

Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:
Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date:
30 April 2013

Meeting time:
09:00

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



For further information please contact:

Naomi Stocks
Committee Clerk
029 2089 8421
Petition@wales.gov.uk

Kayleigh Driscoll
Deputy Committee Clerk
029 2089 8421
Petition@wales.gov.uk

Agenda

1. Introduction, apologies and substitutions

2. New petitions 9.00 – 9.15

- 2.1 P-04-475 Wanted – Buses for Meirionnydd (Pages 1 – 34)
- 2.2 P-04-476 Restructuring in National Museum Wales (Pages 35 – 37)
- 2.3 P-04-477 Support for the Control of Dogs (Wales) Bill (Page 38)

3. Updates to previous petitions 9.15 – 10.00

Health

- 3.1 P-03-150 National Cancer Standards (Pages 39 – 49)
- 3.2 P-04-396 Emergency Life Support Skills (ELS) for Wales Schoolchildren (Pages 50 – 53)
- 3.3 P-04-424 Retain services at Neath Port Talbot Hospital (Pages 54 – 57)
- 3.4 P-04-450 Barry & Vale needs a fully functioning hospital (Pages 58 – 60)

Economy, Science and Transport

The following three items will be considered together

- 3.5 P-04-361 Free bus passes for students under 25, and in full-time education (Page 61)
- 3.6 P-04-371 Reduced fares on public transport for all children up to the age of eighteen (Page 62)
- 3.7 P-04-382 Student fares on public transport (Page 63)
- 3.8 P-04-393 Llanymynech and Pant Bypass Action Group (Pages 64 – 67)
- 3.9 P-04-409 Welsh names for new trunk roads in Wales (Pages 68 – 71)
- 3.10 P-04-416 North-South Rail Services (Pages 72 – 73)
- 3.11 P-04-438 Shopping Access (Page 74)

Natural Resources and Food

- 3.12 P-04-343 Prevent the destruction of amenities on common land – Anglesey (Pages 75 – 77)
- 3.13 P-04-465 Save Welsh Milk, its infrastructure & its jobs (Pages 78 – 80)

Education

- 3.14 P-04-427 A new Welsh language law for Wales (Pages 81 – 85)
- 3.15 P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools (Pages 86 – 153)
- 3.16 P-04-467 January exams (Pages 154 – 156)

4. Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the following business: 10:00

Item 5

5. Discussion of the Forward Work Programme 10.00 – 10.30

P-04-475 Wanted – Buses for Meirionnydd

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to:

- Review the funding for rural bus services to ensure adequate levels of service for the whole of Gwynedd but particularly south Meirionnydd.
- Consider funding to be ensured for additional services to improve access to health services, education, and employment, and thus support the economy and tourism of the area.

Petition raised by: Barbara Snowball

Date petition first considered by Committee: 30 April 2013

Number of signatures : 174



Naomi Stocks
Petitions Committee Clerk
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA.

6 April 2013

Dear Naomi,

As you have instructed, please find enclosed our Petition with supporting evidence. We would be grateful if you would confirm receipt of these.

We understand this will be presented to the Petitions Committee on 30th April, and we look forward to hearing the outcome.

Thank you for all your help in this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "B. Snowball".

Mrs. Barbara Snowball
MAWDDACH BUS USERS

**WANTED – BUSES FOR MEIRIONNYDD
PETITION**

**SUPPORTING MATERIAL
FILE 1**

**MAWDDACH BUS USERS
APRIL 2013**

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to:

- Review the funding for rural bus services to ensure adequate levels of service for the whole of Gwynedd but particularly south Meirionnydd.
- Consider funding to be ensured for additional services to improve access to health services, education, and employment, and thus support the economy and tourism of the area.

Current problems include:

1. Access to Health Services limited by inadequate bus services

- a. Bangor and Wrexham Hospitals are both 60 miles from the Tywyn-Dolgellau area. This makes attending for scheduled appointments and tests difficult.

For example:

i. Depart Dolgellau 9.15am Arrive Wrexham 11.20

ii. Depart Wrexham 1.15pm to connect with the last bus from Dolgellau at 4.20 pm for Tywyn.

Two hours is not enough time to allow for waiting times and consultations.

- b. Radical changes are to be implemented at Tywyn Hospital. It will lose its X-ray facilities as well as having the hours of the Minor Injuries Unit reduced. In future patients will have to travel from Tywyn to Dolgellau Hospital for treatment. The last bus from Tywyn to Dolgellau on the number 28 bus is 2.10 pm, arriving at Dolgellau at 3.05. The last bus back to Tywyn is 4.20 pm. This is clearly not enough time to walk to the hospital from the bus stop (some 15-20 minutes), have X-rays or other investigations, then get back to catch the last bus back to Tywyn.

2. Educational opportunities undermined by transport problems

Current bus services mean that students at schools and college are unable to stay on after the last bus i.e. 4.20 pm, and are thus prevented from attending any after school/college activities including extra tuition, sports, or drama.

Adults are also unable to attend evening classes in either Tywyn or Dolgellau because they are cannot to get home by bus.

3. Employment opportunites limited by poor bus services

People working in Tywyn but living outside the town, or working in Dolgellau but living towards Tywyn, have great difficulty in getting to and from work if they do not have a car. In addition, even when offered employment their hours are constrained by the transport difficulties.

For example: The first bus into Dolgellau from Tywyn arrives at 8.55 am, and the last bus back is 4.20 pm. This precludes any 9-5 full-time working day. It also has an impact on training which is offered 'after hours'.

4. Social Isolation

Elderly people with no car are becoming increasingly isolated because they cannot travel to see their friends and loved ones. It is very difficult for them to attend hospital appointments because even for them, Hospital transport is unavailable if they are not disabled. This means they potentially become a greater burden on the NHS, through the stress and depression which leads to more illness.

5. The impact on tourism and the local economy

The inadequate bus service has a detrimental effect on tourism and local economy.

- Tourists without cars cannot visit local beauty spots and attractions because the buses do not 'fit' with easy day returns. This means they spend less time and money in the area.
- There is the loss of income to the various educational establishments because locals and visitors cannot access courses, talks, and events held in the evenings.
- The lack of buses has contributed to the growth of online shopping in the area, e.g. without ready access to the local Co-op or Spar stores, the Asda Home delivery service has established a strong customer base in just 2 years. This money spent on groceries has gone out of the area to the detriment of local businesses.

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APPENDIX 1 – PETITION 2013 – in File 2

APPENDIX 2 - PETITION 2012 – in File 2

INTRODUCTION

The materials provided here are supporting evidence for the e-petition presented to the Welsh Assembly Government in April 2013 by the Mawddach Bus Users group.

Mawddach Bus Users are campaigning for better bus transport in Gwynedd, especially the area of south Meirionnydd. This is the region which includes Dolgellau to Tywyn, with connections to Traws Cambria routes Bangor to Aberystwyth and Wrexham to Barmouth. The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation rates part of this area (the Llangelynnin Ward) as 'poor' for access to services but the whole region has difficulties relating to public transport. For example, the town of Dolgellau, and the villages of Rhoslefain, Brynchrug, and Llanegryn have no train service so buses are vital.

We are appealing to you because of the profound spirit of discouragement and isolation which is spreading in this area. The cuts in the local bus services have affected many people, creating a growing sense of isolation. Access to healthcare, education and employment are all limited as is the ability to maintain social relationships or leisure interests.

The Mawddach Bus Users group is appealing to the Welsh Assembly Government to review the situation and facilitate better public transport. The current inadequate bus service in Meirionnydd is at odds with the Welsh Assembly's own transport aspirations and at present the basic human needs of the local population (in an already impoverished area) are being denied.

MAWDDACH BUS USERS

LOCAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT – BRIEFING DOCUMENT

No. 28 bus (Lloyds Coaches) from Dolgellau to Tywyn, passing through Fairbourne, Llwyngwriil, Rhoslefain, Llanegryn, Brynecrug.

Not many years ago, the Welsh Assembly Government was very proactive in promoting a good public transport system and encouraging people to use buses instead of their cars. The bus service was excellent but, mainly due to the economic climate, they were drastically cut. This is having a detrimental impact on the lives of people living in rural Meirionnydd. The public transport system is vital to society. The **Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation** rated our immediate area (the Llangelynnin Ward) “**poor**” for access to services but, more generally too, access is difficult because of timetabling and connection problems.

E.G. Dolgellau to Tywyn

The running times were halved, including cancellation of the two later runs, 5.40 pm and 7.45 pm. This means that going to Wrexham, Bangor or Aberystwyth for hospital appointments, shopping or visiting friends & family is a problem. These destinations are all approx 60 miles away and the bus service is the only way for many residents to access health services. For example, the bus arrives in Wrexham at about 11.15 am but travellers **MUST** leave again at 1.15 pm in order to catch the last connecting No. 28 bus from Dolgellau at 4.20 pm. Two hours is not enough time, particularly if you have a hospital visit.

In addition, people cannot access leisure and theatre venues in the evenings and the Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor students are unable to stay later than 4.0 pm for tutorials or extra sessions to increase their skills/sports, etc.

Tywyn to Dolgellau

The last two No. 28 runs were cancelled, and the last bus now, is 2.10 pm. The bus connections in Tywyn are very poor. For example – the X29 (Lloyds Coaches) bus leaves Machynlleth on the X29 (Lloyds Coaches) at 12.15, arriving in at Tywyn 12.47. The connecting No 28 bus leaves Tywyn for Dolgellau at 2.10 pm. - a wait of 1 hr 27 mins. with very little shelter.

Social Issues

Many people, particularly the elderly and frail, are becoming increasingly isolated because they are unable to travel on public transport due to poor connections. This creates a greater demand for ambulance cars if they have no car of their own or anyone to take them to hospital appointments. If they do not qualify for an ambulance car there is a danger that they do not attend much needed appointments and may become a greater cost to the NHS in the long run.

This situation is likely to be exacerbated by the impending tragic reduction in working hours at Tywyn Hospital minor injuries, and the removal of x-ray facilities; this makes the need for an improved bus service even greater. People on the southern side of the Mawddach estuary, and down the coast, will have travel to Dolgellau hospital for consultant appointments and tests. The latest No. 28 bus is 2.10 pm from Tywyn, arriving in Dolgellau at 3.05pm. The last bus for the return journey is 4.20pm. The walk up to the hospital from Eldon Square (for a fit person) is a good 15 minutes each way. In the worst case scenario this allows a totally inadequate 40 minutes to be x-rayed and seen by a health professional.

Socially too, people are limited in what they can do because of inadequate public transport. For example (and there are many more) an 80 year old lady living in Fairbourne used to enjoy visiting her sister in Wrexham every week. She can no longer do this because of the current lack of connecting public transport.

Rhoslefain, Llanegryn, Brynchrug and surrounding areas are not served by the Cambrian Railway, so buses are the only option for people living there. Dolgellau too is not on the railway network so the lack of good bus connections and appropriate late buses creates very real difficulties. People are extremely disheartened with the situation.

Express Motors have extended the Llandudno to Blaenau Ffestiniog service through to Dolgellau (X1). However people living on the No. 28 bus route are not able to use the X1 service, because this would only give them a short time in Llandudno. This is a wonderful but wasted opportunity to socialise, shop and visit attractions along the route. People do not travel and engage with life in the community if they cannot get home.

The bus operators are saying that passenger numbers are reduced, making them not viable financially. Improving bus connections would lead to greater use of the longer distance buses as well as those for local trips.

We are asking for the reinstatement of later buses from Dolgellau to Tywyn, and Tywyn to Dolgellau to ameliorate the social and economic problems.

Business perspective

There are good economic arguments for improving the bus service in south Meirionnydd. These are:

Short term **Better connections would act as a 'loss leader' motivating people to start using the buses more frequently and building up the bus using 'habit'.**

Longer term **Better connections should result in more passengers using the longer distance routes, thereby increasing overall profit to bus operators.**

More buses on the road = more employment = more tax to the Treasury = more finance going to Gwynedd Council + other spending + reducing car emissions and fuel usage.

BUT

Less buses = unemployment pay to drivers = less tax to the Treasury, + less money to spend on the local economy + strain on the NHS due to poor health and depression caused by the knock on effect of isolation etc.

Money has to be spent to generate more money.

The tourist industry needs to be encouraged. Some areas will die or become 'ghost villages' filled with holiday homes if they become inaccessible through a lack of public transport. With the increased popularity of walking and rambling groups, together with organisations like the U3A who seek out new places to visit, a good public transport system is essential to draw them to a location. For local residents too a regular reliable bus service encourages social activities. For example, the Fairbourne Senior Citizens Club goes on regular outings, to help them get out and meet people. They can only go to places served by public transport. It is important to help them to be able to do this.

If the current bus service could be reviewed and improved, by reinstating later buses, it would greatly benefit all the local communities, and give tourism a much needed boost.

If current economic stringency prevents a long term commitment to improving the bus services in the area, could a one year trial be implemented? We could do our part by making sure that local people are aware of the travel options and encourage greater bus usage.

The recent Petitions (in paper and online) have shown the commitment of local residents

MAWDDACH BUS USERS

EXAMPLES OF PRESENT TIMETABLE DIFFICULTIES IN SOUTH
MEIRIONNYDD

Timings These are erratic and inconsistent.

- | | | |
|-----|---|---------|
| 1. | First bus from Dolgellau to Tywyn | 9.10am |
| 2. | Last bus from Dolgellau to Tywyn | 16.20pm |
| 3. | Last bus from Tywyn to Dolgellau | 14.10pm |
| BUT | | |
| 4. | Service T2 from Dolgellau (via Corris)
to Aberystwyth | 17.20pm |
| 5. | Service X27 from Dolgellau (via Corris)
to Machynlleth | 17.55pm |

Connections These are poor or non-existent.

E.G No 28 Dolgellau to Tywyn

- a) Leaves Dolgellau 9.10am arrives Tywyn 10.05am
onward connection to Machynlleth (X29) 10.50am
 - b) Leaves Dolgellau 11.15am arrives Tywyn 12.10pm
onward connection to Machynlleth (X29) 12.50pm
- In each case, a wait of over 40 minutes with no shelter.

E.G No X29 Machynlleth to Tywyn, then 28 Tywyn to Dolgellau

- a) X29 arrives in Tywyn 10.47am but 28 to Dolgellau does
not leave Tywyn until 12.10pm.
 - b) X29 arrives in Tywyn 12.47pm but the 28 to Dolgellau
not leave Tywyn until 14.10pm.
- In each case a wait of 1 hour 23 minutes, again with no
shelter.
- c) X29 arrives in Tywyn at 14.42pm – there is NO onward
connection to Dolgellau by bus for the rest of the day.

E.G Tywyn – Machynlleth via Dolgellau

- i) No 28 bus arrives from Tywyn at 8.55am
X27 bus to Machynlleth leaves at 8.55am
- ii) No 28 arrives Dolgellau 11.05am
X27 to Machynlleth leaves at 10.55am
- iii) No 28 arrives Dolgellau 13.05pm
X27 to Machynlleth leaves at 12.55pm

It would seem that there is no requirement for the buses to wait for these
connections.

**RESPONSES TO PETITIONS (ON-LINE AND PAPER) AND TO THE MEDIA
COVERAGE**

VERBAL SUBMISSIONS

- Alf T. (Llwyngwriil) He is unable to use the train because of the high platform at Llwyngwriil station. His GP is in Tywyn and if his appointments do not fit with the bus times he has to rely on friends to take him there and to Bronglais Hospital, Aberystwyth, when required.
- Bob M. (Llwyngwriil) Travelled to Wrexham Maelor Hospital on the X94 bus service. He arrived back in Dolgellau at 5.30 pm. There was no bus service to get him back home to Llwyngwriil. He had to phone a friend to take him home.
- Danielle Works in Tywyn on variable shifts. She has to get a taxi home from work 2-4 times a week because there are no late buses. This costs her between £7.50 -8.50 per fare and it is a struggle financially.
- Liz R. (Arthog) Had to stay in a hotel the night before an appointment at Bangor Hospital for extensive eye tests. Any later appointment would have made it impossible to get home the same day.
- Betty R (Llwyngwriil) She reluctantly feels that she has to keep and use her car because at 88 years old, she can not rely on the existing bus services. She worries about what will happen when she can no longer drive.
- Richy J. (Dolgellau) His son got a work placement in Arthog but was unable to take up the opportunity because he could not get there and back using public transport.

Sue W. (Llwyngwritl)

Works in Dolgellau but cannot get home by bus because she finishes at 5.30pm, and the last bus leaves Dolgellau at 4.20pm

Barbara S. (Arthog)

Would have been unable to attend her next appointment at Wrexham Maelor hospital because the earliest she could get there by bus from her home is 11.00am. Luckily, on that day her husband can get her to Dolgellau by car (before he goes to work) to catch the 6.30am bus from Dolgellau, arriving in Wrexham at 8.30am; this gives her time to walk to the hospital for her appointment at 10.10am. Without a car she would be unable to get to this appointment and have the consultation she needs for a chronic back problem.

POSTAL/E-MAIL SUBMISSIONS

Mrs M.A.J (Arthog)

Is very worried about, and regrets the loss of any evening bus services which allowed access to leisure facilities and events in Dolgellau and Tywyn. However, her main worry focuses on the problems that her student grand-daughter experiences. Her grand-daughter attends Coleg-Meirionnydd Dwyfor in Dolgellau but can **never** attend any tutorials, seminars or events after 4.00pm because she would miss the last bus home to Tywyn which leaves Dolgellau at 4.20pm.

Mr RW. (Tywyn)

His main concern is the poor bus service between Machynlleth and Tywyn and the impact on tourism. He points to the fact that the last bus from Machynlleth on weekdays is 17.15pm, but on Sundays it is 13.30pm. However, in July and August, there is a Sunday service that leaves Machynlleth at 17.30pm. He cannot see the logic of this; why not run the 17.30pm every Sunday throughout the year to help locals and tourists alike.

D.M (Arthog)

She is very unhappy about the effect the cuts to bus services have had to her life. She points to the fact that her family and her dentist live in Wrexham She has no car and relied upon the connections of the 28 bus service with the X94 (to Wrexham) in Dolgellau. However, since the later buses were taken off the 28 route she can no longer go because of the very short time the current service allows her in Wrexham. She is asking specifically for a later bus from Dolgellau to Arthog.

Mrs Anne R. (Tywyn)

She has two main concerns about the local bus service. Her husband has complex health problems and uses a wheelchair or walker. Changes to the NHS services mean that she and her husband have to travel to Dolgellau hospital but the no.28 bus service running 2 hourly from Tywyn has no wheelchair/pram or luggage space. The no. 30 bus only runs to Dolgellau at 08.00am and 17.10pm, with a return at 16.20pm. This means having to spend a long and tiring time there. She points to the contrast with the X29 and X28 services which run from Tywyn to Machynlleth and on to Aberystwyth. These are well-equipped with wheelchair and pram space, as well as a platform lowering system. This makes it much easier for the elderly with sticks, and young mothers with toddlers. She asks for these welfare friendly buses to be used on the 28 route, and for there to be a later bus from Dolgellau to Tywyn.

Mrs C. (Arthog)

She describes how she has had to give up many of the activities she used to do in Tywyn because she can no longer get home on the bus. She has also given up visiting friends in Wrexham because the bus connections no longer make this practicable. She points to difficulties in arranging Drs appointments in Dolgellau to fit with the bus times, and mentions people she knows who work in Dolgellau but *have* to use their cars because of inadequate public transport. She asks that consideration be given to returning route 28 'back to a reasonable and sensible' timetable like the service that she found in the area when she moved here six and a half years ago.

Dave R. (Dyffryn Ardudwy)

He argues that the reduction of bus services has caused hardship to those who rely upon them, i.e. the elderly and non car owners. In addition, he points to the added difficulties caused by the withdrawal of a comprehensive printed timetable. He suggests that this has made it difficult to plan journeys using several routes and will lead to lower usage of the services. He urges Councils and service providers to recognise the need for a comprehensive and reliable service, with easily accessible timetables that all can use, i.e. locals and tourists alike. He concludes that the bus service is essential in this area and should be promoted and not allowed to decline further.

Cllr Louise Hughes

Louise Hughes
Gwynedd ccl

Dear Cllr Hughes

If you can pass on to as many people as possible, my views, which are fully supported by my family, I'd be grateful:

My wife and adult daughter are shocked by the proposed cuts to the bus service in rural Meirionnydd. I accept that as occasional visitors we do not have as strong a voice as Gwynedd people, but having been visiting the area for more than 20 years, we have some knowledge of how it functions.

It is not only old people and children who depend on public transport in the countryside. For ecological reasons, we should all be trying to leave our car keys hanging in the hall whenever possible. It is, however, not possible to commute to work in, say, Dolgellau when the last bus towards Tywyn leaves before 5pm. Few bosses are going to allow a worker to leave in time for that bus so, because the terrain makes commuter-cycling over more than a few km mostly impractical, the would-be employee has to stay on the dole or somehow find the money to buy and run a car. One way and another, the result is more traffic and more pollution.

Coincidentally, I learnt of these cuts in the same week as I saw a programme on BBC-tv in which journalist Ian Hislop gave a very reasonable review of the Beeching rail cuts. It was noticeable that north Wales suffered more than most parts of Britain and that the public were expected to take up bus travel in huge numbers. In Meirionnydd 50 years on, that never happened and will not happen: the buses are being cut.

At the risk of seeming like a typical English incomer, let me explain that public transport is a key part of my holiday experience. My wife and I, and sometimes, separately, my adult daughter, rent the same cottage in Llwyngwril, and either travel there from our London home or go by train (our preference). If by car, we park it, with the aim of using it as little as possible, preferring the rich experience of travelling on the local trains and buses with local people. (Incidentally, the behaviour of teenage schoolchildren on the buses in the afternoons is excellent, if occasionally highly entertaining.) Though we have visited for decades, during which time we have seen many signs of decline in the village and around, we find plenty to do, including hiking. I have long hoped that on one of the walk routes, the removed railway line along the Mawddach from Dolgellau will be reinstated, not just for tourism but mainly as a service to local people

If bus services are run down in Meirionnydd, transport costs for the districts involved will rise. Road traffic will increase as residents and tourists abandon the remaining public transport and drive to their destinations, necessitating more expenditure on the roads. For example, the road used by the X28 that runs between Tywyn and Dolgellau will have to be widened.

