

Concise Minutes – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

Video Conference via Zoom

Meeting date: Friday, 16 July 2021

Meeting time: 09.30 – 10.54

This meeting can be viewed

on [Senedd TV](#) at:

<http://senedd.tv/en/12376>

Attendance

Category	Names
Members of the Senedd:	Jack Sargeant MS (Chair) Luke Fletcher MS Joel James MS Buffy Williams MS
Committee Staff:	Gareth Price (Clerk) Mared Llwyd (Second 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 Committee remit

Members noted the Committee's remit and responsibilities.

3 New Petitions

In line with the practice adopted by previous Petitions Committees, the Committee agreed that a written response will be sought from the Welsh Government, or another relevant organisation, in advance of its first consideration of new petitions in future.



3.1 P-06-1158 The Welsh Government to put in place a dedicated disability Minister within the next term of Government

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to the First Minister to seek a response to the issues raised by the petition.

3.2 P-06-1159 Finally ban the manufacture, sale and use of animal snares in Wales

Luke Fletcher MS declared the following relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A:

He supported this cause during his election campaign.

Joel James MS declared the following relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A:

He is a member of The British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC).

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to the relevant Minister to seek a response to the issue raised by the petition and a timescale for the proposed ban.

3.3 P-06-1160 Require local Welsh exam centres to accept home-educated students for public exams

The Committee considered the petition for the first time agreed to write to the Minister for Education and the Welsh Language to seek a response to the petition.

3.4 P-06-1161 Routine collection and publication of data of how many babies/children return to their care experienced parents care at the end of a Parent and Child Placement

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to could write to the Children's Commissioner to seek her response to the petition.

3.5 P-06-1162 Break up the County of Rhondda Cynon Taff and join the Cynon Valley to Merthyr County

Joel James MS declared the following relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A:

He is a Councillor on Rhondda Cynon Taff Council.

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed, that as there was little action it could take on the issue raised, to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

3.6 P-06-1163 Extend the postgraduate STEMM bursary to all MSc students in Wales

Jack Sargeant MS declared the following relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A:

He is an engineer.

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to the:

- Minister for Education and the Welsh Language to seek a response to the issue raised by the petition; and
- Centre for Alternative Technologies asking whether they have sought designation as a Higher Education Institute from the Welsh Government for this and other courses, or whether they intend to do so in the future.

3.7 P-06-1164 Make bullying and harassment in schools a criminal offence from the age of criminal responsibility

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to the Minister for Education and the Welsh Language to seek his response to the issue raised in the petition.

3.8 P-06-1165 Ban the sale and consumption of alcohol within the Senedd

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to the Senedd Commission given that the management of the Senedd estate is a matter the Commission. The Committee also agreed there was little further action it could undertake on the petition given its remit, and therefore agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner for raising the issue.

3.9 P-06-1166 Provide tax free grants to people working in the arts and to provide grant funding to arts venues

Buffy Williams MS declared the following relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A:

She knows the petitioner.

Joel James MS declared the following relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A:

He knows the petitioner.

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to the Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport requesting a response to the issues raised in the petition.

3.10 P-06-1167 Support Welsh travel & tourism businesses

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to the Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport requesting a response to the issues raised.

3.11 P-06-1168 Consider re-doing this current academic year for students across wales

Luke Fletcher MS declared the following relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A:

He is a school governor.

Joel James MS declared the following relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A:

He is a school governor.

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and considering the Welsh Government previously rejecting proposals for pupils to repeat the school year and the alternative recovery plan that it has published the Committee agreed to:

write to the Minister for Education and the Welsh Language to seek an update on the issues raised in the petition; and

once a response is received from the Minister it agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

3.12 P-06-1169 Let Welsh citizens vote on lockdown restrictions

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and noted that there was little further action it could undertake on the issues raised in the petition. As such, the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

3.13 P-06-1170 An immediate independent review of the Tier 1 and Tier 2 selection process in the WPWL

Luke Fletcher MS declared the following relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A: He is a co-submitter on a relevant [statement of opinion](#).

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to both the Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport and the Football Association of Wales to seek their views on the issues raised in the petition.

4 Updates to previous petitions

4.1 P-05-914 Equal Access to Health Care for the Disabled

The Committee considered the correspondence received and the work undertaken by its predecessor Committee and agreed to produce a short report on the issues raised within the petition.

4.2 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 that the petition has achieved its aim to ensure funding for limb amputees to have prosthetic technology equal to that available within the English and Scottish NHS. It therefore agreed to close the petition and congratulate the petitioner on the positive outcome achieved.

The Committee also agreed to produce a case study to showcase how petitions can make a difference.

4.3 P-05-1078 Increase funding for mental health services and improve waiting times for people needing help in crisis. We need a change!

The Committee considered the correspondence received, and noted that the petition had been debated in Plenary in the last Senedd and agreed to thank the petitioner for raising the issue and to share a recap of the debate with the petitioner. Members recalled strong campaigns for 24h access to Mental Health service during the election campaign – and agreed to write to the Minister for Health and Social Services seeking an update on that related issue.

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

The Committee considered the correspondence received and noted that the then Minister clearly stated that decisions regarding live or recorded lessons are a matter for the school and local authority. Consequently, there was little further action it could undertake. It agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner for raising the issue and to suggest they contact their school or local authority directly if they wished to take the matter forward.

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

The Committee considered the correspondence received and concluded, that with regret, there was little further action it could undertake on the issue and therefore agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

4.6 P-05-1092 Do not delay the May 2021 elections

As the timeframe noted in the petition has lapsed the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

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

As the action the petition was calling for is being implemented the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

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

As the action the petition was calling for is being implemented the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

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

As the action the petition was calling for is being implemented the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

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

As the action the petition was calling for is being implemented the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

4.11 P-05-1157 Allow schools to assess students how they see fit, including the use of open-book assessments

As the timeframe noted in the petition has lapsed the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

5 Papers to note

5.1 Previous Chairs' Forum legacy report

The Committee noted the report.

5.2 Predecessor committee legacy report

The Committee noted the report.

5.3 P-05-805 Fair Deal For Supply Teachers

The Committee noted the response from the Welsh Government and agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

5.4 P-05-886 Stop the Red Route (A55/A494 corridor)

Jack Sargeant MS declared the following relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A: He has declared his support for the route.

The Committee noted the statement by the Deputy Minister for Climate Change which confirms a review of the route will be undertaken. Considering the [Committee's recommendation](#) that a review be undertaken the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

6 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to resolve to exclude the public from items 7 and 8 of the meeting.

The motion was agreed.

7 Committee procedures and ways of working

The Committee considered its procedures and ways of working and agreed to write to Business Committee to inform it of its decision to maintain the current thresholds:

- requiring 50 signatures for the Committee to consider the petition; and
- requiring 10,000 signatures before the Committee considers seeking a Senedd debate on the petition.

The Committee agreed to review these thresholds in due course to ensure they remain appropriate.

8 Strategic approach to Committee remit

The Committee considered how it wished to approach its remit and agreed:

- to focus on high level issues where the Committee may be able to shape Government policy; and
- to undertake outreach and engagement work once it is safe to do so.