed position since the petition was submitted and the current requirements for people arriving in Wales to undertake a period of self-isolation and testing upon arrival. The Committee agreed that there is little further action they could take and agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

3.12 P-05-1116 Prioritise people with a learning disability to be vaccinated against COVID-19 in Wales

The Committee considered the petition and welcomed the increased prioritisation now being given to people with a learning disability in the Covid-19 vaccination programme. In light of this, the Committee agreed to congratulate the petitioner and close the petition.

3.13 P-05-1013 Provide financial support for self-employed individuals within the Welsh live music industry

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to write back to the Welsh Government to share the further experiences provided by the petitioner and request that further consideration is given to providing further specific support for the live music sector, given the likelihood that music events will not be able to resume in the short-term. The Committee also agreed to await the Government's response to the report on this issue produced by the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee.

3.14 P-05-1080 Introduce anti-racist teaching materials to children in schools in Wales to reduce hate crimes

This petition was considered alongside petition P-05-1000 Make it compulsory for Black and POC UK histories to be taught in the Welsh education curriculum.

The Committee considered correspondence on the petitions and agreed to pass the petitions to its successor committee following the Senedd election to enable it to continue to scrutinise the development of new teaching resources and professional learning needs.

3.15 P-05-1000 Make it compulsory for Black and POC UK histories to be taught in the Welsh education curriculum

This petition was considered alongside petition P-05-1080 Introduce anti-racist teaching materials to children in schools in Wales to reduce hate crimes.

The Committee considered correspondence on the petitions and agreed to pass the petitions to its successor committee following the Senedd election to enable it to continue to scrutinise the development of new teaching resources and professional learning needs.

3.16 P-05-1083 Protect leaseholders in Wales from paying for cladding remedial works

Neil McEvoy MS declared the following relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A: He has campaigned extensively on this issue.

The Committee considered correspondence from the Minister for Housing and Local Government and her commitment to provide further details of a funding offer when this is available. In light of the fact that this is the Committee's final meeting ahead of the 2021 Senedd election, it agreed to pass the petition for further consideration in the next Senedd term.

3.17 P-05-943 We call on the Welsh Government to take urgent action to secure improvements to the A487 between Gellilydan and Maentwrog

The Committee considered correspondence from the Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales and noted the safety work which has been carried out on the road since the petition was submitted, including a new 40mph speed limit. In light of the Minister's assurance that compliance with the new speed limit and the need for further safety improvements are being monitored, the Committee agreed that there is little further that it could achieve at this time. It agreed to congratulate the petitioners and close the petition.

3.18 P-05-1061 Give financial support to Pet Boarding businesses

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and, on the basis of the petitioner's satisfaction that the Government has instructed councils to pay out the discretionary grant to businesses of this type, it agreed to congratulate the petitioner and close the petition.

4 Review of petitions under consideration

The Committee reviewed a list of the other petitions currently under consideration. In line with its previous indication that it would pass a limited number of petitions for further consideration by its successor committee following the Senedd election, it agreed the proposed actions on the petitions currently under consideration outlined in the paper provided.

5 Papers to note

The papers were noted.

- 5.1 P-05-957 “Next Stop St Clears” – Support the bid for a railway station in St Clears
- 5.2 P-05-1017 Allow pupils to wear masks in all areas of the school premises
- 5.3 P-05-825 Protect children's lungs from harmful pollution whilst at school
- 5.4 P-05-882 Transforming the response for older people experiencing domestic abuse – a call for action
- 5.5 P-05-1077 Stop the voting boundary change to Ystrad Mynach south
- 5.6 P-05-812 We call for the Welsh Government to encourage trusts to implement the NICE guidelines for Borderline Personality Disorder or justify why they do not do so

Chair's closing remarks

In recognition of the end of the Committee’s final meeting, the Chair noted that it has considered 473 new petitions with a total of more than one million signatures during this Senedd term and that a legacy report of its work would be published shortly.

The Chair thanked everybody who has submitted and signed petitions, provided written or oral evidence to the Committee, the staff who have supported it, and all the Members of the Committee during that time.

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

The motion was agreed.

7 Legacy Report

The Committee discussed its legacy report and agreed to make a number of recommendations for consideration by its successor committee in the next Senedd.