Try explaining that to the voters.

Yours sincerely


David Altheer


27 March 2013

'FACEBOOK' SUBMISSIONS – ON MAWDDACH BUS USERS GROUP PAGE

- Ruth RO Stresses the importance of buses for young people in outlying villages. Without a car they are 'well and truly stuck' if there is no bus service for their needs. She suggests that for young people to become fully independent they need to be able to live without having to rely on lifts from their parents.
- Susan J Used Traveline to see what public transport it would suggest for her needs. She lives in Llwyngwril and works part-time in Dolgellau. The Traveline results showed that if she had to rely on public transport it would add 2.5 hours to her day making it a total of nine hours. So she uses her car.
- Margaret B She feels that people are not using the bus service because they are not sure how the buses work and not everyone has access to the Traveline. She recognises that if people do not use the buses they may be reduced even further. Her experience is that if she misses a bus, she will have to wait for 2 hours for another – if she's 'able to find out when it's due or where to catch it.'
- Morag R Gave details of four incidents which make her feel the bus service is very unreliable and worries about the future.
1. Her son and girlfriend travelled from Cardiff to Penrhyndeudraeth for a connection to Trawsfynydd. The train arrived 'at 14.45 pm and the bus leaves at **14.43 pm**, the next bus is at 18.33pm 4 hours later !!!'
 2. She used to travel with her 96 year old aunt to Porthmadog, arriving about 10 am. There used to be a bus back at 12.10 pm but now the return is at 14.28 pm – 'much too long for an elderly lady' and they no longer use the service.
 3. There is no longer a bus travelling from Porthmadog to Bangor at 10.10 pm which was useful for people who did evening work.

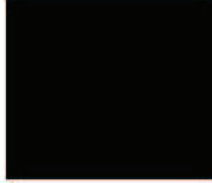
4. Travelling back from Wrexham recently the bus seemed unfit for the two hour journey in that it was noisy and uncomfortable with no lowering platform. A disabled lady in a wheelchair needed to get out of her chair to get on and off the bus, and the driver had to assist her. The bus did arrive in Dolgellau on time but her connection to Trawsfynydd was driving off and had not waited to see if there were passengers arriving from Wrexham who needed to go onward.

SUBMISSIONS BY COUNCILS AND LOCAL
ORGANISATIONS

- Barmouth Town Council
- Dolgellau Town Council
- Llanegryn Community Council
- Llangelynnin Community Council
- Gwynedd Council
 - Councillor Louise Hughes (Llangelynnin Ward)
 - Councillor William Gareth Roberts (Aberdaron Ward)
- Coleg Meirion Dwyfor
- Fairbourne, Friog & Arthog Senior Citizen's Association

BARMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL – CYNGOR TREF ABERMAW

c/o Clerk to the Council



1st April 2013

BUSES MEIRIONNYDD

Barmouth Town Council would like to offer their support to the Petition in regard of Bus and Transport services in Gwynedd.

The Council feels that any cuts in the services provided at present would be detrimental not only to the residents of the area but also to tourism which is such an important part of the local economy.

Yours faithfully,

Sue Phillips
Clerk to the Council

CYNGOR TREF DOLGELLAU

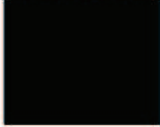
RHYS R. WILLIAMS (BA HONS. GRAD I.C.S.A.)

Clerc i'r Cyngor

Clerk to the Council



Barbara Snowball



03.04.2013

Dear Barbara

Re: Mawddach Bus Users Group – Number 28 Bus Dolgellau to Tywyn

I write on behalf of the Council to record the Council's support for your petition to have the later timed bus services which have serviced this route in the past, reinstated as soon as possible.

The Council is supportive of all your efforts regarding this matter and is appreciative of the fact that a local campaign group such as yourselves is actively seeking to defend such important services as these.

Please also note that with regard to the immediate vicinity of Dolgellau itself, the Council also places great importance on defending and encouraging public transport networks that assist the population in travelling to seek employment and / or for assisting people in attending hospital visits etc.

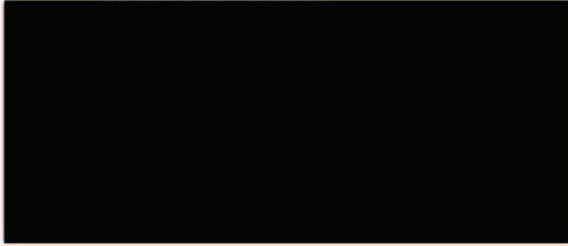
With best wishes for your campaign,

Yours Sincerely,

RHYS WILLIAMS

Clerk To The Council

Mrs Llywela Hughes



FOA Welsh Assembly Government

To whom it may concern:

The Councillors of Llanegryn Community Council are extremely concerned regarding the rapidly dwindling service of the No 28 bus service between Dolgellau and Tywyn.

For many young people, families and older people in the village of Llanegryn this service is vital and the only means of transport to the nearest shop or to visit the doctor or nurse. A taxi to Tywyn (one way) costs a minimum of £8 which makes it out of reach for people living on a low wage or limited income, therefore it makes them even more isolated.

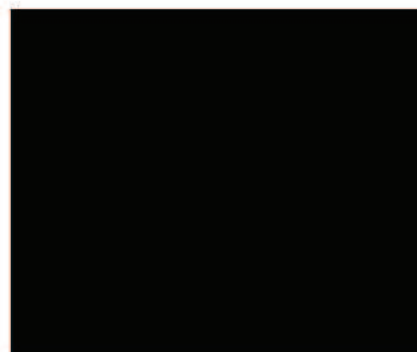
It is incomprehensible for people living in towns in the North and South of Wales who are within walking or public transport distance to every facility they need to realise how frustrated taxpayers who live in rural areas in Mid Wales are who see basic facilities such as health care being taken further away and yet their access to convenient public transport is being drastically reduced.

We appreciate that we now live in a difficult economic climate, but it seems that rural areas are in the front line when it comes to cuts.

Yours truly,

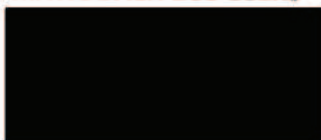
Llywela Hughes
Clerk

Cyngor Cymuned Llangelynnin Community Council



24.03.13

Ms Barbara Snowball
MAWDDACH BUS USERS



Dear Ms Snowball

Llangelynnin Community Council would like to support the local group "Mawddach Bus Users" in asking the Welsh Assembly to review the funding allocated for public transport in the South Meirionnydd area.

Due to recent cutbacks, the public transport service between Dolgellau and Tywyn has been drastically cut. This has proved detrimental to the lives of some people living in this area. Therefore, Llangelynnin Community Council would fully support your request to reinstate the later busses to run from Dolgellau to Tywyn and Tywyn to Dolgellau.

It is vitally important that the Welsh Assembly review the funding issues urgently – to ensure an adequate level of service be provided for the whole of Gwynedd – especially the No. 28 bus – from Dolgellau to Tywyn (through Fairbourne, Llywngwrl, Rhoslefain, Llanegryn and Bryncrug).

Hopefully the Welsh Assembly Government will consider these points and offer a favourable solution to these issues.

Best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Glenda Edwards - Clerk

(rec'd 6.4.2013)

Y Cyngorydd / Councillor

Louise Hughes
Ward – Llangelynin



Dear Ms Hart,

I am writing to you on behalf of the people in my Ward with regard to the continuing loss of public bus services in South Meirionnydd.

I'm sure I don't have to stress the importance of a reliable public transport system to you, however the situation as it currently stands here is reaching crisis point. There simply is no such thing as a reliable bus service in South Meirionnydd at the moment and things are set to get much worse.

The Welsh Assembly has pledged to "develop a Transport Strategy which maximises the contribution of transport right across the economic, social and environmental agenda. Enabling people to access healthcare, education, employment, shopping and leisure facilities. To support economic growth through improved links and more reliable journey times. To achieve a more effective and efficient transport system by developing policies which will promote and encourage safe, integrated, sustainable transport facilities within Wales to meet the needs of persons living or working in Wales".

The Assembly has further stated "improving the transport system is critical to our goal of raising the quality of life for the people of Wales. Transport has a vital role in bringing forward our social justice agenda by helping people to access services and opportunities".





All well and good, and no doubt those promises were made with the best intentions; however the truth is that the reverse is happening here in South Meirionnydd. We are now down to an almost skeletal bus provision and this has taken a toll on the lives of all those who use the buses on a daily or regular basis .

Merely saying that the bus service provided in the past is unsustainable given the present financial climate does not take into account the limited transport choices available to many people across Gwynedd but particularly those living in rural South Meirionnydd.

Put simply, people are becoming prisoners in their own homes. It is a well documented fact that, statistically social isolation is the biggest killer of elderly people.

Although the emphasis is usually given to the impact on our older residents, it also affects younger people too; students trying to get to and from college in Dolgellau, anyone trying to attend out of county hospital appointments (because all our local hospitals have been curtailed or closed) or those just going about their daily lives. The particular problem here is the lack of return bus connections which causes untold problems for anyone endeavouring to get home. A bad situation has become much worse. This simply is not good enough and robs many people of employment opportunities, a varied social life and so much more.



A good bus service is vital for economic growth and unless a solution is found soon more of our small, independent shops and businesses will be forced to close. The consequences for the tourist industry will be equally disastrous.

I also have to say the majority of the people in this area feel completely abandoned by the Welsh Assembly and have lost faith in the endless, meaningless platitudes that emanate from Cardiff Bay. We are definitely the poor relations compared to our counterparts in South Wales.

Nobody expects a bus every five minutes by any means but the situation we have to endure is now tantamount to geographical discrimination. It is obviously easiest to make cuts in the rural areas albeit to the detriment of the people living here.

I fully support Mrs Barbara Snowball in her campaign to reach a workable resolution to this burgeoning problem. We need acknowledgement of our predicament and immediate action by yourself as Ministry for Economy, Science and Transport for the Welsh Assembly. Mrs Snowball has been in communication with Gwynedd Council's Portfolio Holder for Transport Councillor Gareth Roberts, who has stated "we would be happy to review the situation should the volume of users on the existing services increase substantially". In reality this will not happen, it is a case of putting the cart before the horse.

Y Cyngorydd / Councillor

Louise Hughes
Ward - Llangelynin



The obvious solution would be to re-instate a workable, reliable bus service and THEN the volume of users will increase.

There is constant reference to a '21st Century education' or a '21st Century NHS' ~ well, how about a '21st Century bus service'?!

Many thanks for your time and I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Louise Hughes'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

05 - 04 - 2013



---Aelod Cabinet Amgylchedd Cabinet Member for
Environment Y Cynghorydd / Councillor William Gareth
Roberts
Ward - Aberdaron



Ein Cyf / Our Ref:
AD/gmo Eich Cyf / Your
Ref:

Mrs Barbara Snowball

22nd October, 2012

Dear Mrs Snowball

LOCAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Thank you for your recent correspondence relating to public transport issues and for the petition expressing concerns about service provision in South Meirionnydd. I believe that as Cabinet Member with responsibility for transportation, I should respond to some of the issues you have raised.

Firstly, I must stress that bus networks are dynamic and a number of factors will always influence or induce changes to services over time.

Unfortunately, the enhanced level of service previously provided on the 28 corridor between Tywyn and Dolgellau did not generate a sufficient increase in patronage to make them commercially viable. Average passenger numbers on the services were in fact low or very low and the public funding required to maintain them would therefore have been substantial.

In accepting the current timetable places constraints on members of the public wanting to make longer distance journeys via Dolgellau, I must stress the unprecedented pressures on the public finances available to support local bus services. With this in mind, one option maybe to reduce or rationalise the least used elements of the current service to strengthen others. This could mean withdrawing the winter Sunday services to allow a later service from Dolgellau to Tywyn Monday - Saturday. To achieve this, consultation would be required with members of the public and an agreement reached with the operator of the service.

Earlier this year, Gwynedd Council took the decision not to produce a comprehensive paper based guide of all local bus and train timetables for the County. Considerations, including the ongoing changes to the bus network and timetable changes for bus and rail services not coinciding were the basis for this decision. Providing inaccurate information was having a negative rather than positive impact on encouraging public transport use. The Guide did not therefore meet its core objective and resulted in a poor return on investment for the Authority.

The Authority has therefore re-focused resources on providing and maintaining information provision in alternative ways. This includes web based information but also the provision of timetables at bus stops. Paper based public transport information is also available for reference at over 70 outlets across the County. These

Swyddfa'r Cyngor
Caemarfon Gwynedd.
LL55 1 SH 01766
771000
www.gwynedd.gov.uk

include libraries, leisure centres and tourist information centres. For a small cost recovery fee, print outs of timetables can be provided at a number of these locations.

Gwynedd Council also actively promotes and encourages use of the provision made by the Welsh travel information service, Traveline Cymru, which is supported by the Welsh Government.

An increasing number of operators have produced their own paper based materials which are more locally focused, less subject to change and show a healthy attitude towards marketing and promoting services. The long term sustainability of local bus services is increasingly going to depend on them being viable on the basis of the numbers of passengers carried as opposed to subsidies from the public purse. This will require a change in culture and involve the engagement of operators, to provide services that are attractive, and local communities, to make use of the services that are provided on a regular and ongoing basis.

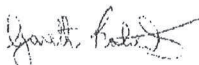
The X94, Monday - Saturday, service is provided on a commercial basis by Arriva Buses Wales. Gwynedd Council therefore has no direct involvement in managing or influencing issues such as the timetable or level of service. One can surmise that the company deem there to be a market on the route that justifies the level of service provided.

Budget constraints in Gwynedd as in all local authorities, combined with reducing levels of grant from the Welsh Government to support the provision of transport services, mean changes in service provision across Gwynedd cannot be avoided. The Council is currently undertaking a countywide contract re-tendering exercise for all public transport services supported by the authority. The process identifies and gives weight to issues such as value for money, access to work and access to services. Meeting rural community needs is an important element within the process used by Council.

"While looking to identify priorities it has to be recognised that bus services require a level of patronage that makes them sustainable both environmentally as well as economically. Unfortunately this means it will not be possible to meet all aspirations in terms of travel opportunities especially where levels of usage are, or are likely to be, low" .

As Cabinet Member, I am actively encouraging consultation and constructive dialogue with bus service providers and bus service users on any changes proposed to the bus network. I would welcome any further comments you may have on the provision of public transport services in Gwynedd.

Yours sincerely



Cynghoryddl Councillor W Gareth Roberts
Aelod Cabinet Amgylchedd / Cabinet Member for Environment



March 26th 2013

Dear Ms Snowball

Re: Mawddach Bus Service

May I support your application for additional bus service for the route from Dolgellau to Tywyn.

A number of our students travel this route daily during college term time.

The last bus for them to travel home is at the end of the normal timetabled hours of learning.

Despite this we raise these concerns:

- There is some panic at the end of the college day for the Tywyn students. If they miss this bus there is no other available public transport home.
- Those who have teaching sessions outside of the normal timetabled hours cannot benefit from this provision. I am in this case referring to those who, as part of their college course, run the college Training Salon and the College Restaurant. This is essential in order to offer realistic working environment. Not all customers are able to use the salon/restaurant during day time and therefore an evening salon is necessary.
- Tywyn students are limited in their choice of additional curricular activities e.g. sports Activities, participating in concerts or skills competitions. This entire events taking place after the college normal working hours.
- We offer the use of all college resources plus additional tutoring on Monday and Thursday evenings. (The college being open until 10 p.m. on those evenings.) Obviously Tywyn students using public transport cannot take advantage of the provision. This is quite sad considering that they are contributing £180 annually towards transport costs.
- Work Experience is compulsory to all of our students and is part of the Government Recommendation for 16+ students. If the placement is outside of their vicinity then they have to leave the placement early in order to catch the 4.20pm bus. As you can imagine there is not sufficient placements for all our Tywyn students in Tywyn itself.

May I thank you for all you efforts in trying to ensure that the Tywyn residents are accessing an acceptable level of transport service. I hope that those who are reading your evidence will be able to conclude that the recent cuts in transport have restricted many of Tywyn Tax Payers.

Yours Sincerely

Rona Lewis

Director responsible for the Dolgellau Campus

Coleg Meirion Dwyfor

Grŵp Llandrillo Menai

**THE PETITIONS COMMITTEE WELSH ASSEMBLY
WALES.**

PUBLIC TRANSPORT.

As the chairperson of the Fairbourne, Friog & Arthog Senior Citizen's Association with a membership of 120 plus of pensionable age, may I ask the committee to consider the following comments?

A robust public transport system is vital in accessing services for those of us residing in rural areas .Our villages are within the Llangelynnin Ward and the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation highlights that access to services and the housing domains are poor. In addition the ward has 35.2% of pensionable age residents compared to 23.09% for the whole of Gwynedd this is a difference of 12.3%.The older members of the community experience real difficulties in accessing services as many do not drive and the geography rules out walking and cycling. Appointments and visits to the acute hospitals are heavily dependent on

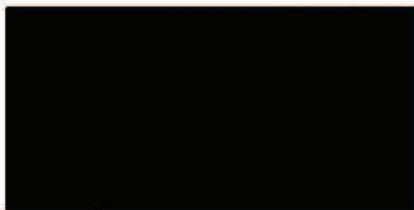
public transport for many residents; the majority of which are older vulnerable members of the community.

The Minister highlights "Access to Services" as one of the priorities for public transport. Our Association would appreciate if the Petitions Committee would recognise that our area has been identified by the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation as poor for "Access to Services". Lack of public transport further disadvantages a vulnerable section of the community.

Megan Wilding:

Megan Wilding 6/3/13

Chair of The Fairbourne, Friog & Arthog Senior Citizen's Association.



CONCLUSION

From a combination of petitions, posters and media publicity organised by Mawddach Bus Users group there is compelling and growing evidence to suggest that the existing bus services in Gwynedd, and specifically in south Meirionnydd, are not fit for purpose. Increasingly all aspects of life are being limited for those people who have no private car and for whom buses are vital. Whilst accepting that any rural area will be challenging for bus operators there is a need to re-arrange timetables and improve connections so that residents and tourists alike have proper access to health, education, employment and social activities.

We call upon the Welsh Assembly Government to review the need for better local bus transport in this area so that their own promises * can be fulfilled.

*Welsh Government 2012 Progress Report :Rural Communities, Chapter 10, p.39

P-04-476 Restructuring in National Museum Wales

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to reconsider its funding settlement for National Museum Wales, with a view to protecting the Museum's services and the jobs, pay and conditions of its staff.

The freezing of the National Museum's grant by the Welsh Government has led to cuts of up to £2.5 million being announced, along with restructuring proposals, which would see the loss of some 35 posts, potentially detrimental impacts for more than 160 staff and the possible loss of allowances, resulting in a 20 per cent cut in take-home pay, for some of the Museum's lowest-paid employees. We believe that the proposed cuts threaten not only the living standards, jobs and security of the National Museum's loyal staff but the unique services that they offer to the people of Wales and the one and a half million visitors that come every year, including school and educational visits

Petition raised by: PCS Union

Date petition first considered by Committee: 30 April 2013

Number of signatures : TBC



Cymru/Wales

Undeb Y Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus a Masnachol	Public and Commercial Services Union
Tŷ Cludiant Ail Lawr	Transport House Floor 2
1 Heol yr Eglwys Gadeiriol	1 Cathedral Road
Caerdydd CF11 9HA	Cardiff CF11 9HA

16 April 2013

William Powell AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1NA

Dear Mr Powell

e-Petition: Restructuring in National Museum Wales

On 30th April, the Committee will be considering the above petition, submitted by the Public and Commercial Services union (PCS) which represents National Museum staff.

The text of the petition sets out clearly our concerns about the proposed restructuring and our reasons for putting this issue before the Committee.

I just want to add a few supportive comments in two specific areas. The first is the importance of the services provided by the National Museum, which we feel are placed in jeopardy by the restructuring plans.

Earlier this month, as you may recall, it was announced that the seven sites of National Museum Wales received 1.69 million visits in 2011-12, continuing the year-on-year increase that has taken place since the policy of free entry was introduced in April 2001. It was noted, in particular, that the number of visitors from less affluent groups has grown significantly. This represents a key contribution to one of the Welsh Government's key policy objectives. In March, Huw Lewis AM, then Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage, wrote about museums' potential to 'nurture in many young people a desire to learn and broaden their horizons' and the positive impact they can make in reducing inequalities in educational outcomes, thereby contributing to the Welsh Government's Child Poverty Strategy. Given the present context of austerity, this role must surely be regarded as more important than ever.

The contribution made by the National Museum to the Welsh economy is also particularly important at the present time. The tourism sector is worth £5 billion to the Welsh economy and employs more than 8% of the workforce. As a major attraction for international visitors, our museums play an important role in this regard. The Wales Office minister, Baroness Randerson, recently stated, after visiting the National History Museum at St Fagans: 'The tourism sector makes a vital contribution to

the social and economic wellbeing of Wales, and it is crucial that we do all we can to attract visits from home and overseas to experience our rich culture and deep history.'

We would not want to see National Museum management pursuing a course of action, as a result of financial pressures, that might undermine this important economic contribution.

The second area I want to highlight relates to the way the restructuring process has been dealt with by management. The trade unions would normally seek to raise our concerns about issues of this kind through the established industrial relations machinery of consultation and negotiation. We have on this occasion, however, encountered a frustrating unwillingness to engage with us on the part of management. The National Museum's Board of Trustees have refused even to meet with union representatives, presumably under pressure from management. Management have also refused to provide us with specific financial information despite frequent and repeated requests. There has also been a lack of consultation on their part with the Museum's stakeholders about the implications of the restructuring plans.

It is in the context of these difficulties that we have felt obliged to follow the petitions route in order to draw attention to our concerns. I hope that your Committee will give due regard to these concerns and will actively consider the means by which they might be addressed.

Yours sincerely

SHAVANAH TAJ
PCS Wales Secretary

Agenda Item 2.3

P-04-477 Support for the Control of Dogs (Wales) Bill

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to proceed with the Control of Dogs (Wales) Bill.

We, the undersigned, residents of Wales, call on the Welsh Government to proceed with its Control of Dogs (Wales) Bill in tackling the issue of dangerous and menacing dogs and not rely on the piecemeal proposals of the UK Government set out in its draft Anti-social Behaviour Bill and initially explained in the its White Paper “Putting Victims First, More Effective Responses to Anti-social Behaviour”.

