

Concise Minutes – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

This meeting can be viewed

Video Conference via Zoom

on [Senedd TV](#) at:

Meeting date: Monday, 4 October 2021

<http://senedd.tv/en/12452>

Meeting time: 14.02 – 15.22

On site

Attendance

Category	Names
Members of the Senedd:	Jack Sargeant MS (Chair) Luke Fletcher MS Joel James MS Buffy Williams MS
Witnesses:	
Committee Staff:	Graeme Francis (Clerk) Kayleigh Imperato (Deputy Clerk) Samiwel Davies (Legal Adviser)

1 Introduction, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting. There were no apologies.

2 New Petitions

2.1 P-06-1173 Give legal protection to designated Special Landscape Areas in Wales

The Committee agreed to write back to the Minister to highlight their concerns regarding the current influence of Special Landscape Areas (SLAs), agreeing to ask if there is any way of strengthening the SLAs.



2.2 P-06-1179 Paint the trains on the mid Wales line to resemble caterpillars to encourage tourism

In light of the response received from the Minister, the Committee agreed that no further action could be taken, thanked the petitioner and closed the petition.

2.3 P-06-1183 Implement a 20MPH speed limit 100 metres either side of the new pedestrian crossing in Glan Conwy

Members agreed that the Chair of the Committee would go on a visit to Glan Conwy to meet the petitioner and assess the current situation at the location mentioned in the petition. The Committee also agreed to return to this issue once the Chair had returned from his visit, in order to assess how best to take this issue forward.

2.4 P-06-1188 Start a Welsh student Erasmus Scheme for students who study in Wales with European Union countries

The Committee noted that the Welsh Government announced its “International Learning Exchange” programme in March 2021. The Committee concluded that this had been a successful petition, congratulated the petitioner and closed the petition.

2.5 P-06-1189 Provide tuition grants to support medical students studying medicine as a second degree

The Committee sympathised with the petitioner on this issue. However, in light of the Government’s response indicating that they are currently not seeking to take any further action on this issue, the Committee concluded that there was no further action it could take and agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

2.6 P-06-1190 Ban the use of peat in horticulture and all growing media by 2023

The Committee noted that the Minister for Rural Affairs, North Wales and Trefnydd is working on a consultation around this issue and encouraged the petitioner and supporters to get involved in the consultation when it comes forward. The Committee also agreed to keep a watching brief on the issue and return to the issue following the completion of the consultation.

2.7 P-06-1192 Ensure that centre assessment grades contribute towards final GCSE and A Level grades

The Committee noted the difficulties faced by qualifications bodies in drawing up their assessment plans during a pandemic – and the huge impact this has on students and teachers at a time that is already highly pressured. The Committee however agreed that as education and learning in schools is returning to normal, to thank the petitioner – wish them well in their studies – and closed the petition.

2.8 P-06-1196 The inauguration of an Honorary National System of Awards; The Cymru Knighthood Award

The Committee noted the current award programme of the St David Awards and agreed to thank the petitioner and close the petition. In closing the petition, Members also agreed to write to the First Minister in order to highlight the petition and ask what the St. David Awards is doing to remember figures from Welsh history.

2.9 P-06-1198 Welsh Government Ministers should save the trees, hedgerows and fields in Cefn Yr Hendy, Miskin

Joel James MS declared the following relevant interests under Standing Order 17.24A: He has previously been involved in this specific application.

He has previously met those involved with this campaign.

The Committee noted that given the Welsh Government's contractual position, little could be done to stop the sale, and the building of houses is largely a planning issue. The Committee sympathised with the petitioner on this issue, concluding that no further avenues were available to the Committee on this issue and agreed to close the petition.

In closing the petition, members wished to suggest that the petitioner contacts their local authority and representatives.

2.10 P-06-1199 Place Cardiff Children's Services into special measures and conduct an urgent independent review

The Committee noted the role of Care Inspectorate Wales in assessing performance of local authorities, and that there is a clear process for them to raise concerns directly with Welsh Government. Members agreeing to note and close the petition.

2.11 P-06-1203 Do not roll out Covid 19 vaccine passports for retail, hospitality or other premises

The Committee noted that this issue was going to be discussed and voted on in Plenary on 5 October 2021. Members therefore agreed to await the outcome of that plenary session, agreeing to bring back the petition for discussion at the next Committee meeting, following that Plenary session.

