

Concise Minutes – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee room 1

Meeting date: Monday, 30 September
2024

Meeting time: 14.00 – 15.40

This meeting can be viewed

on [Senedd TV](#) at:

<http://senedd.tv/en/14104>

Hybrid

Attendance

Category	Names
Members of the Senedd:	Carolyn Thomas MS (Chair) Rhys ab Owen MS Luke Fletcher MS Peter Fox MS Vaughan Gething MS
Witnesses:	
Committee Staff:	Gareth Price (Clerk) Kayleigh Imperato (Deputy Clerk) Gruffydd Owen (Legal Adviser) Lara Date (Second Clerk)

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Members welcomed the Chair and Vaughan Gething MS as new Members of the Petitions Committee.



Senedd Cymru
Welsh Parliament

2 New Petitions

2.1 P-06-1444 Women of North Wales have the right to have a Menopause Services/Clinic in Ysbyty Gwynedd

The Committee considered the petition and agreed the questions raised by the petitioner were operational matters about service provision that were for the Health Board to respond to directly. In light of this Members agreed to write to Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board asking for:

more information about the current and expected demand for specialist menopause services provided through secondary care settings, and when and how they plan to provide this, both face-to-face and remotely;

more information about the provision of services in the medium of Welsh and any issues with staffing that provision; and

how feedback is gathered on the quality of women's experiences of menopause services in North Wales – what is the level of feedback received – if it is currently low what are their plans to address that, and whether there are plans to change existing service provision based on that.

The Committee also noted there was a wider issue of the consistency of menopause services across all health boards in Wales, but this was something that should be included in the Women's Health Plan for NHS Wales due to be published in December 2024. In the first instance it was in the remit of the Health and Social Care Committee to scrutinise that plan, therefore the Committee agreed to write to the Chair of the Health and Social Care Committee about the matter.

In addition to the actions agreed the Chair noted that she would also be speaking in a Members' debate on Women's healthcare in plenary on Wednesday 2 October where she would highlight the petition.

2.2 P-06-1435 We're calling on the Welsh Government to commit to implementing targeted lung cancer screening

The Committee considered the petition and agreed in the first instance to write directly to Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board regarding the details of the lung cancer screening pilot, to confirm when the pilot will conclude, when the full evaluation of the pilot is expected to conclude, and whether they plan any interim evaluation to take forward any learning points in the meantime, and if so when that would happen.

It was agreed that this information would be sought with a view to asking for an update from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care in 12 months' time, to ask how soon he hopes to roll out a screening programme if the pilot is deemed successful. Members also wanted to seek more information on other shorter-term actions being taken around smoking cessation and tackling air pollution.

Additionally the Committee agreed to highlight the petition to the Chair of the Health and Social Care Committee as the lead Committee for scrutiny of these plans.

2.3 P-06-1450 Welsh Government to take action to protect people from airborne infections in health care settings

Vaughan Gething MS declared a relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A as follows:

“I think it would be sensible if I don't take part in trying to guide the committee either way, because I will continue to give evidence to a variety of modules of the UK COVID inquiry, and I think it is inevitable that, if the Senedd COVID special purpose committee wishes to examine matters, I'll be giving evidence to that. So, just to put that on the record, and make clear that I won't seek to sway the committee either way in terms of the potential action.”

The Committee considered the petition and agreed to write to the new Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care to seek a response to the petitioner's further queries, and for an update on the NHS Wales trials of the effectiveness of HEPA air filtration.

Members also agreed to copy in co-chairs of the Senedd Covid-19 Inquiry Special Purpose Committee for information and to ask that the matters be considered as part of its work plan following up on any gaps in the work of the UK Covid-19 inquiry. Members agreed to keep the petition open pending a response from the Welsh Government.

2.4 P-06-1458 Stop the Welsh Government from using Phil Jones Associates (PJA) to review the 20mph scheme

The Committee considered the petition and agreed with the petitioner's own view that it had been overtaken by events. In light of the new guidance and local authorities now assessing the changes proposed in their local areas, Members agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

3 Updates to previous petitions

3.1 P-06-1350 Re-open Dyfi Ward at Tywyn Hospital now

Members considered the petition and agreed that it is unusual for the Committee to keep writing back and forth to the Health Board for 18 months and not achieving an outcome.

Members expressed their frustration on behalf of the petitioners and agreed in order to get some targeted responses for the petitioner they would write again to Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. The Committee agreed that honesty and clarity was

needed as to whether it is possible for the Health Board to provide the service or not, in light of the ongoing recruitment and retention issues.

Members agreed to ask how the service used to be provided, and where is it currently being provided. It was noted that a safe and sustainable model of quality care is preferable to poor local care.

The Chair of the Committee agreed to ask whether the Chair of the Health and Social Care Committee would be interested in co-signing the letter to the Health Board.

3.2 P-06-1409 Cease all further planning for road charging in Wales

The Committee considered the petition and agreed there is nothing more they can do to take the issue forward and agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

In addition to closing the petition Members noted the petitioner could write to Cardiff County Council about the issue if they would like to, or may wish to open a new petition at a later date if a road charging scheme comes forward.

3.3 P-06-1428 Stop the flooding in Caenant Terrace, Skewen NOW!

The Committee considered the petition and noted the Council's correspondence makes it clear that this is a complex process which will not be concluded for at least another year. Members were satisfied with the positive intentions from both Welsh Government and the local authority, and that everything is being done to prioritise this work.

The Committee agreed to write to the local authority seeking a further update and keep a watching brief on the issue. In doing so Members also agreed to write to local Senedd Members to highlight the issue for their attention.

Members noted the stress that the fear of flooding creates and would therefore write back to the petitioner to emphasise that the issue is being taken seriously and they will be kept informed of any updates.

Members noted the stress that the fear of flooding creates and would therefore write back to the petitioner to emphasise that the issue is being taken seriously and they will be kept informed of any updates.

3.4 P-06-1445 Change Land Transaction Tax for First Time Buyers in Wales to be in line with the UK Government

The Committee considered the petition and noted the Cabinet Secretary has provided a comprehensive response to the petitioners additional questions, but there is clearly a difference of opinion with the petitioner on the policy approach in Wales.

Members noted there is little more the Committee can do to take the issue forward, however before closing the petition, the petitioner's recent response should be forwarded to new Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language, as it calls for further assessment to be made of the possible benefits of targeted relief. The Cabinet Secretary would also be asked when a further review of the impact of LTT was planned.

4 Papers to note

4.1 P-06-1346 Provide free and accessible public transport for under 18s in Wales to lower carbon emissions and boost growth

Members noted the Welsh Government response to the Committee's report.

4.2 P-06-1335 Welsh Government should take steps to ensure vulnerable adults without bank cards can pay with cash

Members noted the Welsh Government response to the Committee's report.

5 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the remainder of today's business:

The motion was agreed.

6 Discussion on the Committee's Forward Work Programme

The Committee discussed its forward work programme for the remainder of the autumn term. Members agreed to return to a discussion of future strategic priorities with a new Chair and membership.

The Committee agreed to consider a scoping paper at a future meeting on further work on the petition 'Ban smartphones in all schools in Wales (with exemptions for exceptional circumstances)'.