We agree with the Welsh Government’s statement “The clear advantage of a Dog Control Notice (DCN) over all existing legislation is that a court may never become involved thereby reducing the burden on public finance” and we believe that the UK Governments proposals involving 4 different enforcement tools, namely-

- Injunctions to prevent nuisance and annoyance;
- Crime Behaviour Orders
- Dispersal Powers
- Community Protection Notices

two of which - Injunctions and Crime Behaviour Orders - must be initiated by applications to the court, are unduly complicated, cumbersome, bureaucratic and will lead to delay.

We believe the single all-encompassing Dog Control Notice proposed for Wales is by far the superior approach and we urge the Welsh Government to frame a law based on this concept as originally planned. We draw the Welsh Government’s attention to (i) the highly critical conclusions of the House of Commons Select Committee on Environment, Food and Rural Affairs report “Dog Control and Welfare” which called the UK Government’s proposals as “simplistic” and “woefully inadequate” & recommended DEFRA and the Home Office to introduce Dog Control Notices and (ii) to the fact that the campaign coalition of Unions, Animal Charities, Police, Vets are also unhappy with the proposals.

Petition raised by: Cllr. Dilwar Ali

Date petition first considered by Committee: 30 April 2013

Number of signatures : TBC

P-03-150 National Cancer Standards

Petition wording

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to investigate whether Local Health Boards have the necessary strategies and action plans in place to deliver the target to comply with the National Cancer Standards by March 2009 in RCT and throughout Wales, as a matter of urgency.

Petition raised by: Rhondda Breast Friends

Date petition first considered by Committee: 9 July 2008

Number of signatures: 43. In addition Rhondda Breast Friends have developed a charter regarding improvements required to cancer care services, supported by 1,475 signatories.

P-03-150 National Cancer Standards – Correspondence from the petitioner to the Deputy Clerk, 16.04.13

Kayleigh Driscoll
Petitions Committee Deputy Clerk
Committee Service
National Assembly for Wales

16th April, 2013

Dear Kayleigh,

P-03-150 National Cancer Standards

I appreciate your support and revised deadline.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the oral evidence from the Health Minister on 20th November and whether the National Cancer Delivery Plan addresses the issues raised within the Petition.

I last commented during the previous government's term of office. At that time the self-reported achievement of gaining up to 90% compliance with the cancer standards across Wales was an outstanding achievement brought about by our tenacity and that of the previous Petitions Committee.

The Cancer Delivery Plan has built on the firm foundations of the Cancer Standards and introduced new population outcome performance measures. How those outcomes will be achieved is the remit of individual Health Boards' Local Delivery Plans.

I think that the evidence session with questions members put to the First Minister was excellent and demonstrated that the new committee members have achieved a good understanding of the issues involved and I make no apology for re-enforcing my opinions on some of the points raised. I have concentrated on what I believe are currently the most important issues for patient centred care.

Minister[96]: All health boards have committed to achieving the cancer standards by next year. The building blocks of the service are in place. However, I do not want to continue to focus on process. I would rather focus on delivering the continuous improvement in quality care that we have seen over the past few years.

Cancer Standards

What a wonderful piece of work. How empowering! Including NICE guidelines, it seemed that patient centred cancer care had indeed been promoted to centre stage. It was in the public domain, anyone could go online and know what the minimum expected level of service was, the "process," if you knew where to look! When I came across them I thought this was everything we could ask for, already in print and with implementation deadlines decreed by the Welsh Government. How could it be that compliance was such an issue since 2005 and despite considerable progress we still wait for full implementation "by next year"? or even 2016?

The Welsh Government believes it is not appropriate to continue to monitor 700 plus standards which form the process and mechanics of service delivery.

Each HB's compliance was previously self-assessed and submitted to the government for monitoring. I believe that the Minister has accepted the importance of the cancer standards and their effect in raising the standards of cancer care by requiring 100% compliance by 2013 and ensuring that HBs will continue to monitor the standards. I remain optimistic that the organisational structures in place will allow that to happen. In addition, there will be a system of peer review and audit. I am pleased that the review process will continue, albeit in another format.

Cancer Delivery Plan

I have to congratulate the minister and her team for producing the first comprehensive cancer plan for Wales – it covers every stage of the cancer journey: prevention, early diagnosis, screening, delivering high-quality cancer services, supporting people living with cancer, as well as improving cancer information, and promoting research. The central theme is on outcomes with local cancer delivery plans drawn up detailing how HBs, with their partners, were going to achieve them. National priorities have not been assigned but left to HBs, using national and local indicators to decide their own local priorities but with an overall delivery date of 2016. I think putting the information in the public domain was vital to enable public accountability and inform of progress.

The first local and national annual reports on the delivery plan have been released online. I am “delighted” with Cwm Taf's report which I believe gives a full hard hitting account of local challenges with areas of high deprivation and the lowest life expectancy in Wales, AND... it included progress against the Cancer Standards with a report of areas of compliance and non compliance, (including Cancer nurse specialists and psychological support) , WHOOP, WHOOP...RESULT!

Cancer has a greater impact in the more deprived areas of Wales and the annual reports will highlight particular challenges faced by these LHBs. Will the government recognise and support those areas and work with them towards solutions? I did a survey a number of years ago comparing an area of Rhondda Cynon Taff (RCT) with a more affluent area in South Glamorgan. At that time it highlighted a greater patient doctor ratio in RCT and with a greater number of people with chronic and life threatening illnesses. So more ill patients per GP, greater strain on the service, not the most attractive proposition for GPs, .problems getting a GP appointment for patients.... Hmmm any changes there I wonder???

Issues raised by the Petition

Overall, I believe that the vision from our original Charter of Rights is reflected in the vision for the cancer delivery plan across the cancer journey. A shared vision is one thing, delivery is another and HBs will have to put the processes in place, implement them and achieve the required outputs. As we have seen from the Cancer Standards this can be problematical.

Patient centred care: Key workers, Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS), Psychological support, Rehabilitation, Information, benefits advice. Carers & care plans.

1. **The Issue of Key workers and Cancer Nurse Specialists** remain a burning issue for me. I do not believe the minister's response is adequate.

There seems to be some conflict and cross over in the evidence supplied. The cancer rehabilitation standards were released in 2010 and health boards were required to ensure

all key workers were in place by the end of March 2011. We know this has not happened and full compliance with standards is now next year – 2013, but the delivery plan on the other hand sets performance measures that by 2016, 100% of people with cancer will have an assigned key worker and care plan in place?! 2013...2016 exactly when?

I believe it is totally unacceptable that some patients should have to wait until 2016, that means patients passing through the system without support for the next 3-4years,?!

So what is a key worker, what is their role? Is it pivotal, a keystone of care?

- Do patients that *do* have them know their remit?
- Do clinicians and other health and information professionals know for signposting?
- Do they have a national or local remit?
- Does this mean inconsistencies and inequalities?
- How does not having a key worker affect other cancer standards?

Appendix 1 is an excerpt from Macmillan's policy document (1) which the Health Minister frequently made reference to. It briefly explains the role of the key worker based on their research and also their concern that it should be a nationally agreed remit.

During the treatment phase the key worker is likely to be the clinical nurse specialist (CNS) who is: the co-ordinator of care and central point of contact, undertaker of assessments, communicator of care plans to the patient and carers, provider of information and understanding about cancer and its effects, referring and signposting to other support e.g. financial, practical, emotional, psychological, rehabilitation etc. The absence of a key worker could thus leave the patient without vital communication and co-ordination of services and I have witnessed the traumatising of the patient, carer and family members leading to more complex psychological needs leading into rehabilitation.

The Haematology department in Royal Glamorgan had no CNS when one of our clients was diagnosed with Leukaemia last year and had no information or support. "I should have been sat down and discussed what was happening and the side effects. I expected to be back in work within two weeks. The nurse did not even have a leaflet to give me and I did not know how tired and unwell I would be feeling."

I accessed the Macmillan RCT library service for booklets on Leukaemia, side effects, radiotherapy, fatigue and the emotional effects of cancer. He told me, "The books were really good and for the first time I could understand what had happened to me."

The fact that patients are given a name and a number of their key worker I believe is inadequate. A written copy of their remit is needed. I have seen so many people coming for support and when I ask do you have a key worker, or have you been given a phone number to ring I often get blank looks. When I explain they seem surprised and comments like. "On I didn't think of ringing them for that" are often made. Perhaps the significance of the cards has gone undigested due to the impact of the diagnosis and aftermath.

There therefore seems to be a conflict in the Ministers comments that, "It is up to local health boards whether they employ specialist nurses and it is up to them to ensure that they get the right skills mix." If every cancer patient is promised a key worker/ specialist nurse then should not CNS staffing levels be decided by demand?

Action: I believe that all patients have the right to:

- (i) A key worker (with a nationally agreed remit) from the date of diagnosis (**now**) as promised in the cancer standards 2011, not waiting for the delivery plan target of 2016.
- (ii) Receive a copy of the key worker's remit in support and rehabilitation at each stage, not just a name(s) and phone number(s).
- (iii) A personal copy of the care plan in writing.

2. **Rehabilitation Standards and psychological support**

The standards require an assessment of Physical, Nutritional, Psychological, Informational, Practical, Spiritual, Social and Financial needs. My understanding is that again a key worker will be crucial in assessing individual need and some of the above areas like psychological support have very limited services. The voluntary sector may be able to offer some support in some areas and locations but again, inconsistencies and inequalities can mean the needs of a patient can go unsupported on their cancer journey.

3. **Information, including benefits advice & the Voluntary sector**

The All Wales Cancer Information Pathway Project and the new Public Health Wales NHS Trust post, funded by Macmillan Cancer Support, is designed to support each person with cancer being offered, through their care plans, written information about their disease, treatment and supportive care including psychological.

If Key workers /CNS are responsible for agreeing and communicating care plans, and helping with understanding of information, then the lack of a key worker will impinge directly on their ability to make informed decisions and cope with the effects of their treatments.

The Voluntary sector: national and local cancer charities and support groups, age concern, etc., have supported the provision of good quality information to patients, carers and family members close to home, assisting with compliance of information needs. More referrals are being received from health providers. However, this service can be tenuous and sustainability is an issue.

The Macmillan Cancer Information and support in Libraries projects that have been funded across Wales come with a three year funding and the first information co-ordinator is coming to the end of her funding and other projects will follow. Traditionally Macmillan fund for three years with the expectation that the host organisation will take over funding after that time. In the current financial climate that is not happening.

Likewise benefits advisers have terminated when their funding ran out. Other charities I believe have received lottery funding for some of their services which again is time limited. The government and HBs needs to be mindful of this situation which could potentially leave further gaps, inconsistencies and inequality in patient centred information and care. A classic example of this is when Cancer Care Cymru ceased to exist leaving a huge gap with regard to CNSs. LHBs had to employ the nurses over a period of time, some financed by Macmillan but still leaving gaps in provision.

A comprehensive cancer patient information service needs to be seen as a core service within the HB which does not stop it contracting out this service to the voluntary sector.

4. Carers & family support

Carers also need support to look after themselves as well as their loved one, especially in palliative care when the patient is being looked after at home. Carers are often kept in the dark, under huge psychological stress and need to be kept informed and supported. I would like to see specific targets and performance outcomes for carers and family support.

5. Process & Outcomes

The Health Minister commented, “that the cancer delivery plan has overtaken the cancer standards, that there is a change of focus from the process and mechanics of service delivery to delivering continuous improvement in quality care and outcomes. “

The Health Minister has delegated the process, mechanics and monitoring of cancer standards to HBs so they can concentrate on the new population outcomes: incidence rates, mortality, one and five year cancer survival... in effect, how many lives are saved and/or quality of life managed better.

However, I don't think that the process and the mechanics should be undermined as they have been an important part of consistent patient centred care across cancer sites and locations and have improved the patient experience. It is the difference between fearing the unknown and knowing exactly what to expect. I believe that the cancer standards have provided HBs with an excellent platform from which they can work to set up new processes to achieve the new outputs.

6. Patient Power: Continuous improvement in quality care and outcomes

Patient engagement

I believe that the government's engagement with Macmillan on the patient survey will indeed provide valuable information on patients' need for co-ordinated information and support, as did Rhondda Breast Friends' Community cancer conference and leading to the petition.

Patient action: patient power

I believe it is a time for openness, transparency and empowerment and we have seen this reflected in the requirement to publish Annual reports in the public domain.

Informing patients in writing of their agreed care plans and what looks like “excellent service, the best in the world” and getting feedback at various stages in the cancer journey would ensure that “quality and patient-centred outcomes” are evaluated and continuously improved by those using the service.

Action -Patient Power monitoring system

Set up a pilot “Measure your quality outcomes treatment” [MyQoT] feedback system to inform, empower and feed back on the quality of individual cancer care. Patient centred care

feedback systems can be piloted /implemented to replace government monitoring, given at each stage of treatment for monitoring

Examples of patient empowerment – the good practice

The First Minister recently launched Cwm Taf’s bowel cancer DVD that won national acclaim. The DVD was designed to prepare patients for going into hospital and to familiarise them with the diagnostic and surgical procedures and treatment they may undergo while there. It effectively provides a virtual tour for patients and is an excellent example of the vital part played by informing patients of the process and mechanics of their treatment care plan. I believe that the quality of the service will in fact be determined by the process and the trained, experienced, dedicated personnel undertaking the “process.”

Breakthrough Breast Cancer has a brilliant publication, “The Best Treatment: Your guide to breast cancer treatment in England and Wales, (July 2012). (Link provided in reference section).It was first published in 2004 to provide a guide for women during their breast cancer treatment journey. It includes information from documents and official guidelines used by health professionals, with an explanation of what they mean for you, the patient (Cancer Standards, NICE guidelines etc.) It explains why you might be offered certain tests and treatments, and what to expect if you need them. It equips you to have informed discussions with your doctors and nurses, so you are able to play as full a part in decision-making about your treatment as you’d like to. I discovered this book after my treatment and if I had known about a “triple assessment” sooner, I would have pressed for a biopsy which could have potentially saved my daughter’s life.

Examples of patient helplessness - the bad & the ugly

There is a lack of public knowledge regarding treatment guidelines and what is “patient centred care.” Many people come to me because they don’t know where to turn, So much of cancer care seems to rest on the patient asking for answers or help and for those afraid to ask, afraid they won’t understand the answers, afraid of seeming weak and helpless there is ignorance, anxiety, uncertainty and fear.

My husband has recently had bowel investigations at Prince Charles hospital and I was extremely impressed with the service, communication and written feedback supplied to him the next day, I rated it 1st Class. I have supported other patients and I could not believe the differences in experiences ranging from: misunderstanding of diagnosis given, appointment letters not received, referrals not actioned, side effects and after effects of treatment ignored, lack of information, not knowing where to go for help....practical, emotional, financial and other. Patients are often still left in the dark worrying about their condition and treatments.

Action:

- Key workers are this seasons must have -NOW
- Empowerment: Best treatment guidelines –NOW
- Care Plans – NOW

CONCLUSION

When I see how much work has been put into improving cancer services in Wales and how much has been achieved since 2008 I am filled with gratitude, hope, enthusiasm and optimism for full compliance with the standards and evidence of improved outcomes.

Areas of concern noted:

- Key workers, should be prioritised for compliance as without them other patient standards will fail and those people will have a much worse experience than others fully supported with a key worker.
- Carers can often be left out of the support cycle
- The importance of the Voluntary sector in supporting information and support services should be recognised.
- Patient empowerment with treatment guidelines.
- Access to GPs
- Additional support for areas of high deprivation and poor cancer outcomes

Opportunities

- Set up a pilot “Measure your quality outcomes treatment” [MyQoT] feedback system to involve patients in evaluating various stages of their treatment


Thank you once again for giving me the opportunity to comment on the evidence supplied by the Health minister.

Regards,

Diane Raybould

Rhondda Breast Friends

Appendix/Attachment/Links

1. Key worker role _excerpt Macmillan Policy Report 2011
 2. The best treatment: your guide to breast cancer treatment in England and Wales (Edition 2, reprint July 2012) (1191 kb)  (link), or copy and paste ...
www.breakthrough.org.uk/document.rm?id=1924
 3. National Standards for Rehabilitation of Adult Cancer Patients (link)
www.wales.nhs.uk/sites3/Documents/322/National_Standards_for_Rehabilitation_of_Adult_Cancer_Patients_2010.pdf
-

APPENDIX 1

CHANGING CANCER CARE IN WALES

A report by Macmillan Cancer Support
March 2011

Access to an identified key worker

Every cancer patient should have access to a named key worker who understands their needs and is able to support them during and after treatment.

In May 2010 the government announced that all people with a cancer diagnosis in Wales would be given a key worker to coordinate their care. The new Local Health Boards were required to implement the policy by March 2011. We warmly welcomed this announcement. We understand the work has begun, but as yet there is no nationally agreed, clear definition of the key worker role. And most planning for the scope and function of the key worker role in Wales is being undertaken locally. This may lead to inconsistency and geographical inequality in the level and quality of service provided.

We believe it is important that the implementation of the key worker initiative in Wales is consistent. Although key workers may be different professionals at different stages in a person's cancer journey, there should be consistency in their functions and responsibilities throughout Wales. With the current approach there's a risk that the type of key worker a person has to support them will depend on where they live rather than on their needs and circumstances.

In developing the role of the key worker, it is vitally important to consider continuity of care. Issues such as access to key workers out of hours, the transition from secondary to primary care and the use of electronic records are all essential to the success of this initiative. In order to ensure consistency across Wales, the role and remit of a key worker must be agreed at a national level by the end of the first year of the next assembly term. By the end of the second year of the next assembly term, we want every person living with or beyond cancer in Wales to have access to a relevant, named key worker.

What is a key worker?

What should a key worker do?

Based on our research, and work carried out by governments elsewhere in the UK, the role of the key worker is to:

- Be a main point of contact.
- Undertake assessments, agree care plans and ensure the details of the care plan are communicated to the person living with cancer and others involved in their care.
- Be ultimately responsible for coordinating care and managing care transitions.
- Provide information about cancer treatment and its effects. Help the person living with and after cancer to understand that information so they can make informed decisions.
- Find out what additional help and support the person needs and make sure they get it. This may mean signposting them to other support services, such as financial advice, practical help and emotional support. Ensure people know who to contact when they have questions or need help.
- Give advice to the person and their carers.

It should be acknowledged that the implementation and coordination of a person's care may be carried out by a number of clinical and non-clinical professionals.

Who will they be?

During the treatment phase, the key worker is likely to be the clinical nurse specialist. After treatment, the most appropriate key worker will depend on the type, severity and advancement of the cancer and the needs of the person. For people living with and after cancer who have complex needs, their key worker is likely to be very involved. For those who have moderate needs, their key worker will be less involved. For people who have no complex needs, they are likely to have more limited contact with their key worker, although the key worker should be available if any issues arise. The important thing is that the person living with and beyond cancer knows who their key worker is, and the key worker knows their responsibilities to that person.

Agenda Item 3.2

P-04-396 Emergency Life Support Skills (ELS) for Wales Schoolchildren

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to make ELS skills training, including vital cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) a compulsory part of the curriculum at secondary schools in Wales, forming part of the core knowledge and understanding that children acquire at school. This would create a new generation of lifesavers across Wales.

Petition raised by: British Heart Foundation

Date petition first considered by Committee: 19 June 2012

Number of signatures: Petition brought by the British Heart Foundation. An associated petition collected approximately 4,000 signatures.



CYMRU

Emergency Life Support skills briefing British Heart Foundation (BHF) Cymru, April



What is Emergency Life Support?

Emergency Life Support (ELS) is the key set of actions needed to keep someone alive until professional help arrives. It includes performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), dealing with choking, serious bleeding, how to put someone in the recovery position and helping someone who may be having a heart attack.



What needs to happen?

We are calling for ELS, including vital CPR, to be a mandatory part of secondary education in Wales. Secondary school students should be taught it from year 7, and their skills should be refreshed every year until they leave school.



ELS is simple, and easy to teach and learn. It can be performed without any special medical knowledge. **It takes as little as two hours to teach, just 0.2% of a school year.** In just two hours of their school life, children can learn the skills to save a life. Teachers can include ELS in a range of different subjects including Personal and Social Education (PSE), Physical Education and Science.



Children of 10 years and above can learn the full range of ELS including vital CPR, and younger children are also able to learn many of the skills. Primary schools should be encouraged to teach their children many of the skills including dialling 999, calling for help and checking for danger.



Leaving decisions on ELS to individual schools has meant that too few children are trained in these crucial skills. This requires the Welsh Government to act now to drastically increase the numbers trained in ELS.



Why is ELS so essential?

Due to a lack of data collection, out-of-hospital cardiac arrest statistics are not available for Wales, however, it is estimated that there are around 60,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests in the UK each year. Survival across the UK is variable, with between 2-12 per cent of these people surviving to be discharged from hospital depending on where the arrest takes place.



It is estimated that around two-thirds of cardiac arrests that occur outside of hospital occur in the home, and nearly half that occur in public are witnessed by bystanders. With each minute that passes in cardiac arrest before defibrillation, chances of survival are reduced by about 10 per cent. Immediate CPR in a shockable out-of-hospital cardiac arrest can improve the chances of survival by up to a factor of three.



Evidence from the US shows that if an emergency ambulance is called and immediate bystander CPR is used, followed by early defibrillation and effective post-resuscitation care, **survival rates following cardiac arrest can exceed 50 percent.**





ELS isn't just about stats and numbers. It makes a huge difference to people's lives.

Tabatha McElligott was just 17 years old when she collapsed at school. While studying for her A-levels, she had suffered a cardiac arrest.

Luckily, the school receptionist was trained in CPR – this bought Tabatha a few crucial minutes before a community responder arrived with a defibrillator.

Tabatha said: "If I had been at home with friends when it happened, there is very little chance I would still be here today. There are others who are not so lucky.

"If everyone had the simple knowledge of ELS skills at a young age through their schooling it may not seem so daunting if they are ever caught in an emergency situation."



The Royal College of Anaesthetists

How could this work in practice?

Organisations including **BHF Cymru**, **St John Ambulance** and **British Red Cross** already successfully provide training and support for teachers so they can deliver ELS. Community Resuscitation Development Officers (CRDOs), established by the BHF, develop community resuscitation programmes across their regions within Ambulance Trusts, and **deliver ELS training and support to teachers** as part of the wider ambulance service response.