The Committee also agreed to inform the petitioner of the outcome of the vote held during the Plenary session on 5 October 2021.

2.12 P-06-1214 Ban the use of face masks in the classroom

Following the request of the Chair to bring forward this petition's closing date in order to be considered at the Committee meeting on 5 October, and due to the action called for in the petition having already been implemented, Members agreed to close the petition.

2.13 P-06-1215 Restart Welsh parkruns at the same time as english ones

Following the request of the Chair to bring forward this petition's closing date in order to be considered at the Committee meeting on 5 October, and due to the action called for in the petition having already been implemented, Members agreed to close the petition.

2.14 P-06-1216 Reduce costs for PCR test in Wales when returning from abroad and end isolation for vaccinated

Following the request of the Chair to bring forward this petition's closing date in order to be considered at the Committee meeting on 5 October, and due to the action called for in the petition having already been implemented, Members agreed to close the petition.

3 Updates to previous petitions

3.1 P-05-1046 Reconsider lockdown and investigate scientific evidence

The Committee noted that the circumstances have changed with most of the adult population having been vaccinated and most restrictions lifted in Wales, agreeing to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

3.2 P-05-1056 Give Local Authorities powers to control the housing market in rural and tourist areas of Wales

Luke Fletcher MS declared the following relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A: He knows the petitioner.

The Committee sympathised with the issues raised in the petition and agreed to write to the Chair of the Local Government and Housing Committee in order to ask that they consider this issue as part of their programme of work. Members agreed to close the petition.

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

The Committee agreed that as a result of the approach taken by the Welsh Government on this issue, that there was little further action that the Committee could take, noting that it would be likely that there will always be some circumstances where leaseholders would need to be in place. Members agreed to thank the petitioner and close the petition.

3.4 P-05-1094 Stop the erosion of Pontypridd's heritage – save the White Bridge

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

He knows the petitioner.

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

She knows the petitioner.

The Committee agreed to welcome the approach taken to safeguard the White bridge by Rhondda Cynon Taf Council in partnership with CADW and note that the petition has achieved what it set out to do. Members agreed to congratulate the petitioner on the success of the petition and agreed to close the petition.

3.5 P-05-1142 Workout To Help Out Scheme

The Committee noted that work has and is being undertaken with sporting organisations and public bodies to support and encourage physical activity following the pandemic, and agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner for raising this issue.

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

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

She lives in Pentre, one of the areas affected by the flooding in 2020.

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

He knows the petitioner.

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

He is a Councillor at Rhondda Cynon Taf County Council.

The Committee agreed to write back to the Minister for Climate Change, asking that the government brings together an overview of the findings from each of the different section 19 reports and the NRW report, that considers the human cost alongside the technical details.

Members also agreed to write to the Chair of the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee, requesting that they consider the issues and evidence raised by the petitioner as part of their future work.

3.7 P-05-1097 Ban game bird cages

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

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

The Committee agreed to write to the Minister for Rural Affairs, North Wales and Trefnydd to seek a response to the areas highlighted by the petitioner, asking how they may influence and interact with each other as well as the call from the petitioner, together with a clear timeframe.

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

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

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

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

He has previously signed a petition on this issue.

The Committee noted and welcomed the fact that the Welsh Government has already made a commitment to banning the use of snares in Wales, members therefore agreed to congratulate the petitioner and close the petition.

3.9 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 agreed to request a scoping paper from the research service on this issue, before deciding what actions could be taken on this petition.

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

The Committee noted that legislation already exists when bullying or harassment constitute a criminal offence, and that the Welsh Government does not intend to legislate further on this issue. Members therefore agreed to thank the petitioner for raising the issue and close the petition.

In closing the petition, members wished to make the statement that bullying and harassment is not acceptable in Wales.

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

The Committee agreed that this issue should now be taken up by individual Members of the Senedd, and that there was little further that the Committee could do on this issue. Members agreed to thank the petitioner for raising the petition and close the petition.

4 Paper to note

The Committee noted the letter.

5 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to resolve to exclude the public from item 6 of the meeting.

The motion was agreed.

6 Strategic Planning Session / Petitions data presentation

The Committee considered the evidence presented and agreed to return to the issue, requesting a paper on this issue that looked in more detail at the implications of changing the signature threshold by the next meeting.