With additional resources, these models could be successfully applied across all schools in Wales. There are over 200 local authority maintained secondary schools teaching over 200,000 pupils. Wales is now the only devolved country in the UK that does not have some form of community resuscitation network. Greater investment is therefore needed, with a minimum of **five** CRDO posts created.



Do teachers support this idea?

We commissioned research in February 2011 to find out the views of teachers across the UK on the idea of schools being mandated to train pupils in ELS. There was particularly high support among teachers with **86 per cent** of the 500 surveyed said they were in favour of this move.



This support is also replicated among parents and children across the UK. **70 per cent** of 2,072 parents surveyed wanted to see their children trained in ELS. **78 per cent** of 1,000 children surveyed aged 11 to 15 years wanted to learn these key skills, with a large proportion unsure of what they would do in an emergency.



Our vision is for every child to leave school knowing how to save a life

We are already behind many of our European neighbours – France, Denmark and Norway all have life-saving skills such as CPR as a

P-04-396 Emergency Life Support Skills (ELS) for Wales Schoolchildren –
Correspondence from the petitioner to the Chair, 12.04.13

mandatory part of their school curricula. They have been using strategies ranging from self-learning with DVDs and manikins to structured teaching – **all as part of the curriculum**.

Further afield, in Seattle CPR has been taught for over thirty years within PE lessons at all schools funded by the city government. Over half of the population of Seattle and surrounding King County are now trained in CPR, and survival rates for witnessed cardiac arrests were very high at **49 per cent** in 2010.

By teaching children ELS at school, we can create **a new generation of lifesavers**. Children can learn and retain new skills more easily than adults and are also often present at emergencies.

We all learnt skills as children – how to ride a bike, play a musical instrument, or speak a foreign language. Why not add ‘How to save a life’ to that set of skills?

About BHF Cymru and Resuscitation Council (UK)

BHF Cymru operates a successful Heartstart Schools Programme, teaching children ELS. Currently, around 200 schools in Wales are teaching ELS through Heartstart – around a quarter of these are secondary schools. The Resuscitation Council (UK) is principally involved in producing and disseminating national guidelines in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

If you believe every child in Wales should leave school knowing how to save a life please contact Delyth Lloyd, BHF Cymru’s Public Affairs Manager on 02920 382406 or email lloyd@bhf.org.uk

Agenda Item 3.3

P-04-424 : Retain services at Neath Port Talbot Hospital

Petition wording:

We the undersigned call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to halt the decision to move all CT2 Doctors from Neath Port Talbot Hospital in the autumn, without prior consultation with the public. This decision will mean that acute medical services will not be provided at the Hospital, and patients will be forced to travel to Morriston in Swansea, or the Princess of Wales in Bridgend for such services. Neath Port Talbot hospital is a state of the art, PFI hospital, and the people of this area want such vital services to be retained at Neath Port Talbot hospital.

Petition raised by: Carolyn Edwards

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 193 signatures. Associated petitions collected over 5000 signatures

424

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Cymru



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Ref: DDG/nlf

5 March 2013

William Powell AC/AM
Chair – Petitions Committee
National Assembly of Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Dear Mr Powell

Thank you for your letter dated 27th February 2013 with regard to the further written evidence that we provided, dated 31st January 2013. Our discussion around the removal of Core Medical Training posts did take almost 2 years but the discussions are with the Chief Executives of the Health Boards and their Medical Directors.

We only recruit to training posts once per year and therefore while this did seem like a long lead in period, it is important that we give the Health Boards sufficient notice to make alternative arrangements with regard to the service delivery elements of such jobs.

We are directly responsible for the quality of training to the General Medical Council in the UK and it is to them that we answer with regard to our standards. Our discussions are therefore only with the Health Board and not with the public as we are discussing the provision of training not the provision of service delivery by trainees.

I hope this helps to further clarify our position. We do believe we have acted appropriately and given sufficient time and notice to the Health Boards to ensure the improved quality of teaching and training within the Health Boards and for the benefit of patients.

Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Professor Derek Gallen
Postgraduate Dean and Head of School

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Postgraduate Dean and Head of School: Professor Derek Gallen FRCGP FHEA MMED FAcadMED FRCP (Edin)

Deputy Postgraduate Dean: Professor Peter Donnelly FRCPsych BA (Open) PGCMEd ILTM

Pennaeth yr Ysgol a Deon: Yr Athro Derek Gallen FRCGP FHEA MMED FAcadMED FRCP (Edin)

Dirprwy Deon: Yr Athro Peter Donnelly FRCPsych BA (Open) PGCMEd ILTM

P-4-424 Retain services at Neath Port Talbot Hospital- Correspondence from the petitioner to the Committee, 15.04.13

Re Committee Meeting 30th April.

The situation locally remains the same with ambulances waiting outside Morryston A/E. See attached photograph which was taken on the 9th April when there was ten hour wait outside Morryston A/E and fourteen ambulances were queuing up outside. The removal of services from NPT hospital must surely be adding to the pressure on ambulance, nursing and medical staff at Morryston

It should also be noted that Tina Donnelly of the Rcn and representatives of the Junior doctors were also reported in the Western Mail last week, stating that their representatives were finding it increasingly difficult to cope with the demands in the service.

Thank you for keeping me informed

Carolyn



Agenda Item 3.4

P-04-450 : Barry & Vale needs a fully functioning hospital.

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure that Barry Hospital has a fully functioning minor injuries unit that is open to patients 8 hours a day, 5 days a week.

Supporting information: We call on the Welsh Government to stop sitting on their hands and intervene in the way the Cardiff & Vale NHS trust are running Barry Hospital. For too long the trust have sold the Barry & Vale people down the river! With excuses such as staff sickness and operational pressure. The Barry & Vale people need a fully functioning Minor Injuries unit. This is unacceptable for a hospital with a catchment area the size of Barry and the Vale of Glamorgan. The reasoning behind these problems are that 'the Minor Injuries Unit at Barry Hospital is a very busy service which is currently under significant operational pressure because of staff sickness and maternity leave. As a result, and for safety reasons, the Unit will run on a reduced hours basis until further notice. It will open at 8.30am, and will close to new patients at 2pm. This means that, after 2pm, we will only treat those patients who are already waiting'. (quote from official website)

This is unacceptable for a hospital with a catchment area the size of Barry and the Vale of Glamorgan. The reasoning behind these problems are that 'the Minor Injuries Unit at Barry Hospital is a very busy service which is currently under significant operational pressure because of staff sickness and maternity leave. As a result, and for safety reasons, the Unit will run on a reduced hours basis until further notice. It will open at 8.30am, and will close to new patients at 2pm. This means that, after 2pm, we will only treat those patients who are already waiting'. (quote from official website)

Petition raised by: Jeffrey Heathfield

Date petition first considered by Committee: 29 January 2013

Number of signatures: 50



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Caerdydd a'r Fro
Cardiff and Vale
University Health Board

**Ysbyty'r Eglwys Newydd
Whitchurch Hospital**

Park Road, Whitchurch.
Cardiff, CF14 7XB
Phone 029 2069 3191

Heol Parc, Yr Eglwys Newydd
Caerdydd, CF14 7XB
Ffôn 029 2069 3191

Eich cyf/Your ref: P-04-450
Ein cyf/Our ref: AC-jb-04-2507
Welsh Health Telephone Network:
Direct Line/Llinell uniongychol: 02920 745681

**Adam Cairns
Chief Executive**

2 April 2013

Mr William Powell AM
Chair Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Dear Mr Powell

Thank you for your letter dated 6th February 2013 in which you shared the petition from Mr Jeffrey Heathfield and his concerns relating to the Barry Minor Injuries Unit (BMIU). I can confirm that the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board have experienced some challenges last year in relation to staffing the unit due to staff sickness, however I hope that my response will provide you with the assurance that the Minor Injuries service is providing an 8 hour a day, 5 day a week service to the local population.

The BMIU is run by a team of highly qualified Emergency Nurse Practitioners who have significant experience and expertise in treating minor injuries in adults and children (over a year old). As a result of unexpected long term staff sickness, and for safety reasons, on 18th July 2011 a decision was made to temporarily open BMIU on reduced opening hours from 8.30am and closing to new patients at 2pm.

The Cardiff and Vale University Health Board is continually striving to ensure that we provide the appropriate services to meet patient's needs. Following a public review in 2012, new opening hours were introduced on the 6th August 2012 with the Unit opening from 8.30am to 4.00pm. To ensure that there is enough time for patients to be assessed and treated properly, it was agreed that new patients would be booked into the unit up until 3.30pm.

The BMIU service has been subject to much debate, primarily because of the challenge of maintaining an independent service in Barry while facing on-going unscheduled care demand, workforce and resource pressures in the Emergency Unit at the University Hospital of Wales.

While the University Health Board (UHB) and the local population of Barry wish to maintain this service they are not without the challenges.

As part of our continuing efforts to support the patients of Barry and the Vale of Glamorgan, the Health Board are launching a phone first service for patients wishing to access Barry Minor Injury's Service in Spring 2013. The phone first model will mean that patients in need of the minor injury service first call the BMIU's dedicated team of nurses who will assess the patient's condition over the phone. This approach will ensure those patients in need of urgent treatment are booked with priority appointments and patients whose condition requires treatment at another unit will be directed appropriately.

The phone first model marks a real investment in the Barry Minor Injuries Unit and ensures the service is more responsive to residents of the Vale of Glamorgan.

Over the coming weeks the Health Board will work with various stakeholders to ensure that the local population is aware of the change in service and more importantly communicating the change as to how they access the service.

The phone first helpline will be run and provided out of Barry Hospital and will over time be open for 24 hours a day 7 days a week, during the time that the unit is closed patients will either be booked into the next available session or signposted to alternate care pathways should their condition requires. This pilot will run for an initial period of one year and be evaluated. This will allow significant data to be gathered and the opportunity to remodel the service based on reliable evidence.

Thank you for bringing the concerns of the Petitions Committee and Mr Heathfield to our attention.

Yours sincerely



Adam Cairns
Chief Executive

P-04-361 Free bus passes for students under 25, and in full-time education

Petition wording:

Students under 25 in full time education should be entitled to a free Arriva bus pass because when you're in college and finish half a day you have to wait for the 5 o'clock bus and some students cannot afford a bus (Arriva) due to parents' low income and students not being liable to receive EMA or ALG.

Petition raised by: Students of Llandrillo College

Date petition first considered by Committee: 24 January 2012

Number of signatures: 15

Agenda Item 3.6

P-04-371 Reduced fares on public transport for all children up to the age of eighteen

Petition wording:

We the undersigned call on the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to require reduced fares for public transport passengers aged under eighteen years.

Petition raised by: Simon Williams-Jones

Date petition first considered by Committee: 13 March 2012

Number of signatures: 26

P-04-382 Student Fares on Public Transport

Petition wording:

We call on the Welsh Government to secure reduced fares on public transport for those in full-time education.

Petition raised by: A-level students

Date petition first considered by Committee: 27 March 2012

Number of signatures: 93

Agenda Item 3.8

P-04-393 Llanymynech and Pant Bypass Action Group

Petition wording:

We call upon the Welsh Government to reinstate plans for the bypass of the villages of Pant and Llanymynech which straddle the English/Welsh border. 15,000 cars and lorries a day pass through these two villages, and it will only increase once the plans for the wind farms get the go-ahead. We call upon the government now to proceed with their plans, or at least open up talks on the bypass and have a full debate, listening to our needs and the voices from our community on how this road is affecting us and our quality of life. We hope, by doing this, that the English government will then take note and proceed with plans on their side. We would like a full and open debate on the need for a bypass for the villages of Pant and Llanymynech, which then, will develop into the actual construction of the bypass once funds are available.

We are fed up of the noise, the pollution, the fact that we cannot walk our children to school, walk to the shops, or walk our dogs along the road. Road improvements such as widening, will not work here. The road was initially designed as a single track lane for horses and carts. The houses on both sides of the road often touch the edge of the road, and there are many lanes which feed onto the A483, which will again make it unsuitable for improvements. A bypass is the only option we feel, taking the road from Llyncllys (which is absolutely deadly) around the villages of Pant and Llanymynech and joining the new bypass by the edge of Llandysilio. This is the main trunk road between Manchester and Swansea, and it is not fit for purpose. We have many MPs and AMs on our side and we are determined to get this done, and have a full debate in the Assembly on the subject.

Petition raised by: Duncan Borthwick

Date petition first considered by Committee: 29 May 2012

Number of signatures 84

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Minister for Local Government and Communities



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-393
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/07293/12

William Powell AM

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

5th
March 2013

Dr Bill

I am responding to the Petitions Committee's request for an update further to my letter of 5 November 2012 on plans for a bypass of the villages of Pant and Llanymynech.

Officials from Welsh Government have approached their counterparts in Highways Agency, Area 9 regarding this matter and have been informed that the A483 Pant to Llanymynech Bypass Scheme was considered by the West Midlands Regional Transport Board in 2006 as part of the Regional Prioritisation process. The board advised that the scheme was a low priority because of its low cost benefit score and the modest contributions it was thought to make towards economic development and housing in the region.

Following this decision, the Highways Agency undertook a detailed review of the scheme, to assess whether its cost could be reduced whilst maintaining a substantial proportion of its benefits. The review concluded that even the possible smaller scale solutions along this route would still offer poor value for money.

UK Transport Ministers have since instructed Highways Agency to stop work on the scheme and it is therefore no longer included in their programme of major regional works.

Additional inclusions to this programme would be led by the Department for Transport in consultation with UK Ministers.

You will appreciate that because of the nature of these cross border schemes we cannot progress our scheme programme as we envisaged without the cooperation of the Highways Agency. Therefore we will need to reconsider our options along the Welsh trunk road length.

al

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Minister for Local Government and Communities

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400
Correspondence: Carl.Sargeant@wales.gsi.gov.uk
Printed on 100% recycled paper



Jeremy Patterson,
Prif Weithredwr
Chief Executive

County Hall / Neuadd y Sir,
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If calling please ask for / Os yn galw gofynnwch am

W. D. Powell, A.M.,
Chairman, Petitions Committee,
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Mr. J.R. Patterson
Tel / Ffôn: 01597 - 826199
Fax / Ffacs: 01597 - 826149
Email / Llythyru electronig: jeremyp@powys.gov.uk
Our ref / Ein cyf: JRP/CE.33/072

Date / Dyddiad: 19 March 2013

Dear Cllr Powell,

A483 Pant – Llanymynech Bypass

Thank you for your letter dated the 27th February 2013. The views of, and comments made by the petitioners are noted and I am certain that the Portfolio Holder for Highways and other Elected Members of Powys County Council would fully support a renewed call for a bypass of Pant and Llanymynech to be reinstated in future programmes. I am aware that in the past support was given to previous proposals for such a scheme.

I can also confirm that when the Minister requested a list of priorities prior to his 2011 review of the National Transport Plan (NTP) the Regional Consortium TRaCC included the A483 Pant – Llanymynech Bypass as one of the existing NTP priorities that TraCC would like to be taken forward in the proposed three year NTP delivery programme.

The Welsh Government (WG) acknowledges that A483 trunk road through Newtown and northward to Weshpool is, at peak times, operating at well above capacity and this leads to delays, congestion and driver frustration and sadly accidents. Similarly, the single carriageway constraints in Pant and Llanymynech coupled with the constant and relentless, high volume of traffic including a relatively high percentage of HGVs passing residents' doorways inevitably leads to disquiet and calls for action to be taken to remedy the noise, vibration, fumes and the daily intrusion of traffic within the village environment.

I am sure that residents in Pant and Llanymynech view the recently completed Four Crosses bypass with some envy and would relish the improved quality of life and safety that the improvement has brought to villagers in Four Crosses.

A bypass would improve safety and resilience on the trunk road network, provide reliable journey times and ensure vehicle operating cost are reduced. It would also greatly improve transport links between north and mid Wales and between the West Midlands and Aberystwyth which is identified as a key settlement of national significance in the Wales Spatial Plan.

Gwasanaethau effeithiol ar gyfer calon werdd Cymru
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www.powys.gov.uk



From an economic and regeneration view point an effective route for through traffic to bypass Pant and Llanymynech would encourage investment in Welshpool, Newtown, Llanidloes and other settlements in the Severn Valley by significantly reducing congestion and delays and thereby would provide employment opportunities and safeguard jobs in central Wales and in Ceredigion. Coordinated route improvements along the length of the A483 would not only greatly assist commercial hauliers but would also be a boon to tourism in mid Wales and the west coast.

Unfortunately, the major portion of any proposed scheme to bypass Pant and Llanymynech would fall outside Powys and Wales and my understanding is that at this time the Highways Agency (HA) in England does give any such proposal a sufficiently high priority to warrant inclusion in any forward programme. It is therefore doubtful that the WG would include a scheme in the NTP in the foreseeable future.

Nevertheless, the need for a bypass is clearly apparent and it may be that the only way to move this forward is for the WG to take the initiative and to raise the issues relating to tourism, regeneration and the mid and west Wales economy with counterparts in England in order to emphasise the positive benefits such a scheme provide in the region.

Yours sincerely



Jeremy Patterson
Chief Executive

c.c. Cllr Barry Thomas
c.c. Stuart Mackenzie NMWTRU

Agenda Item 3.9

P-04-409 : Welsh names for new trunk roads in Wales

Petition wording:

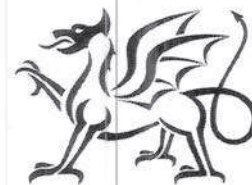
We call upon the Welsh Government to ensure that all new trunk roads in Wales have names in Welsh. Not only does this help preserve the identity of our cities, towns and villages. It also helps non Welsh speakers learn basic Welsh pronunciation and spelling.

Petition raised by: WelshnotBritish.com

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 47

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Minister for Local Government and Communities



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-409
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/00323/13

William Powell AM

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

26 February 2013

Mr Bill.

I am responding to your letter dated 6 February regarding the petition which calls for all new trunk roads in Wales to have Welsh names.

Your letter advises that the petitioner has clarified that they are not seeking all trunk roads to be renamed, but that they would like to see Welsh names used if applicable for "new roads" that will be constructed in the future. If by this they are referring to new trunk roads or motorways my position on the matter must remain the same. As I explained in my letter of 5 November for reasons of continuity of routes across the UK due in part to their length, all trunk roads and motorways are numbered following strict convention to ensure clarity to the road user following them.

Carl

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Minister for Local Government and Communities

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400
Correspondence: Carl.Sargeant@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Printed on 100% recycled paper

William Powell AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
CF99 1NA

8/4/2013

Dear Mr Powell,

The Petitions Committee, National Assembly for Wales (Ref: P-04-409/427)

Thank you for your letter requesting the Commissioner's opinion on the two petitions referenced above.

The main objective of the Commissioner is to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language. This is done by drawing attention to the fact that Welsh has official language status in Wales and by imposing standards on organisations. In turn, this will lead to the establishment of rights for Welsh speakers.

The work of the Commissioner is underpinned by two principles:

- The Welsh language should be treated no less favourably in Wales than the English language
- People in Wales should be able to live their lives through the medium of Welsh if they wish to do so

The following are the Welsh Language Commissioner's comments on the two petitions.

P-04-409: Welsh names for new trunk roads in Wales

We acknowledge the supportive spirit of this petition in respect of the Welsh language. The Welsh Government is responsible for trunk roads in Wales. We also acknowledge the Government's response to your request for comments on the aim of this petition, and we note that it would be difficult to name trunk roads that are very long and that stretch through different parts of the country. If the Government

wished, in due course, to name trunk roads in Wales, we would expect it to do so in accordance with its Welsh language scheme and, in turn, with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

P-04-427: A new Welsh language law for Wales

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 received royal assent in February 2011. The post of Welsh Language Commissioner was created by the Measure. The Measure sets a legal framework for the introduction of duties on some organisations to comply with statutory standards relating to the Welsh language. The standards will note how organisations will be expected to treat and use the Welsh language. The standards will be one method used to give legal effect to the official status of the Welsh language in Wales.

Over a period of time, new powers to impose standards on organisations, and to enforce them, will come into force through subordinate legislation. Until then, the Welsh Language Commissioner will continue to review statutory language schemes through the powers that she has inherited under Part 2 of the Welsh Language Act 1993. The Measure allows some private sector organisations to be open to complying with standards. Those categories are listed in Schedules 7 and 8 of the Measure. Until the statutory standards come into force, it is difficult to consider their full potential within the private sector.

The long title of the Measure refers to the rights of the individual, which will stem from the ability to enforce the duty to comply with standards, though it is fair to note that this is the only reference in the Measure to the rights of the individual.

The Commissioner believes that it is premature to make a statement about the full impact of the Measure at present. However, the Commissioner would welcome an annual meeting with the relevant Committee on this issue, given that one of the functions of the Commissioner, stipulated in Section 4 (2)(c), is *keeping under review the adequacy and effectiveness of the law relating to the Welsh language*.

Yours sincerely,

Meri Huws

Welsh Language Commissioner

Agenda Item 3.10

P-04-416: North-South Rail Services

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to work with Arriva Trains to increase the number of direct express rail services between Holyhead and Cardiff.

Petition raised by: Neil Taylor

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 19



Ein cyf/Our ref SF/EH/1282-13

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

William Powell AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

28 March 2013

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 27 February 2013, on behalf of the Petitions Committee, about express rail services between Holyhead and Cardiff. I apologise for the delay in reply.

I note that you have forwarded the specific timetabling concerns of the petitioner Neil Taylor and have asked that these be considered in more detail. I am committed to further improvements to these services, as evidenced by the infrastructure improvements that the Welsh Government is currently funding in the Wrexham area. I have asked my officials to consider further the information your petitioner has provided as they continue their work in this area. It should be noted, however, that the infrastructure on the West Coast Main Line (WCML) used for journeys between Holyhead and London provides greater capacity and allows higher operating speeds than the corresponding route. As you will be aware, responsibility for rail infrastructure sits with the Department for Transport.

Your letter also asks if further discussions have taken place with Arriva Trains Wales (ATW) on this issue. My officials have an on-going dialogue with ATW about further capacity enhancements, both for existing services and for delivering new services such as those outlined in the National Transport Plan. This dialogue continues to include discussions of north-south services.

I trust that the Committee will find this information useful for its inquiry.

Agenda Item 3.11

P-04-438 : Shopping Access

Petition wording:

We the undersigned call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to:

Investigate the provision of off-street disabled parking in line with Department for Transport Guidance

Create a law stating the minimum number, and dimensions of disabled parking spaces Investigate the current minimum size for disabled spaces to find out if they take into account vans used to transport wheelchair users

Set a standard, higher fine for misusing disabled space across all car parks that is enforced on first offence

Make taxi companies carry the correct clamps and inertia reels for use with motorized wheelchairs

Investigate whether current disabled toilet provision is of adequate size for users of motorised wheelchairs and attendant carers

Create a scheme where shops with fixed, or portable ramps display a badge in their windows

Petition raised by: Mencap Cymru & Ysgol Erw'r Delyn

Date petition first considered by Committee: 20 November 2012

Number of signatures: 55

P-04-343 Prevent the destruction of amenities on common land - Anglesey

Petition wording

We call upon the Welsh Government to examine ways to prevent the destruction of amenities on common land, including for example the Marian Common in Llangoed, Ynys Môn.

Petition raised by: JE Futter

Petition first considered by Committee: 15 November 2011

Number of signatures: 156

P-04-343 Prevent the destruction of amenities on common land - Anglesey - Correspondence from the petitioner to the Chair, 03.04.13

Dear Mr Powell AC/AM

Thank you for requesting an update on the situation at Marian Common, Llangoed, to help aid your consideration of the petition.

The land is still being driven over occasionally by large machinery, and the residents' offer to the Llangoed Community Council to set up a management scheme, or to initiate tree planting, has been turned down.

We have had a lot of support from our councillor, the local MP and the AM. Environmental and wildlife organizations have been sympathetic, but there has been no action in terms of providing additional protection for this common land.

I asked for responses to your letter from local residents, and the overwhelming response is that there should be some sort of higher protection afforded to common land in general, as we feel totally impotent against this. One of the major concerns is that, if machinery is driven over this land on a regular basis, in a few years time, the perpetrator will be able to argue that he has a legal right to this land, and all common rights will then be invalidated. This would inevitably lead to the tracks becoming permanent roadways.

I include a couple of written responses from residents below (names and addresses supplied):

1. "We feel that all Common Land is in a very vulnerable situation. The Marian is a good example of this. Better protection needs to be given to all Common land to prevent the invidious erosion of the general public's right to access and enjoyment. The situation re The Marian remains unresolved as heavy vehicles are still crossing it and the Local Authority & Community Council are reluctant to take any action against the perpetrator. Why should local residents be forced to afford legal action themselves? These rights should be enshrined by law and one individual should not be able to hold local residents to ransom. As our M.P. & A.M have been involved and supported the local community, do you know if they are aware of this latest development."

2. "Simply Tom.....that nobody locally, individually or institutionally, has the resources to confront the perpetrator of the common's clearance through the courts and we all cling to the hope that our representatives in the Welsh Assembly will help us.

By popular local agreement there has been a clear breach of use of this land. We have owned the closest house to this outrage for the last 20 years. Where there was once a public footpath through gorse, there is now a 10-12 foot earth road. The sudden appearance of this road by an earthmover was carried out in a covert manner without application to the

Community Council and may contravene laws of trespass and the rights of users of the Marian to enjoy this land. We are presenting the Welsh Assembly with the opportunity to set a precedent and get firm control on all such common land in Wales.

In practical terms a mud bath has developed at the bottom of the new track, on the lane leading to our house over the wet winter and this a direct and foreseeable result of the ground clearance. There is clear evidence from tyre ruts that vehicles attempting to turn round are getting bogged down at the point where the new track meets the lane. The CC, whilst sympathetic, do not have the resources to lay hard core here and appear reluctant to ask for the work to be carried out and paid for by the individual who commissioned the original clearance.”

I hope that this information is of help to the committee and that you are able to find a way forward for all of us.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely

Tom Pollock

Agenda Item 3.13

P-04-465 Save Welsh Milk, its infrastructure & its jobs

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to protect Welsh Milk Production, Processing and the Dairy Infrastructure within Wales, rather than rely on the facilities centrally managed within the greater UK, a long way from the many Welsh farms particularly in the West of the country. We are not suggesting that the Government promote one business or brand, but rather promote investment in any business processing milk in Wales, either fresh liquid milk, butter or cheese.

Petition raised by: Richard Arnold

Petition first considered by Committee: 19 March 2013

Number of signatures: 426

Alun Davies AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol a Bwyd
Minister for Natural Resources and Food



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-465
Ein cyf/Our ref AD-/00185/13

William Powell AM
AM for Mid & West Wales
Chair Petition's committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Dear Bill,

7 April 2013

PETITION TO PROTECT WELSH MILK PRODUCTION, PROCESSING AND THE DAIRY INFRASTRUCTURE

Thank you for your letter dated 21 March seeking my views on the petition from Richard Arnold about Milk Production, Processing and the Dairy Infrastructure within Wales.

The Welsh Government's Programme for Government specifically identifies food as a priority sector for support and I am fully committed to supporting the dairy industry to be a viable and thriving part of the Welsh economy. To date £5.6 million has been awarded to dairy projects with a further £3.3 million Supply Chain Efficiency support in place to improve the Welsh Dairy Supply Chain. Furthermore £5 Million has been awarded through the Processing and Marketing Grant to the Welsh dairy industry to support 20 dairy processing projects and this has leveraged a further £16m of private sector investment.

I launched the Plan for Milk at the Royal Welsh Show in July 2012 and have established the Wales Dairy Task Force and, as the Chair, I will be working with the industry to push forward an innovative agenda. The Task Force, which is due to be in place until 30 September 2014, has a challenging agenda to examine the differences between the most and least profitable dairy businesses in Wales – and to recommend ways to help lower performing businesses. In addition, the Task Force will consider the Welsh milk processing sector and that across the border, where most of our milk is processed.

The Task Force will focus on supply chain issues such as the operation of the Voluntary Code of Practice and consider any need for change before our full review after the Code has been in place for two years.

I recognise the importance of added value in the supply chain and I will be also exploring the potential with Welsh Dairy Processors/Food producers on achieving protected geographical indication (PGI) or protected designation of origin (PDO) status for Welsh Cheeses. To receive the PGI status, the entire product must be traditionally and at least partially manufactured within a specific region and thus acquire unique properties and I believe that this prestigious status could support the Welsh dairy processing industry considerably.

I am keen to ensure that the Welsh Dairy Industry is robust and competitive. I believe that knowledge transfer is key to developing the industry's capacity to be competitive and our Farming Connect programme is providing easy-to-access advice on the best ways to cut costs and increase profitability. I recently announced that the number of days of subsidised business and technical support available through Farming Connect has been increased from five to eight days as I understand that this advice is consistently well received by farmers.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alun Davies', with a flourish underneath.

Alun Davies AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol a Bwyd
Minister for Natural Resources and Food

P-04-427 : A new Welsh language law for Wales

Petition wording:

We call on the Welsh Assembly to create a new Welsh language law as we feel that the current laws regarding the Welsh language do not go far enough to protect the rights of Welsh speakers. Currently, the private sector is not required to have Welsh language plans or policies and does not have to treat the Welsh language as an equal to English. Whilst Welsh speakers have increased rights, they now need to have the right to be able to use Welsh in ALL aspects of their daily lives.

Petition raised by: Gethin Kurtis Sugar

Date petition first considered by Committee: 16 October 2012

Number of signatures: 93

Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-427
Ein cyf/Our ref LF/LA/0103/13

William Powell AM
Chair Petition's Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Tŷ Hywel
Cardiff Bay

11 March 2013

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 6 February, requesting further clarification to my response to your letter of 22 October 2012 regarding a petition submitted by Gethin Sugar, calling for a new Welsh language law to cover the private sector.

You asked whether the Welsh Government would be able to bring forward such legislation, in terms of legislative competence. The National Assembly for Wales's legislative competence is set out in section 108 of, and Schedule 7 to, the Government of Wales Act 2006. A detailed consideration of the provisions proposed to be contained in any such Bill would need to be undertaken to determine whether the legislation would be within the competence of the National Assembly. This would be a matter for the Presiding Officer to confirm as part of her duties under section 110(3) of the Government of Wales Act 2006.

Whilst I am unable to advise on issues of legislative competence of the National Assembly, as I stated in my original response the Welsh Government has no plans to introduce primary legislation with regard to the Welsh language as we are currently implementing the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

Yours sincerely

Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills

William Powell AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
CF99 1NA

8/4/2013

Dear Mr Powell,

The Petitions Committee, National Assembly for Wales (Ref: P-04-409/427)

Thank you for your letter requesting the Commissioner's opinion on the two petitions referenced above.

The main objective of the Commissioner is to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language. This is done by drawing attention to the fact that Welsh has official language status in Wales and by imposing standards on organisations. In turn, this will lead to the establishment of rights for Welsh speakers.

The work of the Commissioner is underpinned by two principles:

- The Welsh language should be treated no less favourably in Wales than the English language
- People in Wales should be able to live their lives through the medium of Welsh if they wish to do so

The following are the Welsh Language Commissioner's comments on the two petitions.

P-04-409: Welsh names for new trunk roads in Wales

We acknowledge the supportive spirit of this petition in respect of the Welsh language. The Welsh Government is responsible for trunk roads in Wales. We also acknowledge the Government's response to your request for comments on the aim of this petition, and we note that it would be difficult to name trunk roads that are very long and that stretch through different parts of the country. If the Government

wished, in due course, to name trunk roads in Wales, we would expect it to do so in accordance with its Welsh language scheme and, in turn, with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

P-04-427: A new Welsh language law for Wales

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 received royal assent in February 2011. The post of Welsh Language Commissioner was created by the Measure. The Measure sets a legal framework for the introduction of duties on some organisations to comply with statutory standards relating to the Welsh language. The standards will note how organisations will be expected to treat and use the Welsh language. The standards will be one method used to give legal effect to the official status of the Welsh language in Wales.

Over a period of time, new powers to impose standards on organisations, and to enforce them, will come into force through subordinate legislation. Until then, the Welsh Language Commissioner will continue to review statutory language schemes through the powers that she has inherited under Part 2 of the Welsh Language Act 1993. The Measure allows some private sector organisations to be open to complying with standards. Those categories are listed in Schedules 7 and 8 of the Measure. Until the statutory standards come into force, it is difficult to consider their full potential within the private sector.

The long title of the Measure refers to the rights of the individual, which will stem from the ability to enforce the duty to comply with standards, though it is fair to note that this is the only reference in the Measure to the rights of the individual.

The Commissioner believes that it is premature to make a statement about the full impact of the Measure at present. However, the Commissioner would welcome an annual meeting with the relevant Committee on this issue, given that one of the functions of the Commissioner, stipulated in Section 4 (2)(c), is *keeping under review the adequacy and effectiveness of the law relating to the Welsh language*.

Yours sincerely,

Meri Huws

Welsh Language Commissioner

P-04-427 A new Welsh language law for Wales – Correspondence from the petitioner to the deputy clerk, 09.04.13

Dear Kayleigh,

Thank you for the e-mail. I welcome the Minister and the Commissioner's responses. I am happy to accept the Commissioner's response regarding my petition and I have no further comments.

Thank you again for giving me this opportunity.

Best regards,

Gethin Sugar

Agenda Item 3.15

P-04-432 : Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to recommend that the armed forces should not go into schools to recruit.

Britain is the only country in the European Union that allows a military presence in its schools. Britain is the only country of the 27 European Union countries to recruit 16-year-old children to the armed forces. The armed forces target their recruitment in schools in the most deprived areas of Wales.

Petition raised by: The Fellowship of Reconciliation

Date petition first considered by Committee: 6 November 2012

Number of signatures: 374 Associated petition collected approximately 700 signatures

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from Reverend Gwynn ap Gwilym

Dear Sir / Madam

I wish to support the following petition:

We call on the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to recommend that the armed forces should not go into schools to recruit. Britain is the only country in the European Union that allows a military presence in its schools. Britain is the only country of the 27 European Union countries to recruit 16-year-old children to the armed forces. The armed forces target their recruitment in schools in the most deprived areas of Wales.

I am very concerned that the armed forces

- are given the opportunity to provide careers advice in schools in Wales
- give careers advice to children in areas of Wales where there is a shortage of careers;
- give children a false impression of what they have to offer without disclosing that the true purpose is to train to kill and harm people.

I was taught at a school in Mid Wales where the headteacher always refused to allow the armed forces to set foot on the school grounds. I always admired him for that and I would like to see every child in Wales being protected, like I and my fellow pupils were, from the Army, the Navy and the Air force's propaganda.

Yours sincerely

Reverend Gwynn ap Gwilym

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from the Fellowship of Reconciliation

‘No’ to the Military Visiting Schools in Wales

An address on the steps of the Senedd, Cardiff, 14.xi. 2012

Robin Gwyndaf

Vice President of the Fellowship of Reconciliation

Life is sacred. Each person has the right to live. But in every war the purpose is to destroy life – to kill. And the result? Unimaginable pain and suffering and the destruction of families and communities.

On a leaflet issued by the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Wales we read the following words (I translate):

‘... after thousand of years of wars, the world is in a more dangerous state today than it has ever been. The belief in war is responsible for this. War is the problem, not the answer.’

That is the message that school children and young people should be hearing. But what is happening in many schools in Wales today? The Army is given permission to visit these schools to recruit.

Of the 27 countries of the European Union, Britain is the only member to allow the Military into schools. Yes, although Britain has already signed the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child, and although the British Government is, therefore, obligated to put words into action and keep its promise. What hypocrisy! What heartbreaking situation.

The Welsh Government says: 'We have nothing to do with this; defence is a matter for the British Government.' But we are here today to say to each member of the Assembly: 'Yes, yes, yes, you do have a responsibility.'

They have a responsibility; all church members; all members of societies and institutions in Wales; all of us, you and I – we all have a responsibility, a vital role to play to ensure that, instead of promoting the culture of violence and war, we promote the culture of non-violence and peace.

Of course, the Army will say: by visiting schools we are not actually recruiting, we are merely educating. In other words they are telling the children of Wales: what a wonderful career the Army can offer, especially at a time when, in poor areas in particular, so many young people are out of work. But are we to believe this? Will they also be told about the heart of stone they need to kill a

fellow human being? Will they also be told of the fear and anguish and often the grief of a family back home, day by day waiting for news of their beloved son or daughter? And will they also be told of the traumatic effect of war and life in the army on a soldier's personality and health?

We are here today, therefore, to present a petition and to say to the Welsh Government in a loud and clear voice: the Army must not be given permission to visit one single school in Wales.

Rather, we are asking the Welsh Government to ensure that studies relating to justice, peace and human rights will soon have a central role to play in the education of the children and young people of Wales.

Comisiynydd Plant Cymru Children's Commissioner for Wales

Keith Towler

Mr Leon Russell

13 November 2012

Dear Mr Russell

Re: Military Presence in Welsh Schools

Thank you for your letter regarding your campaign to ban Ministry of Defence (MoD) recruiters from Welsh schools.

It is not my intention to comment on the age of recruitment into the armed forces, but to address the specific issue you raise in the petition which you have submitted to the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) Petitions Committee.

At this time, I am not minded to write directly to the Welsh Government and the NAfW Petitions Committee but I will copy both in to this correspondence for information and I am happy for you to share this letter with whomever you wish and to treat this correspondence as a public document.

I welcome the discussion on this subject and note the information that the Welsh Centre for International Affairs will be facilitating a debate via one of their children's debates. Hearing the voice of young people in this discussion is very important, as is hearing the experiences of those who have been through the processes of the armed forces whilst they were under the age of 18.

I am aware of past media coverage which suggested variations in army recruitment officers' visits to schools. The statistics, which, as far as I am aware, were not contested, was that schools in the most deprived areas were visited 50% more often than those in affluent areas and that there were big regional variations. I would have obvious concerns if levels of deprivation had any influence in recruitment strategy. However, a statement from the MoD at the time also explained that:

"The Army does not recruit in schools, but seeks to raise awareness of the Army and its place in a democratic society while building interest in the Army and its careers"¹

This position is in contrast to the UK state party's submission under Article 8, paragraph 1, of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict², which states:

¹ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/6199274.stm>

“Army recruiting initiatives include presentations in schools by Army careers advisers (ACA), a variety of Army youth team and Army recruiting team activities, attachments and visits to units, school fairs, Combined Cadet Force (CCF), advertising and marketing initiatives, membership of the Army’s Camouflage Club.”

This contradiction needs to be resolved. I believe clarity is needed so that headteachers, pupils and parents are aware of the nature of MoD activity and can make informed decisions on whether or not they wish to be exposed to any presentations in school.

A recommendation by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2008 stated that the UK state party should:

“Reconsider its active policy of recruitment of children into the armed forces...”

Another key consideration in this debate is Article 13 of the UNCRC, which states:

“The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.”³

In presenting career options, the MoD has a responsibility to present a balanced and accurate picture. Elements which should be thoroughly covered include:

- the rights to discharge
- minimum periods of service
- fatality and injury rates
- effectiveness of prohibition on deployment into hostilities

I do have some reservations regarding the MoD’s ability to offer a balanced picture of military life. This statement is based purely on anecdotal examples of MoD online materials aimed at young people, for instance the *Camouflage* site: <http://army.mod.uk/camouflage/default.aspx>

The MoD’s position is that it visits schools by invitation only. Therefore it appears that this issue rests with headteachers, as you state in your letter. I can appreciate that headteachers may want to invite the MoD into their schools to ensure that pupils are provided with information about a wide range of career opportunities. I would hope that due consideration is afforded to inviting providers of other possible career avenues

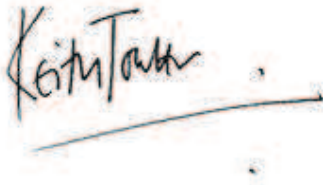
² <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/CRC.C.OPAC.GBR.1.pdf>

³ <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm>

Importantly, I also hope that head teachers seek assurances that all available information is accurate and balanced, including the elements discussed above.

I thank you again for bringing your campaign to my attention and I will continue to monitor developments in this area. I would also suggest that you engage with the Wales UNCRC monitoring group on this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Towler". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line that serves as a signature line.

Keith Towler
Children's Commissioner for Wales / Comisiynydd Plant Cymru

cc: William Powell AM Chair of NAFW Petitions Committee
Leighton Andrews AM Minister for Education

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from Dr Kelvin Mason

Responding to this petition, which I wholeheartedly support:

I am deeply concerned about the exposure of schoolchildren who are too young to join the armed forces being prematurely recruited/groomed via so-called 'careers advice'. Any Armed Forces recruitment should be limited to adults old enough to decide whether to enlist or not. I am also concerned that there is no constitutional check that ensures those targeted for recruitment hear the other-side of the arguments on the use of coercive violence, for example pacifist and humanitarian arguments. There is a very particular ethical argument that must be presented and understood in the case of recruitment to a career that exposes the person recruited to the ultimate questions of human morality, the potential sacrifice and/or taking of human life.

Dr Kelvin Mason
Cardiff School of Planning and Geography
Cardiff University

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) Cymru

Response to request for information from the Petitions Committee with regard to Armed Forces and Schools.

- 1 The Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) represents over 17,000 heads, principals, deputies, vice-principals, assistant heads, business managers and other senior staff of maintained and independent schools and colleges throughout the UK. ASCL Cymru has members in more than 90 per cent of secondary schools in Wales. This places the Association in a unique position to consider this issue from the viewpoint of the leaders of secondary schools.
- 2 **Q1:** Do you have any concerns about the Armed Forces giving career advice in schools or do you welcome such advice?
 - *We have concerns about the principles underpinning this petition. What are the implications of a government influencing, whether explicitly or implicitly by means of advice, which legally permitted careers young people should receive information and advice on? Would support for this petition set precedents by which other careers, such as banking, might be deemed unacceptable in the future? Indeed, might it even mean that schools should not allow any elected politician into school in case he/she may recruit new party members?*
 - *Feedback from members suggests a mixed picture at present- some Governing Bodies have adopted a policy of not involving the Armed Forces in careers events, whilst individual pupils showing an interest are welcome to participate in army/navy/air force activities. Other schools have a policy of involving the Armed Forces in career events whilst prohibiting explicit recruitment activity.*
 - *Many schools use the Armed Forces as a learning resource for team building and outdoor activities.*
- 3 **Q2:** What are the benefits and disadvantages of the Armed Forces giving career advice in schools?

- *It ensures equality of opportunity to those students who wish to pursue a career in the armed forces*
 - *It allows students who may not previously have considered a career in the armed forces to have access to that information*
 - *Whilst it could be seen as tacit approval for the armed forces, in reality it is no more than ensuring that a full range of employers are represented.*
- 4 **Q3:** What impact, if any, would restricting armed forces access to schools have on young people's access to information about Armed Forces careers?
- *Schools have to be careful to remain politically neutral on all matters – the role of school is to enable students to gain information on such matters as careers rather than to seek to influence the choices made by the students. A total prohibition on all contact with representatives of the Armed Forces could be interpreted as being an attempt to influence choices.*
- 5 **Q4:** Do you have any evidence that the Armed Forces target their activities in schools in more deprived areas?
- *We have no evidence to that effect.*
- 6 **Q5:** Do the Armed Forces work differently in independent schools than in local authority schools?
- *The feedback from members suggests a broadly similar approach in schools in both sectors, with the independent schools more likely to have Army/Navy Cadet Forces as a school activity.*
- 7 In conclusion, we would suggest:
- there are too many regulations already bearing on schools and there is no good reason to add another one about this
 - the matter should be left to individual schools and their leaders when arranging for careers advice
 - there should be no presumption that the armed services or any other group have a right of access, but equally
 - there should be no prohibition on careers advice being given on any legal and decent occupation (the latter criterion being decided by the school)
- 8 I hope that this is of value to your consultation. ASCL Cymru is willing to be further consulted and to assist in any way that it can.



Gareth Jones, ASCL Cymru Secretary

Petitions Committee,

22nd March 2013

National Assembly for Wales,

Cardiff CF99 1NA

Re: Petition P-04-432

As conscientious citizens of Wales we welcome this opportunity to express our views to the committee.

The Assembly has taken public pride in protecting the rights of children, not least in its innovative role as the first legislature in Britain to appoint a Children's Commissioner. That the Commissioner's work must follow the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), encourages expectation of a positive outcome for the petition. The stance of the UNCRC towards the British military's recruitment of children is very clear.

In its 2008 report to the UK, the UNCRC expressed concern at recruitment practices relating to under-18s (the UN uses the term **child soldiers**) and called for the minimum recruitment age to be raised to 18. In 2009 this recommendation, and others relating to young people in the armed forces, was endorsed by Parliament's Joint Committee on Human Rights. The report also highlighted evidence that the experience of recruits in the 16 – 18 age bracket is adversely affected by their relative lack of maturity, and that their high drop-out rate results in millions of pounds in wasted expenditure.

The outcome of the petition has broader relevancy than the question of MOD recruitment in schools, and may serve as something of a test-case for the depth of autonomy of the Welsh legislature, following the March 2011 referendum for increased powers.

We feel that this petition faces Welsh politicians with the dilemma over whether to truly represent the interests and values of the people of Wales, or to simply serve other interests. Has the Assembly become sufficiently democratic that it legislates on behalf of the welfare of the children under its care, in opposition to the requirements of the UK military-industrial complex? The Labour Party has transformed considerably in recent decades in pursuit of votes in English constituencies; this petition offers an opportunity to prove publicly that it has not cut loose completely from its founding values.

The question of Ministry of Defence recruiters' pursuit of minors in the school environment offers a very clear case for legislative change on moral grounds alone. However, should the Petitions Committee find cause to close the petition, our campaign will continue apace, armed with documented evidence of Welsh politicians' reluctance to take action where they should. We trust that our representatives would much prefer to spare themselves such public embarrassment.

Although members of Cardiff & District United Nations Association, we write in our personal capacity and as initiators of the petition and campaign.

Yours sincerely

Leon Russell and Sara Hawys

United Nations Association, Cardiff



Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from Dr Gwyn Williams

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the petition opposing army recruitment in schools.

As you know, Britain recruits 16 year-old children to the army. This has been condemned by the United Nations, and Britain is the only country within NATO that allows this. Indeed, only some 20 countries in the world do this and they are usually oppressive governments.

The main way that the army recruits these children is by visiting schools. These children who are targeted (who are too young to vote) are attracted by tempting resources and exhibitions that give them a false impression of the army's main purpose. Little, if at all, is mentioned of how many young lives are lost or injured. According to one army officer, the exhibition is aimed at children in years 9, 10 and 11. The officers are trained as skilled salesmen even using video games to make the work of a soldier appear attractive. Influencing children in this way is immoral.

Our country's deprived areas are targeted. According to figures that I have seen, there were 50% more visits to schools in these areas (using free school meals figures). About 50% of children who are recruited have a reading age of an 11 year old or younger. Many of the children recruited do not recognise the significance of the contract that they sign. There is no means of leaving the army after six months without special permission and this is very rarely given. Therefore, a number of them will be in the army against their wishes until they are 22 years old. It is no surprise, therefore, that the number of suicides among these young people is 50% higher than those who are not in the army. However, many also have disabilities or suffer from trauma, facts which are not mentioned much during the recruitment process.

The economic situation is sure to influence the decision of some to join the army and some think that they might have opportunities that would not otherwise be available to them. This should not be true because everybody has the right to an education until they are 18 years old. These opportunities should be available without asking children to sacrifice their lives to have them. I read that £80 million is spent on recruitment. This money should be used to provide them with work opportunities and training.

Children under the age of 18 were sent on active duty until that was banned by international law recently. Hasten the day when recruiting children under the age of 16 is also banned. On average the percentage recruited to the army from Britain is 5%, but in Wales this figure is 9%. Does the Assembly think that this is acceptable? This is achieved by allowing the army to recruit in schools. According to the officer whom I referred to already, going to schools is more effective than any

other means of recruiting children. How young they are or how one-sided the method used do not seem to count for much.

I urge you to refuse the army permission to visit schools in Wales.

Dr Gwyn Williams

PET(4) SAR 08

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from Dorian Williams

28 March 2013

William Powell AM
Chairman of the Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Dear William Powell AM

Thank you for your e-mail message received today, 28.03.13.

I would like to respond as Headteacher and as a member of the Governing Body of Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bro Myrddin (Bro Myrddin Welsh Comprehensive School).

This is the opinion of the School Governing Body:

1. The Armed Forces do not get the opportunity to come in to Bro Myrddin to talk to pupils, and this prohibition has been in force for many years.
2. Each attempt by the Armed Forces to provide support of any kind, career input or free extracurricular activity (e.g. fitness days ('assault course days out'), is rejected.
3. In those rare cases where a pupil chooses to join the Armed Forces, the school does not prevent the Careers Wales Officer based at the school from assisting the individual to receive relevant information.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our view.

Yours sincerely

Dorian Williams
Headteacher

PET(4) SAR 09

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from the Meeting of Friends in Wales (Quakers)

*Cyfarfod y Cyfeillion yng Nghymru,
Crynwyr*

*Meeting of Friends in Wales,
Quakers*



02.04.2013

ARMY RECRUITMENT IN SCHOOLS

P-04-432

To: The Petitions Committee

Meeting of Friends in Wales (Quakers) is charged by Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) to represent and advance the life and witness of the Society within Wales, and to communicate with the Welsh National Assembly on matters relating to peace, justice and social witness and interfaith relations. It represents Wales to Britain Yearly Meeting, and is therefore aware of its responsibilities to ensure that the voice of Quakers in Wales is heard.

As one of the historic Peace Churches, Quakers have maintained a peace witness across the centuries, we feel bound to respond to the petition on the involvement of the Armed Forces or Ministry of Defence recruitment personnel in Welsh schools. What follows indicates our areas of concern:

- Under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child is defined as anyone under the age of eighteen, and it is the duty of the UK government, party to the Convention, to promote the best interests of the child. The recruitment of children into the armed forces, in our view, subordinates or negates those interests since it limits the breadth and depth of their education,

as defined by Article 29 of the Convention.

- The 2011 Wolf Report - Review of Vocational Education (commissioned by the Department of Education) recognised that the armed forces educational system was fundamentally flawed, offering limited academic qualifications and excessive professional specialisation. Its deficiencies can therefore affect future prospects and may contribute to the high level of unemployment found amongst former military personnel. A study by the Royal British Legion in 2006 found 'unemployment rates among ex-Service personnel aged 18 – 49 to be twice the national average for the same civilian age group. Their lack of training and skills was cited as a reason for this.'¹
- The 2008 report by the UN Commission on the Rights of the Child recommended to the UK government that it should take measures to ban the recruitment of children into the armed forces.² In April 2008 there were 4,650 under eighteen year olds serving in the British armed forces.³ In 2007-08, 20% of all recruits in Britain had been under 18 years of age. While those under eighteen currently constitute about 1% of the trained strength of the armed forces, those recruited under the age of 18 amount to over a quarter of the army's fighting strength. The UN Commissions's recommendation should be heeded.
- The House of Commons Defence Committee in their third report of the 2004-05 session hinted strongly that recruitment of those under 18 should be seriously considered. They hinted that the practice should cease.⁴ The thrust and validity of their comments, throughout that report, highlight serious issues relevant to the recruitment of those under 18. All other EU and NATO countries ban the practice of recruiting below the age of 18. We should follow their example. The very notion that we encourage 'child soldiers,' whatever the safeguards, is troubling.
- 28 regular armed forces personnel, under the age of 18, died, while on service between January 1994 and 31st December 2003. In 2007 two under 18 year

1 *Mind the Gap: Education for minors in the British armed forces*, Child Soldiers International, July 2012, 4.

2 Committee on the Rights of the Child, (2008) *Concluding Observations on the initial report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland under the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict* (UN Doc: CRC/C/OPAC/GBR/CO/1)), para.13.

3 Parliamentary Question, 27.10.2008, PQ 229409.

4 House of Commons, Defence Committee Report, '*Duty of Care*,' Third Session 2004-05.

olds died while on training.⁵

- Considerable evidence points to the fact that recruitment is concentrated on areas of deprivation and towards young people who may be vulnerable. Using information obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, Assembly Member Leanne Wood, 'showed that the army was 50% more likely to visit schools in the most deprived areas of Wales than to visit those in less deprived areas.'⁶ A 2004 survey in the Cardiff catchment area found that 40% of army recruits were joining as a last resort. A survey of their personal backgrounds found that of 500 recruits joining between 1998 to 2000:
 - 69% of recruits were found to have come from homes of severe disharmony;
 - 50% were classified as coming from a deprived background;
 - 16% had been long-term unemployed before joining;
 - 35% had had more than eight jobs since leaving school (nearly all on a casual basis);
 - just over 60% had left school with no academic qualifications;
 - just 14% had more than five GCSEs at grades A-C.
- Informed choice in respect of enlistment is essential as is opportunity for balanced judgement made in the light of all available evidence and in awareness of the ethical dilemmas the judgement may involve. We doubt that many 16 and 17 year old are capable of this, even when supported by their parents, but the absence of information about the implications and possible outcomes of enlistment should be remedied. A recent study undertaken by King's College, London, which found that of 2,700 men 'in the armed forces under the age of 30, 20.6% had been convicted of a violent offence, compared with 6.7% in the general population. Men who had seen combat in Iraq and Afghanistan were 53% more likely to commit a violent offence than those in non-frontline roles. Personnel who had multiple experiences of combat had a 70% to 80% greater risk of being convicted of acts of violence.'⁷ Associated with this was a worrying revelation that violent offending was most common among young men from the lower ranks of the army. Problems of

⁵ Ibid., 229408.

⁶ David Gee, *Informed choice? Armed forces recruitment practice in the United Kingdom*, www.informedchoice.org.uk accessed 19.3.13, page 16.

⁷ *The Guardian*, 13.3.13.

homelessness and mental ill-health amongst veterans also deserves to be highlighted. The report *Informed Choice?* found ethical shortcomings in recruitment practice. 'Although being over 18 is no guarantee of individual maturity, it is the formal moment of transition from the status of minor to adult. It could be argued that employment in the (armed forces), with its particular features, is inappropriate for minors.'⁸

- Present practice in marketing life in the armed forces relies on a high level of glamorisation, this accompanied by a culture which glorifies and fantasises 'killing', particularly in computer games, distorts understanding of the issues especially amongst the most vulnerable. If the recruitment of under 18s is to continue then it is vital that alternative views around peace building and keeping should be integrated into the curriculum. Promoting peace is, in our view, more important than reflecting upon military glory. Heroism is not merely the prerogative of the military.
- We do not hold with the militarization of young people on the spurious grounds that it may be an answer to the social ills which have disadvantaged them, nor do we hold with such a thing happening in schools. Given that headteachers and school governors have discretion regarding what happens in their schools we would encourage the Wales Assembly to reflect on this matter with due concern for the wider picture, and to issue guidelines in respect of recruitment and schools.
- Quaker independent schools do not allow the military to advertise and recruit, though at a later stage any individual might make the choice of visiting a recruiting office. We do not believe that scholars from these schools have been at a disadvantage because of this, nor by the absence of career advice on the armed forces.

We understand that the present situation regarding invitations to the armed forces to attend schools rests with the headteacher. This being so, we believe that the Assembly should reflect on the issues with a view to defining what is acceptable, and should be issuing firmer guidance to schools on how they should handle the involvement of the military. Matters relating to recruitment practices, the quality of training to members

⁸ *The Deepcut Review*, A review of the circumstances surrounding the deaths of four soldiers at Princess Royal Barracks, Deepcut between 1995 and 2002, HC 795-I, London, The Stationery Office, 2006, para.,12.36, 386.

of the armed forces, post-discharge support, housing, health etc. belong with the UK government, but they are issues which should affect informed thinking on recruitment in schools and upon which our National Assembly should have an opinion.

Signed on behalf of Meeting of Friends in Wales (Quakers), by
Christine Trevett and Ros Morley

PET(4) SAR 10

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from Tim Hart

Dear Sir/Madam,

Unfortunately I was not aware of this petition until after the closing date but in any event I support the proposal for a ban on a military presence in schools and therefore submit this email as part of the consultation. I have two daughters that went through the state education system in England and would have been dismayed had they been subject to such targeted recruitment, although I understand that England does permit such presence in its state schools at the discretion of the head teacher.

I was interested in the wording of the petition which states that: 'no other country in the European Union permits such a military presence in schools.' Before the Welsh Assembly makes up its mind on this issue I feel that it would be helpful for it to have the facts on this particular aspect. I suspect the statistics and reasons for the ban on the military in schools by Member Countries could be obtained relatively easily from the European Commission and would prove valuable in enabling Assembly Members to make an informed decision.

The petition also states that the Military target deprived areas in its recruitment drives. I wonder whether the department of education has statistics concerning which schools have been visited by the Military in Wales- say over the past five years - and what is the socio-demographic profile of these schools. This would help to prove or disprove this particular claim.

Personally I have no particular knowledge or expertise in this subject and therefore cannot assist with the answers to these questions. From a broad legal and moral standpoint I believe it is questionable whether a school has the right to impose upon the children in its care such a military presence, which I believe would be more suitably deferred to adulthood - perhaps at college or university for instance - by which time the young people would be better placed to make an informed choice.

Thank you for taking the trouble to consider my views.

Tim Hart

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from John Williams

Dear Sir or Madam,

I was delighted to read the petition you are considering on the armed forces in schools.

I was a teacher for 35 years and now work as an adviser in secondary schools in London.

For the reasons stated I am in complete sympathy with this statement. I consider it completely wrong to use schools as a recruitment ground for the armed forces. Often the guise used by the armed services is to offer outdoor activities for impressionable youngsters. Such activities could and should be offered without links to the armed services. There are other community services that could offer such e.g. the fire, police and nursing services.

There are recruitment offices local towns and extensive media advertisements. That is enough.

Education is about developing a discerning conscience. Once a child has left school he/she can make an informed decision.

To take this petition and uphold it in practise would send a courageous and powerful message to all schools in the UK.

Yours sincerely,
John Williams

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from Llandrindod & Pales Quaker Meeting



Llandrindod & Pales Quaker Meeting
Peter Hussey

National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA
2013

8th April

Dear Sirs

I write with reference to the Petition:

"We call on the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to recommend that the armed forces should not go into schools to recruit." etc.

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) has a 350 year history of pacifism. As part of our testimony of peace we are against use of children in the Armed Forces and therefore we are against representatives of the Armed Forces going into schools to recruit. The Quaker United Nations Office have been campaigning worldwide on the issue of child soldiers for many years.

As the petition points out, Britain is the only country in the European Union that allows a military presence in its schools. Britain is also the only one of the 27 European Union countries to recruit 16-year-old children to the armed forces.

It is our view that school children are vulnerable and too young to make decisions as radical as joining the services. We particularly feel that it is totally wrong for the Armed Forces recruitment personnel to target their schools recruitment at the most deprived areas of the country.

We appreciate that service in the Armed Forces is a way in which young adults can achieve transportable skills that may otherwise be difficult for them to achieve. This is a further indictment of Welsh society that such training is difficult for young people to access other than through the military route.

We note that your mailing list on this topic does not include Quakers, and would ask you to include our Meeting and also Meeting of Friends in Wales.

Yours sincerely

Peter Hussey, Clerk,
Llandrindod & Pales Local Quaker Meeting

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from the Vale Youth Forum

Dear William Powell AM

The Vale Youth Forum (VYF) is made up of young representatives aged 11-25 from all over the Vale of Glamorgan who have been normally been elected or nominated from their school council, youth club, church group, scout group, Youth Offending Service team or any other youth facility to represent their peers.

The VYF is registered charity which works with young people who either live, work or attend an educational establishment in the Vale of Glamorgan. The VYF works in partnership with the Vale Centre for Voluntary Services and the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

The VYF members choose which consultations they wish to add their voice to and they decided they would like to respond on the subject of recruitment of 16 year olds by the armed forces in schools. This is what they said:

- Bad Idea to recruit in Schools as I don't like the idea of young people training to die.
- There is a Military Prep course you can do for GCSE so why not.
- Under 16's won't think about what they are signing up to and then they can't leave.
- Your old enough to do lots of things when you are 16 like have a baby and they don't force you to sign up so it's ok.
- Good to have the information because careers advice in schools is awful.
- Its good money, you can get things.
- It teaches discipline and team work.

The group did not have any evidence of the armed forces recruiting from deprived areas as they had not been to any of their schools and had no evidence of the armed forces working differently in independent schools.

Hope this helps.

Regards

Helena Jones

PET(4) SAR 14

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from the Reverend R.G. Morris

The Reverend R. G. Morris BTh

Clerk of the Petitions Committee

National Assembly for Wales

Cardiff Bay

CF99 1NA

12/04/13

The Church, Citizenship and Evangelism Committee of the Baptists' Synod of Pembrokeshire

Dear friend,

I write to you on behalf of the above committee to express our opposition to recruitment by the armed forces in schools. We feel strongly that no school is an appropriate place for this kind of activity, and that schools should be a place for our children to develop for their futures in a world that we hope will be a peaceful one.

Yours sincerely

Gareth Morris

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from Hefin Jones

I would like to note a brief response for the consultation on the British Army's presence in our schools.

It is disgraceful that the British Army propagandizes and indoctrinates children in our schools. It is a disgrace on the Welsh Government that the country is one of the few countries in the world that allows this to happen. I have heard that England and Scotland are the only other two countries throughout Europe where this happens.

One in ten prisoners in Britain is a former member of the British Army. That fact alone should be sufficient to prove that this is immoral. The recent show where they attempted to get 4000 North Wales school children to play with arms was an example of indoctrinating tactics of the worst kind.

Children do not have the armour or wit to be able to choose wisely. Can I ask why was Hitler Youth wrong and this is right? Is it because 'we' are on the righteous side? Are you sure about that? Of course, as a Labour Government, you have no problems with sending the children of Wales to fight for your London masters' mendacious imperialistic conceit. Therefore, the children of Caernarfon can come home in ten years' time from whichever country America targets next and go straight to the new prison which, if the plan is realised, will at least be close to their homes.

Hefin Jones

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from Association of Teachers and Lecturers - Wales

ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS AND LECTURERS – WALES
9 COLUMBUS WALK, BRIGATINE PLACE, CARDIFF, CF10 4BY
TEL: 029 2046 5000 EMAIL: cymru@atl.org.uk

CYMDEITHAS ATHRAWON A DARLITHWYR – CYMRU
9 RHODFA COLUMBUS, MAES BRIGATIN CAERDYDD, CF10 4BY
FFON: 029 2046 5000 EBOST: cymru@atl.org.uk



Committee Clerk
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Response to petition committee: Armed Forces in schools.

The Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) represents over 160,000 teachers, lecturers, head teachers, principals, and support staff across the UK in maintained and independent schools, further education colleges and sixth forms. It represents over 6,500 education staff in Wales.

We are pleased to provide our contribution to your consideration of the recent petition: *We call on the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to recommend that the armed forces should not go into schools to recruit.*

Having discussed the matter at length at our recent Committee in Wales meeting we wish to note at the outset that there was a mixture of opinion about the value and role of visits by the armed services. However, in the main we do not have any particular concerns relating to the armed forces providing careers advice or training in schools.

Our membership was of the opinion that any difference in the working of the armed forces across the maintained schools sector compared to independent schools was largely to do with historical legacy and the existence of cadet corps, etc.

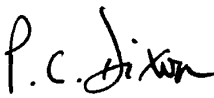
We found no evidence that schools either preclude or advocate for any particular career choice, and, on balance, as part of the overall careers advice

in schools, our membership felt that the armed forces had the same right to provide information to pupils as any other employer. We were unable to establish if armed forces target their activities in schools in more deprived areas.

It was felt that any career advice should be provided in an appropriate and timely manner and that career advice should be given at a time judged by the school as appropriate for the maturity and relevancy of pupils.

Our membership felt that experiences provided by armed forces, such as cadets, to learners delivered valuable skills and knowledge to individuals. These experiences enjoyed whilst at school have enhanced learner's career choices; not necessarily resulting / leading to a career in the armed forces.

We have every confidence that schools in Wales are socially responsible and aim to provide a balanced career advice programme to learners. While the armed forces remain a legitimate career path we see no reason why they should not be allowed to visit schools to promote that career.



Dr Philip Dixon
Director, ATL Cymru

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from the Amie Duggan

I am an individual wishing to give my opinion on the consultation to stop the armed forces recruiting in schools.

I went to a high school in Merthyr Tydfil, typically considered to be an economically deprived area. I can think of three army focused recruitment events during my time at school, the first when I was under 16 years old - no other 'in-house' recruitment was ever offered to me or my classmates.

I find the idea that the army recruit from disadvantaged areas abhorrent and I totally believe that this practice needs to be stopped. I do not however believe that this issue is this simplistic and truly believe that the solution lays in better overall career guidance for school pupils.

The army is a valid career choice for many, but they should not be pitched to poorer pupils as their only option - why not allow the army to recruit, but as part of 20 different organisations that go into schools every year. Give pupils a chance to hear from farmers, doctors, solicitors, factory workers and military personnel ... but give them options, give them choice and give them a wide range of potential career paths.

In fact I feel so strongly about this that I hope to address this issue and start an online career platform (I have an initial expression of interest in WG at the moment to help support the idea)- a short video overview can be found here - <http://vimeo.com/56690820>

I hope that my opinion can be included in your discussions.

Kind regards,

Amie Duggan

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from the Reserve Forces' & Cadets' Association for Wales

Reserve Forces' & Cadets' Association for
Wales
Centre Block
Maindy Barracks
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CF14 3YE



Cymdeithas Lluoedd Wrth Gefn a
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From: Colonel N R Beard TD DL

Mr William Powell AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CARDIFF
CF99 1NA

09 April 2013

[Dear Mr Powell]

Introduction.

1. Thank you for your letter dated 20 February 2013 inviting the Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association for Wales (RFCA for Wales) to submit evidence to your committee. I am responding in my role as Chief Executive of RFCA for Wales on behalf of my Chairman and Board. Furthermore I have spoken to the Army in Wales and sought an MOD view in direct response to your letter as Chairman of the Welsh Government's Petitions Committee. I have also corresponded with Commander 160 (Wales) Brigade, Brigadier Philip Napier, who became involved with the question of Armed Forces access to Welsh schools with the Welsh Government and in particular the Minister for Education, Leighton Andrews AM.

The Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association for Wales.

2. The Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association for Wales is not a part of the military chain of command in Wales. As one of 13 autonomous Associations across the United Kingdom, we exist to provide advice and assistance to the Defence Council and the three Services on matters pertaining to the Volunteer Reserves and Services Cadet organisations. Our members consist of experienced professional people interested in Defence matters able to provide a formidable amount of local knowledge and experience across a wide range of outputs

***CYNNIG A CHYNNAL Y CYSWLLT RHWNG Y GYMUNED FILWROL A'R GYMUNED SIFIL YNG NGHYMURU
PROVIDING AND MAINTAINING THE LINK BETWEEN THE MILITARY AND THE CIVIL COMMUNITY IN WALES***

from the maintenance of buildings and infrastructure to recruitment. We provide an essential representative link between the military forces and the local community and this includes schools, colleges and establishments providing higher education. We raise awareness of the benefits and skills gained through part-time military service.

3. None of the Armed Forces visit schools for recruitment purposes and only attend by invitation from the school who welcome us in to support school activities that form part of the National Curriculum. As an integral part of society and an important highly valued public service these visits have proven to be of great benefit to pupils, as demonstrated by the fact that the Services attend several thousand schools each year. Equally such visits add to school career advisers collection of employment options that are on offer in order to prepare their pupils for work in the future. In simple terms it is about providing careers advice and only that. As you will appreciate the Armed Forces present significant opportunities in terms of skills and trades and future careers.

MOD.

4. I have sought a view from the MOD in direct response to your letter, which is set out below:

“School visits by Service personnel are by invitation from the school and are not part of a recruitment campaign. The Armed Forces never visit schools for recruitment purposes and would only ever visit a school after being invited by a teacher to support school activities. The Armed Forces are an integral part of society and an important, highly valued public service. School visits by members of our Armed Forces are of great benefit to pupils and the three Services have a duty to explain to children their role to protect the nation, and pass on valuable skills such as leadership, teamwork and citizenship. Similar contributions to schools are made by police, fire, ambulance, emergency and other services and professions. The Armed Forces get numerous informal and official requests from schools every year and get no special treatment or access, but neither should they be excluded or discriminated against.

Furthermore, it is not possible to sign up for the Armed Forces outside of a recruitment office and all recruitment into the UK Armed Forces is voluntary and no young person under the age of 18 years can join our Armed Forces unless their application is accompanied by the formal written consent of their parent or guardian. Comprehensive written and verbal guidance on the terms and conditions of Service and rights to discharge during the selection process are provided at various times before the parent or guardian provides their formal written consent for the individual to enter Service.”

Army in Wales.

5. I understand from the Army Commander in Wales, Brigadier Napier, that the Minister for Education, Leighton Andrews AM, replied quite clearly on behalf of the Welsh Government. You may wish to discuss issue with the Minister. As you will know this is very much a matter of policy and it is for the MOD and Welsh Government to engage directly with this matter. Although the Armed Forces in Wales do not actively recruit in schools through the Cadet Forces they do add support to the Welsh Government’s Youth Strategy in that they prepare young people with the appropriate life skills to take their place in society as responsible adults. Of course this also means that they are prepared to assume a role in the workplace which is so important in today’s competitive job market. This specific issue was raised at the Jobs Summit in Newport recently.

Specific questions.

6. In your letter you asked us to consider some specific questions which are addressed below:

a. Do you have any concerns about the Armed Forces giving career advice in schools or do you welcome such advice?

As an Association we do not have any concerns about the Armed Forces offering careers advice in schools in fact we welcome the opportunity. As a parent I would have no concerns or objections to my children being exposed to the Armed Forces who are clearly thoroughly professional in the manner that they conduct themselves.

b. What are the benefits and disadvantages of the Armed Forces giving career advice in schools?

The young people of Wales deserve every chance to understand what employment opportunities exist in the outside world. The Armed Forces are but one employer of many who should be given the chance to expose what they offer in terms of careers, skills and trades. A considerable number of Welsh men and women join the Armed Services and develop thoroughly successful careers while serving. Many of those who leave then use their experience to work and establish businesses in Wales. If Armed Forces careers advice in schools is denied this will discriminate against exactly the specific group of people that the Welsh Government are trying to support and help in terms of finding and securing employment.

c. What impact, if any, would restricting armed forces access to schools have on young people's access to information about Armed Forces careers?

Today, the Armed Forces are considered small in number and exposure to the career opportunities is limited to a handful of careers offices across Wales and advertising. I believe restricting the impact will deny young people in Wales the chance to consider the Armed Forces as an option for their future careers. Young people today are very perceptive they are confident enough to decide for themselves what is best for their future and should be given every chance to explore the wide range of employment available. That includes exposure to the Armed Forces.

d. Do you have any evidence that the Armed Forces target their activities in schools in more deprived areas?

No, I do not have any evidence that the Armed Forces target their activities at more deprived areas. One should remember that the Armed Forces are invited into the schools in Wales by head teachers with presumably the support of their governing body.

e. Do the Armed Forces work differently in independent schools than in local authority schools?

As far as I am aware the Armed Forces do not work any differently in independent schools.

Summary.

7. In summary access to schools for the Armed Forces is important for the future of our young people, as they offer a wide range of skills and trades within a career structure that might appeal to some in that age group. Employment in the Armed Forces is voluntary and adds to the options that schools careers advisers can draw on when trying to create interest to steer teenagers towards work opportunities. When visiting schools the Armed Forces do not recruit, they attend by invitation only from head teachers. Joining the Armed Forces is strictly controlled and managed requiring written consent of the parent or guardian if the applicant is below 18 years old. Finally, I believe firmly that this issue rests with the Minister as any change could well discriminate against the Armed Forces and affect the career choices for our young people that desperately need employment.

Should you require further detail or require further explanation please do not hesitate to ask.

[Yours sincerely,

Nick Beard

Original signed]

Chief Executive

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from anonymous

I am the Head of an independent school in North Wales. I represent independent schools on the ASCL Cymru council but am responding to the consultation in a personal capacity.

Unless the practice of recruiting 16 year olds is deemed to be illegal it should have no bearing on the relationships between schools and the armed forces.

The armed forces can often provide young people from deprived areas the support and structure and create life expectations that they might not otherwise receive from their circumstances. I don't have any first hand evidence regarding the recruitment practices of the armed forces.

CCF and ACF units have the support and endorsement of the government as providing a very worthwhile education experience to complement the academic aspect of schools' work.

Schools as employers are invited to support the work of the reserve forces, and it seems perverse that we should support the armed forces as employers but not as providers.

Provided the armed forces are treated equally to other organisations in careers advice and their access to schools, I can see no objection to their visiting schools or being included in careers advice. Many aspects of the armed forces provide valuable career pathways that do not involve combat – engineering, medicine, logistics, personnel etc – that can be of great benefit to individuals within a well-structured and disciplined working environment.

There seems to be a dangerous element of discrimination here – if the forces' 16+ recruitment is considered morally wrong, should not all prospective employers or recruiters be scrutinised for their ethics before having any involvement in schools – retailers of goods produced in sweatshops or tested on animals, banks, companies with questionable investment policies, organisations with a bad environmental record etc etc?

We involve the armed forces in our careers convention on the same footing as other organisations, and the army have provided team- building days for our Sixth form pupils which have been very valuable. As a boarding school we have a number of children from forces families as boarders, and we have day pupils from local MOD bases on Anglesey and the Conwy valley. The armed forces have an excellent reputation for high standards, self-discipline and public service, and it would be perverse to bar them from schools. I would expect the adverse publicity for the Welsh government to be significant if this petition were to be enforced through legislation.

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from West Carmarthen Association of Independent Churches

FOR THE ATTENTION OF: Clerk to the Petitions Committee, the National Assembly for Wales

Consultation response – *Stop the army recruiting in schools* – on behalf of the West Carmarthen Association of Independent Churches.

As an association, we would like to make the following comments:

Britain is the only country in the European Union, and one of only 20 throughout the world, that allows its armed forces to recruit people under the age of 18. As part of that process, they are given access to schools. We believe that this should be stopped, because:

- In the eyes of the law, people under 18 are still children.
- Those who sign an agreement to join when they are 16 or 17 have to serve until they are 22 years old.
- An adult should not be bound by an agreement made when he or she was a child.
- The information given to children is inadequate and misleading; it romanticises war by minimising the risk to the lives of those who join the armed forces; it emphasises “learning a skill” at the expense of the fact that a soldier's main function is to be prepared to kill the enemy.
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UK Parliament’s Joint Committee on Human Rights are both critical of the way that Britain recruits children.
- The Ministry of Defence recognises that tens of millions of pounds are wasted on training children who then turn their backs on a career in the armed forces.

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools



Response from UCAC

Armed Forces Recruitment in Schools

National Assembly for Wales Petitions Committee Inquiry

April 2013

UCAC | yr undeb sy'n diogelu athrawon a darlithwyr Cymru

Armed Forces Recruitment in Schools

UCAC's response to the National Assembly for Wales Petitions Committee's request for information

UCAC welcomes this opportunity to respond to the request of the Petitions Committee. The union represents 5,000 teachers, school leaders and further and higher education lecturers in all parts of Wales.

- **Do you have any concerns about the Armed Forces giving career advice in schools or do you welcome such advice?**
- **What are the benefits and disadvantages of the Armed Forces giving career advice in schools?**
- **What impact, if any, would restricting armed forces access to schools have on young people's access to information about Armed Forces careers?**

We regret the fact that the United Kingdom allows recruitment to the armed forces at 16 years of age. This goes against the practice in other European Union countries and NATO, which set the threshold at 18 years of age. It also goes against international legal commitments, including the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (OPAC).

Nevertheless, it must be accepted that the armed forces offer accredited and lawful professions.

As a result, we believe that, from a school's perspective, it is important to try to differentiate between recruitment on the one hand, and providing career advice on the other.

UCAC would object to attempts within schools to recruit pupils under 18 to the armed forces. We believe that it is inappropriate for children to be involved in military activities, and to endanger their lives as a result of their work, before reaching adult age and voting age. As the establishment of cadet units within schools would come too close to constituting recruitment activity, UCAC objects to this.

However, UCAC would defend pupils' right to receive information regarding the armed forces as a possible post-18 career path, in the context of receiving information about various other career paths. It would be inappropriate to try to prevent pupils from receiving such information, which could lead to a career.

- **Do you have any evidence that the Armed Forces target their activities in schools in more deprived areas?**

We have no firm evidence regarding this matter.

- **Do the Armed Forces work differently in independent schools than in local authority schools?**

We have no evidence regarding this matter.



UCAC
Undeb
Cenedlaethol
Athrawon
Cymru



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Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from Jill Evans MEP

Military Recruitment in Schools

I am writing in support of the petition by Cymdeithas y Cymod to ban military recruitment in schools.

Education is a fundamental right. It prepares our young people for life, gives them the knowledge and skills ready for the world of work or further education, and hopes to create balanced and healthy individuals for life beyond the school gates. The social and psychological development of school-age young people is incredibly important in shaping individuals, and as such, needs protection from outside interests seeking to take advantage of this.

One such interest is the military. Their programme of recruitment of school-age children is widespread. It is estimated that around 900,000 young people have exposure to the armed forces within the education system in this way every single year.

For the armed forces, with promotional films, interactive games, and use of social media, schools are a vital ground for recruitment. Of the 20,000 new non-officer personnel enlisted every year, over a quarter are under 18, and without these 16 and 17-year olds, the Ministry of Defence staffing requirement could not be filled. Given that fewer and fewer are enlisting, the armed forces' marketing is becoming more aggressive and increasingly focussed on attracting younger and younger children, including those as young as seven years old.

Life in the military is portrayed to look enjoyable and educational in campaigns aimed at young people, often by incorporating the aesthetics of video games and the promise of personal growth and career development. For vulnerable school pupils, perhaps feeling alienated by the system or worrying about their prospects after school, the perceived security and excitement of life as a soldier certainly seems like an attractive offer. However, these marketing campaigns gloss over many aspects of the job such as the ethical issues, the psychological trauma, the legal responsibilities and the physical risks involved.

Armed forces recruitment concentrates on poorer schools more often, as well as on young people with low educational attainment. This, coupled with the fact that the required reading age for a new recruit is just 7, seems to suggest that the military intentionally targets the most vulnerable young people. They target those who might find it difficult to fully comprehend and assess the legal obligations and ethics of being a soldier because I believe a balanced and informed assessment would deter

many from enlisting. A survey conducted in Cardiff in 2004 found that 40% of army recruits joined as a "last resort" relating to the lack of civilian career options.

The UK is unique in that it is the only Member State of the European Union to either allow the military into schools or to employ soldiers under the age of 18. Both the United Nations and the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights have called on the UK government to raise the minimum recruiting age up from 16.

Jill Evans MEP
April 2013

Our Ref/Ein Cyf:

ST/NA/JD

Your Ref/Eich Cyf:

Date/Dyddiad:

16th April 2013

Please ask for/Gofynnwch am:

Naomi Alleyne

Direct line/Llinell uniongyrchol:

029 2046 8660

Email/Ebost:

naomi.alleyne@wlga.gov.uk



Mr William Powell AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Dear Mr Powell

Armed Forces Recruitment in Schools

Thank you for your letter dated 20th February 2013 seeking views on the petition urging the Welsh Government to recommend that the armed forces should not go into schools to recruit. The WLGA is submitting this response in reply to your letter.

The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) represents the 22 local authorities in Wales, and the three national park authorities and the three fire and rescue authorities are associate members. The Association seeks to provide representation to local authorities within an emerging policy framework that satisfies the key priorities of our members and delivers a broad range of services that add value to Welsh local government and the communities they serve.

It is our understanding that local authorities in Wales do not take a particular stance on the Armed Forces visiting schools to recruit. It is generally the responsibility of the school and governing body in each local authority area to decide whether they want to invite the Armed Forces to visit their school, not only in relation to highlighting opportunities for careers in the armed forces but also in relation to building relationships with local communities. As such, the WLGA is not in a position to comment specifically on the questions set out in the consultation letter however we would like to make some general comments for consideration as part of your deliberations on the petition:

- The Armed Forces do not only visit school settings to engage with young people. This engagement may take place across a number of educational settings, including pupil referral units (PRU's), alternative education programmes, colleges of Further Education and Youth Service settings.

Steve Thomas CBE
Chief Executive
Prif Weithredwr

Welsh Local Government
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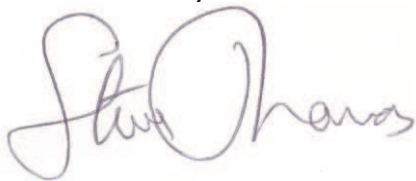
Cymdeithas Llywodraeth
Leol Cymru
Tŷ Llywodraeth Leol
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CAERDYDD CF10 4LG
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www.wlga.gov.uk

- The engagement of young people with the Armed Forces may help some young people with self esteem and confidence issues, as well as developing resilience and wider skills and may encourage them to take part in healthy (mainly outdoor) activities. This can also include helping them to make informed decisions as to whether they want to join the Armed Forces. It is important that young people should receive objective guidance on joining the Armed Forces. Many young people use the opportunity of visiting Armed Forces to help inform their decisions for a future career.
- Due to ongoing cuts in funding for the armed forces, recruitment is not currently a priority. However, there are a number of positive joint programmes carried out in partnership between schools, local government and other organisations and the Armed Forces for young people. These can include armed forces personnel returning from overseas duties working with young people in schools, communities and specialist training facilities. The main focus of these activities is to provide young people with opportunities to take part in a series of positive experiences and, in some cases, immerse themselves in scenarios and environments they would otherwise not have the opportunity to do i.e. by being taken them beyond their own community (or comfort zone) to parts of Wales they would otherwise not have the chance to visit. This can present challenges and positive learning experiences.

The WLGA would be happy to provide further information on the issues highlighted above if you think that would be helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Thomas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Steve" and the last name "Thomas" clearly distinguishable.

Steve Thomas CBE

Chief Executive / Prif Weithredwr

1. Introduction to ForcesWatch
2. Overview of this evidence
3. The situation in Wales - answers to Petition Committee questions
4. Unpacking 'recruitment'

1. Introduction to ForcesWatch

ForcesWatch is a British-based campaigning organisation. We seek to hold the state to account on the ethical integrity of its recruitment of young people into the armed forces. We advocate changes to policy, raise public awareness of the issues and challenge the armed forces on their recruitment practices, especially those aimed at the youngest and most disadvantaged groups.

2. Overview of this evidence

One of our main areas of concern is the extent to which the armed forces are given access to young people within education. We are undertaking research on the extent and character of this activity using information within the public domain and through Freedom of Information requests to the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Department for Education.

We are aware that other organisations submitting evidence to this consultation have cited reports and recommendations relating to this issue, such as the 2008 UN report on UK's compliance with Convention on the Rights of the Child optional protocol relating to children in armed conflict ¹, *Informed Choice? Armed forces recruitment practice in the United Kingdom* ² (written by a member of the ForcesWatch Steering Committee), *Mind the Gap: Education for minors in the British armed forces* ³ and others. These documents are essential to any consideration of the issue and they outline key arguments supporting our claim that military engagement with young people should be avoided as it is not benign and is potentially damaging to the future interests and opportunities of those the young people they seek to influence.

Our evidence does not aim to further explain these arguments, but to detail the extent of the presence of the armed forces in schools and other educational institutions during the last two full academic years: 2010-11 and 2011-12.

We then consider the argument presented by the armed forces and the MoD that the visits to schools are not for recruitment purposes. We argue that they constitute activities leading towards recruitment with many of the activities being specifically about careers in the forces. We also state that the armed forces are using visits to schools in order to positively influence young people's opinions and that more balanced view of life in the armed forces and its activities needs to be presented within educational environments.

3. Armed Forces visits to schools in Wales, 2010 to 2012

The data presented here was received from the British Army under the Freedom of Information Act. The data relates to the academic years of 2010-2011 and 2011-2012. The original information received included details of visits made to FE Colleges, schools for special needs and primary schools, but for the needs of this submission only data for state and independent secondary schools is considered. It is worth mentioning, however, that FE Colleges are visited significantly more often than any other education institution. In the original information received there were many visits that were not to one specific institution, but rather to

the town hall, or a youth club, or, in one instance - a twice-weekly running club in a small town. None of these visits are counted in the analysis submitted here. Finally, when comparing with data from other areas, it is important to note that the data for Wales refers only to the army and not all three forces.

For general information about the type of visits made to schools and the activities undertaken, please see the *Military Activity in UK Schools* briefing in Appendix 1.

Welsh secondary schools were visited by the army just over 1200 times during the two year period. The break-down by percentage of the types of visits made to Welsh secondary schools is presented in Table 1 below. The greatest number of visits made by the army were focused on mock interviews and interview techniques, general presentations (which include a section on the types of careers available in the military), and Personal Development Activities (generally outdoor, team-building activities). Presentations and activities exclusively focused entirely on careers (such as stalls at careers fairs, presentations about early entry to the military, etc...) made up 7.5% of visits (equivalent to nearly 100 visits).

The Challenge Index for Wales lists 219 state secondary schools in Wales for the academic years 2010-11 and 2011-12. During that time, the Army had visited 163, or 74%, of them. To put this in a national context, in London all three armed forces had visited less than 30% of state schools and in Scotland over 85% were visited by the three forces. The army alone visited Welsh state schools an average of twice a year during that period (compared with just once in London for all three services and twice in Scotland).

Within Wales schools with a more disadvantaged demographic (based on the Welsh Multiple Deprivation Index and measuring the average percentage over a three year period of students eligible for free school meals, and the percentage of students living in the most deprived 20% of Wales) were not visited a significant number more times than those with less deprived demographics. However, the high average number of visits during a year compared to other areas in the UK suggests that there is increased engagement of the armed forces with local authority schools in Wales as a whole compared to, for example, the South East of England where the number of visits is substantially lower.

There is however, a very striking difference between the level of engagement with independent schools compared to that with state schools. Of the 21 independent schools registered with the Welsh Independent Schools Council, only six, or 29% have been visited by the army compared to 75% for state schools. Furthermore, these schools were visited an average of just 1.5 times over the two year period, less than half that of their state equivalents.

Table 1 - Breakdown of type of visits to Welsh secondary schools 2010 to 2012

Type of visit	Percentage	Further notes
Interview techniques/Mock interviews	22.6%	One-on-one interview practice and whole classroom workshops
General Presentations	21%	General overview of Army work/role, with section on types of careers available in Army
Personal Development Activities	20.6%	Mostly outdoor activities focusing on team-building and leadership
Curriculum enrichment	12%	Including presentations to engineering, public services, and other vocational courses students
Participation in routine school activities	8.3%	Including induction days, industry days, certificate presentations, staff meetings, etc...
Careers focused activities	7.5%	Events with careers in title, including 'early joining' presentations to under-16s
Army focused workshops	2.4%	Activities with Army focus, such as 'Build a Barracks', 'Force Multiplier', etc...
Citizenship & Terrorism presentation	1.9%	Specific presentation apparently delivered to 24 schools during this period

Enterprise/business activities	1.6%	Common across country - Armed Forces regularly invited by schools to deliver and contribute to business/enterprise focused events
Fitness/sport focused activities	1.3%	Running clubs, fitness assessments, etc...
Mentoring	1.3%	Unknown what this actually looks like
Combined Cadet Forces	0.1%	Only one visit recorded to CCF

Further analysis of this data is available on request.

4. Unpacking recruitment

It is likely that in response to the Petitions Committee's call for evidence, the MoD or one of the three services will respond with a statement that they do not 'recruit' in schools and that they are only invited in at the bequest of a teacher. This statement has been issued numerous times in response to the research undertaken by ForcesWatch. Here is our statement on their activities in schools should be considered to be recruitment.

- i. *The MoD state that the armed forces only visit schools following an invitation from a member of staff*

This statement means very little as no external visitor would ever visit a school without an invitation. The key point to consider is the terms by which an invitation is gained. Following extensive consultation with colleagues who work in delivering Information, Advice and Guidance on Higher Education (IAG), an invitation to a school is gained by approaching them first offering what services you can.

The armed forces, like any organisation regularly visiting schools, normally has to approach them first. The aim is to build up a relationship with staff at the school and establish regular annual (or more frequent) visits. Of course, it does happen that some schools get in touch requesting services, but this occurs on a minority of occasions, as generally (with the exception of careers advisors whose job is to contact organisations like these) teachers are too busy to actively pursue external visitors. ForcesWatch has evidence of the letters sent by the Armed Forces to local schools offering their services to corroborate this claim.

- ii. *The MoD state that the armed forces under no circumstances undertake recruitment activities in schools*

For a full analysis of why we know this to be untrue, see our briefing on *Military Activity in UK Schools* (Appendix 1). Briefly, the evidence for our claim that recruitment is at the heart of armed forces engagement with education comes from the MoD itself; the Defence Youth Engagement Review of 2011 and various other internal MoD reports and documents are quite clear that the overarching rationale for engaging with young people is one of recruitment and the need to influence 'future opinion-formers'. ForcesWatch has also made multiple Freedom of Information requests, which all demonstrate that a significant proportion of armed forces' visits to schools include attending careers-related events and activities, such as presentations about the work of the forces (which include detailed descriptions of the different careers available in the armed forces) and offering more general careers advice such as mock interviews and CV workshops. Some young people go on to pre-recruitment activities such as Insight interviews and courses which are designed to offer a taste of what life is like in the army.

However, the main point to consider is the absurd distinction the MoD is making by claiming that recruitment is only the act of signing on the dotted line. Other organisations visiting schools, attending the exact same events as the Armed Forces including universities, local employers and major national firms, would all define

this activity as recruitment but none of which would 'recruit' in the sense that students would sign a contract or have an interview in situ.

ForcesWatch
16 April 2013

¹ Committee on the Rights of the Child, (2008) *Concluding Observations on the initial report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland under the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict* (UN Doc: CRC/C/OPAC/GBR/CO/1)), para.13.

² David Gee, *Informed choice? Armed forces recruitment practice in the United Kingdom*, www.informedchoice.org.uk accessed 19.3.13

³ *Mind the Gap: Education for minors in the British armed forces*, Child Soldiers International, July 2012,

Appendix 1

Military activity in UK schools

October 2012

This briefing outlines the methods and rationale of the military's engagement with young people within the education system and highlights potential developments in this area, including projects under consideration or development by the Armed Forces and the Department of Education.

Armed forces activities in schools and colleges

Each of the three services that make up the Armed Forces, as well as the Ministry of Defence, have their own education and outreach programmes to engage with young people. Of the three, the Army has the most extensive programme of activities, reflecting their need to recruit more young soldiers.

Although it is often refuted that the overall rationale for engaging with young people is one of recruitment, particularly following the beginning of ForcesWatch's national series of debates, internal documents and publicly available reports demonstrate that interesting potential recruits, coupled with the need to influence future decision makers and opinion formers, is a primary part of the rationale (1). The recent report by ResPublica, *Military Academies: Tackling disadvantage, improving ethos and changing outcome*, is explicit in suggesting that a major benefit of more interaction between the armed forces and education would be "assuring and extending the future Reserves' intake".

A key task for ForcesWatch has been to establish the mechanisms and practice of the military's engagement with schools, including the ways in which they approach schools or schools approach them, the activities on offer, the type of schools/students they generally work with and localised information on their engagement with schools. While it is difficult to assess the scale of activity nationally, it is estimated that around 900,000 young people come into contact with the armed forces within the education system each year. See below for details and types of activities undertaken.

Pushing a 'military ethos'

In addition to the current challenges facing those concerned with this issue, there are greater challenges yet to come. In the past six months there has been an increase in visible efforts to integrate the military into national education policy. The Department for Education's "military skills and ethos programme encompasses Cadets, Troops to Teachers, the cadet version of the National Citizen Service and alternative provision with a military ethos." (FOI request, 13/07/12). On Armed Forces Day 2012, the Government announced a budget of nearly £11m to expand cadet units into state schools.

'Alternative provision' includes the Military to Mentors programme run by Skillforce and a £1m grant for work from September 2012 "supporting military ethos in schools", working with "pupils who are either disengaged with education or at risk of becoming disengagedutilising the skills of a high proportion of former armed services personnel or other staff with experience in this field of work".

The Department for Education states that "these programmes will give young people the opportunity to develop teamwork, self-discipline, resilience and leadership" but do not explain what is meant by 'military ethos' or why a military framework will develop these skills more effectively than one based in other 'service' contexts. Furthermore, that there may be aspects of a 'military ethos' that are not appropriate to education does not seem to have been considered.

Military Academies / Service Schools

Following the ResPublica report calling for the establishment of Military Academies, a number of politicians (from Labour and the Conservative Party) have supported the idea of 'service schools', which would be primarily or entirely staffed by ex-servicemen and women. The rationale would be to provide ex-forces with employment opportunities, introduce a more disciplinarian ethos to schools in need of it and increase recruitment capacity (especially to the reserve forces). The politicians interested in this scheme speak almost exclusively about the second of these recommendations in what seems to be very much a reaction to the riots in summer 2011.

Summary of activities across the UK:

There are no national figures that provide a reliable overview of the number of young people that take part in armed forces related activity within education. However, youth/schools engagement surveys conducted by the MoD suggest that, at a minimum, around 900,000 children (mainly 8-19 years old) are contacted each year, which is about 15% of the age group.

Army

- Presentations - These can cover various topics such as the role of the Army as well as topics such as peacekeeping and presentations on Afghanistan.
- Insight Interviews - The Army run Insight Courses which are designed to offer a taste of what life is like in the Army. The interviews with students who want to attend a course provide information on the course and what is expected of them so they get the most from the course.
- Careers Fair - The Army having a stand at a school fair with other businesses.
- Careers Day - A whole day in the school to discuss Army Careers.
- Careers Brief - A single presentation on Careers in the Army (could be recorded as a presentation).
- Team Visits - Support of the National Curriculum
- Schools Challenge - This is a regionally run competition between schools run by the Army Careers Adviser pitting the schools against each other in a competition based around command tasks (such as getting across an area using ropes and planks etc.).

In addition, a large number of curriculum resources are provided on the Army in Education website.

Navy

Schools received a wide variety of activities, including:

- Careers Conventions/ Jobs Fairs
- Shows & Exhibitions & Carnival (or Parade)
- Presentations about the work of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines
- Displays by the Royal Marine Commando Team
- Team-Building exercises
- Physical Training and sports instruction (including a programme called Fit 4 Life)
- Careers presentations
- Alternative curriculum events such as 'leadership tasks'

RAF

All visits prior to the most recent academic year were made by the RAF Presentation Team which no longer visits schools. It is unclear how the RAF's outreach will progress.

Quotation from letter sent to ForcesWatch regarding RAF visits to schools:

All schools received the same 40 minute presentation, a series of narrative and DVD presentations that cover who the RAF are, what they do and how they do it. The 'who we are' section covers a few facts and figures about the trades within the RAF. The 'what we do' section focuses on the four pillars of air power

(Intelligence & Situational Awareness, Control of the Air, Attack and Air Mobility & Lift). The 'how we do it' section covers training, specialist roles and welfare. There is Q&A session at the end.

Notes

1. On the reasons to provide armed forces related activities within education:

- The MoD have stated that curricular activities are “a powerful way to facilitate recruitment”. *MoD Strategy for Delivery of MOD Youth Initiatives. Directorate of Reserve Forces and Cadets, 2005*
- “Our overall rationale for engaging with schools is to encourage good citizenship, provide an environment which raises awareness of the MOD and Armed Forces among young people, provide positive information to influence future opinion formers, and to enable recruiters to access the school environments.” *Engagement with UK schools, MoD, 2007*

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Dyddiad/Date: 12th April 2013

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e-bost/e-mail : **Samantha.morgan@merthyr.gov.uk**

Dear Sir/Madam

In response to the Petitions Committee request for views on the Armed Forces providing careers advice to young people in schools, the Schools Department of the Local Authority in Merthyr Tydfil would like to submit the following response:

Locally, there is no evidence that the Armed Forces target their activities in schools in more deprived areas or that they work differently in independent schools than in Local Authority schools.

The Armed Forces have, in the past, participated in Local Authority organised careers events for pupils and are able to visit the local schools in order to support specific or general careers events if required.

Any restrictions on access to career advice that allows young people to make informed career decisions would be a disadvantage and there are no restrictions on access imposed on any other employers who are willing to work with pupils and schools in the delivery of specific and general careers advice. Any support for careers advice and guidance from employers is to be welcomed and it should also be pointed out that advice is different from recruitment.

Yours faithfully

Lorraine Buck
Chief Education Officer

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from S.W. Edwards

13/04/2013

Dear Sir,

I am sending a note to express my opposition to the recruitment of children to the armed forces in schools in Wales.

I hope that you are aware that Great Britain is the only member state of the European Union that permits military presence in its schools. Of the 27 states of the European Union, Britain is the only one that recruits 16 year olds to the armed forces. Also, Britain is the only nation within NATO that recruits children to the armed forces.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child has urged the UK Government in 2008 to ‘reconsider its policy of recruiting children to the armed forces.’

I very much hope that our National Assembly will respond positively to this call in our petition for schools in Wales to stop the armed forces from recruiting children.

Yours faithfully,

S.W.Edwards (Mrs)

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from M. Angharad Roberts

Dear friend,

I am writing to you since I consider it a disgrace that Great Britain is the only member state of the 27 member states of the European Union that recruits children, as young as 16 years old, to the armed forces. Also, Britain is the only nation within NATO to do so.

We also know that it is the schools in our most deprived areas that are targeted by the armed forces in their recruitment campaigns. In 2008, I understand that the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child urged the UK Government to reconsider its policy in this regard.

I sincerely hope that our National Assembly here in Wales will respond positively to our petition that calls for schools in Wales to stop the armed forces from recruiting children.

Yours faithfully

M. Angharad Roberts

William Powell AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1NA

20 March 2013

Dear Mr. Powell,

Child Soldiers International welcomes the decision of the Petitions Committee to consider the issue of recruitment activities in Welsh schools by the British armed forces.

Regrettably we are not able at present to provide a detailed response to the specific questions posed in your call for evidence. However, I have enclosed a few relevant documents from Child Soldiers International concerning the recruitment of minors by the British armed forces and the impact this has on their educational opportunities. Please find enclosed:

- Memorandum to the UK Defence Select Committee inquiry into the education of service personnel (January 2013)
- Mind the Gap: Education for minors in the British armed forces (July 2012)
- Catch 16-22: Recruitment and retention of minors in the British armed forces (March 2011)

Child Soldiers International is an international human rights research and advocacy organisation. We seek to end the military recruitment and the use in hostilities, in any capacity, of any person under the age of 18 by state armed forces or non-state armed groups. We advocate for the release of unlawfully recruited children, promote their successful reintegration into civilian life, and call for accountability for those who unlawfully recruit or use them.

We hope that this information is helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact me if we can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely,



Rachel Taylor
OPAC Project Manager

MEMORANDUM TO THE DEFENCE SELECT COMMITTEE INQUIRY

The Armed Forces Covenant in Action? Part 4: Education of Service Personnel

January 2013

SUMMARY

1. Child Soldiers International¹ welcomes the call for evidence issued by the Select Committee in relation to its inquiry into the education of service personnel. Child Soldiers International is concerned that the education provided to minors (aged 16 and 17) in the armed forces fails to meet the standards recommended for this age group. As a result it narrows rather than broadens recruits' future opportunities, and compounds rather than alleviates long-term disadvantage.
2. Child Soldiers International requests that the Select Committee examine the nature, breadth and level of education available to (and achieved by) armed forces personnel aged below 18 years separately from the education of adult personnel. This should be compared with the national recommended standards of education for young people, the education options and outcomes of their peers in the mainstream (civilian) education system, and government policy on enhancing social mobility among young people.
3. The evidence presented in this submission contends that:
 - The literacy and numeracy curriculum for minors in the armed forces is set at a level lower than the minimum recommended for this age group in an independent review of education.
 - Too few recruits are able, in practice, to take advantage of additional, elective academic courses. Those who do so are penalised by burdensome additional return of service commitments.
 - Training consists predominantly of military skills which have limited or no transferable value to civilian employment, with consequent negative repercussions for post-service resettlement.
 - There is a lack of independent oversight of the education policy and curriculum.
4. Child Soldiers International concludes by recommending that the Ministry of Defence (MoD) raise the minimum armed forces recruitment age to 18 years, to ensure recruits enter the armed forces only after completing a full secondary level education. Such a measure would significantly enhance their operational effectiveness within the armed forces as well as their employability in future civilian life. It would also benefit the armed forces by reducing initial training time and costs by up to one third, and improve recruit retention rates.

¹ Child Soldiers International is a human rights research and advocacy organization, formerly known as the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. Child Soldiers International seeks to end the military recruitment and use in hostilities of child soldiers (boys and girls below the age of 18) and other human rights abuses resulting from their association with armed forces or groups. We seek the release of child soldiers from armed forces or groups, promote their successful return to civilian life and accountability for those who recruit and use them. Child Soldiers International promotes global adherence to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

CONCERNS

5. The Army recruits far greater numbers of minors than the other two services combined² and the large majority of these now undertake Phase One training at the Army Foundation College in Harrogate (AFC Harrogate).³ This submission therefore focuses primarily on the educational provision at AFC Harrogate, as it accounts for the experience of the large majority of minors in the armed forces as a whole.⁴ Where relevant, the submission also refers to the Department for Business Innovation and Skills *Armed Forces Basic Skills Longitudinal Study* (“the BIS study”) which concerns provision of basic skills education to recruits in the armed forces as a whole including, but not limited to, recruits at AFC Harrogate.⁵

I. The provision of education to new recruits including help with literacy and numeracy

6. Recruits at AFC Harrogate study Level 1 Functional Skills in English and maths, and a Level 2 Diploma for IT users.⁶ Over the 50 week period of the “Long Course” at AFC Harrogate, recruits spend a total of just five and a half hours a week studying for these qualifications.⁷
7. Child Soldiers International recognises that there is a high pass rate for the three basic courses undertaken by recruits at AFC Harrogate. Of all recruits training there between September 2010 and August 2011, 97 per cent passed the Level 1 literacy qualification and 87 per cent passed Level 1 numeracy.⁸ Recruits who achieve Level 1 Functional Skills in English and maths during the course “have the additional opportunity” to study them at Level 2. However, between September 2010 and August 2011, just 52 per cent of AFC Harrogate recruits achieved Level 2 literacy and 49 per cent Level 2 numeracy.⁹ MoD data does not indicate whether this is because fewer recruits undertake Level 2 courses, or because pass rates are lower. In either case, the figures indicate that there is a lower level of institutional support for recruits embarking on Level 2 study.
8. Prior to its closure to Junior Entry recruits in October 2012, recruits on the (23 week) course at Army Technical Foundation College Winchester (ATFC Winchester) studied only “functional skills in either [*sic*] numeracy or literacy, along with basic military training”.¹⁰ The pass rates for literacy and numeracy courses at ATFC Winchester were very low. Between March and September 2011, the pass rates for recruits taking Level 1 literacy and

² *UK Armed Forces - Annual Manning Report 2010/ 2011: Table 7. UK Regular Forces intake by Service and age*, available at www.dasa.mod.uk. In the financial year 2010/2011, the RAF recruited 90 under-18s, the Navy recruited 280, and the Army recruited 2,400.

³ Prior to October 2012, Junior Entry recruits (those aged 16 to 17 and a half at enlistment) could also undergo Phase One training at ATFC Winchester. ATFC Winchester now accepts Senior Entry recruits only (those aged over 17 and a half years) and all Junior Entry recruits train at AFC Harrogate. Between September 2010 and September 2011, 3,745 under-18s commenced Army Phase One training. Of these, 950 (25 per cent) attended ATFC Winchester and 2,114 (56 per cent) AFC Harrogate. See HC Deb, 8 December 2011, c427W and HC Deb, 10 January 2012, c12W.

⁴ Child Soldiers International’s 2012 report “Mind the gap: Education for minors in the British armed forces” explores in detail the education provided at AFC Harrogate and ATFC Winchester. The report is available at www.child-soldiers.org.

⁵ The recruits participating in the study were typically aged between 16 and 20 and had left school by the age of 16. Department for Business Innovation and Skills; *BIS Research Paper Number 78. Armed Forces Basic Skills Longitudinal Study: Part 2*, June 2012, page 28 (hereinafter “*BIS Research Paper: Part 2*”).

⁶ These levels are intended to be broadly equivalent to GCSE grade D-G and GCSE grade A* - C respectively.

⁷ HC Deb, 18 July 2011, c578 W.

⁸ HC Deb, 10 January 2012, c12W.

⁹ *ibid.* The figures provided for those passing out with Level 2 qualifications in the BIS study sample vary significantly from the figures provided in Hansard. Hansard figures have been used in this document as they are taken from a larger data set. See *BIS Research Paper: Part 2*, page 25 to contrast.

¹⁰ HC Deb, 30 November 2011, c976W.

numeracy qualifications were just 48 and 65 per cent respectively. For Level 2 the figures were even lower, with pass rates of 47 per cent for candidates enrolled in the Level 2 numeracy courses, and just 10 per cent for those undertaking Level 2 literacy.¹¹ Data is not yet publicly available on the current pass rates for recruits taking the “Short Course” at AFC Harrogate, which has replaced the ATFC Winchester training course.

9. Notwithstanding the high pass rate for Level 1 literacy and numeracy courses at AFC Harrogate, Child Soldiers International considers the literacy and numeracy provision to be inadequate as it consists solely of Functional Skills rather than GCSE qualifications. The BIS study also questioned the extent to which qualification achievement rates in armed forces basic skills education “are accompanied by significant and functional long term gains”.¹² The BIS study further expressed concern at pressure on tutors to “teach to the test” rather than focus on sustainable development of skills.¹³
10. In 2011 the Department for Education commissioned Professor Wolf to conduct a *Review of Vocational Education* (“the Wolf Report”). This report singled out Functional Skills qualifications for criticism, describing them as “conceptually incoherent”,¹⁴ suffering from “major and fundamental flaws”,¹⁵ “of highly variable standards”¹⁶ and “certainly not in themselves an adequate ‘maths and English’ diet for the 16 - 19 cohort”.¹⁷ The Wolf Report judged as “shocking” those educational institutions where - as is the case at AFC Harrogate - students without English and maths GCSE A* to C are “channelled into, or required to take, key or functional skills” instead of being supported to re-sit the GCSE exams. The Wolf Report concluded that this practice served “to deny rather than promote the acquisition of good English and maths qualifications”.¹⁸
11. In contrast, the vital importance of achieving GCSE qualifications in English and maths has been emphasised on numerous occasions. The Wolf Report was adamant that English and maths GCSEs were “of critical importance for employment”.¹⁹ The Department for Education’s response to the Wolf Report recognised that the failure of the “most vulnerable” young people to achieve “critical” GCSE level qualifications “harms their prospects for progressing in education or training and finding a job”.²⁰ A report by Centre for Cities noted a strong correlation between failure to attain GCSE English and maths at grades A* to C and high levels of youth unemployment.²¹ Furthermore, the BIS study found Army recruits with GCSE grade A* - C in English and maths had a better retention rate.²²
12. The Wolf Report concluded that a GCSE at grade A* to C was the only adequate qualification in these subjects for all young people, regardless of future education and career plans and that no lower level or theoretically “equivalent” level qualification was an adequate alternative. One of the Wolf Report’s main concluding recommendations was that:

¹¹ HC Deb, 10 January 2012, c13W.

¹² *BIS Research Paper: Part 2*, page 103.

¹³ Department for Business Innovation and Skills; *BIS Research Paper Number 78. Armed Forces Basic Skills Longitudinal Study: Part 1*, June 2012, page 11 (hereinafter “*BIS Research Paper: Part 1*”).

¹⁴ Wolf, A. *Review of Vocational Education - The Wolf Report*, 2011, page 170 (hereinafter “*The Wolf Report*”).

¹⁵ *The Wolf Report*, page 170.

¹⁶ *ibid*, page 171.

¹⁷ *ibid*, page 84.

¹⁸ *ibid*, page 82.

¹⁹ *ibid*, page 32.

²⁰ Department for Education, *Wolf Review of Vocational Education: Government Response*, 2011, page 7.

²¹ www.centreforcities.org, “Half of all young people in cities are not getting the grades in Maths and English GCSE to get them a job”. Accessed 01/12/2011.

²² *BIS Research Paper: Part 1*, page 66. BIS recommended further investigation of the relationship between level of literacy and numeracy and retention rates.

“Students who are under 19 and do not have GCSE A* - C in English and/or Maths should be required...to pursue a course which either leads directly to these qualifications, or which provide significant progress towards GCSE entry and success (...) Key Skills should not be considered a suitable qualification in this context”.²³

13. The BIS study highlighted the challenge presented to the armed forces by this conclusion and recommended a “substantial assessment” of the issue.²⁴
14. Both the Wolf Report and the Department for Education’s response recognised that some young people who had not achieved GCSE English and maths Grade A* - C by age 16 might not be ready to retake their GCSE exams immediately and would need to undertake other levels of study, such as Functional Skills, as a preparatory step. However, these alternative qualifications were endorsed only as a means of progressing towards GCSE qualifications, and not as an alternative to them. Despite this consensus on the importance of GCSE English and maths qualifications for all young people, GCSEs are not studied at AFC Harrogate. This is because literacy and numeracy training in the Army is matched directly to the skill level required to perform a junior soldier’s role and the GCSE curriculum currently exceeds this level.
15. There is currently no requirement for recruits to undertake literacy and numeracy training in Phase 2 except for those enrolled on an “apprenticeship”.²⁵ When questioned as to how many recruits undertook GCSE English and/or maths in Phase Two training or subsequently, the MoD was unable to provide figures.²⁶ This indicates that there is no policy to ensure that all Army recruits, including those enlisting under the age of 18 in particular, obtain GCSE English and maths qualifications.
16. Indeed, the MoD’s goal is only for Army personnel to achieve “at least Level 1” qualifications within three years of enlistment.²⁷ This target falls short of the minimum standard recommended for young people in mainstream education by the Wolf Report. Consequently, Child Soldiers International concludes that the education opportunities provided to minors in the armed forces are substantially inferior to those available in a mainstream school or college. In the BIS study, 10 out of 14 soldiers interviewed reported that “they would be happy to take a GCSE”,²⁸ indicating that recruits themselves wish to study to a higher level of qualification than that currently on offer.
17. It should be noted that some have argued that young people who join the armed forces as minors are of a particular social and educational profile likely to drop out of, or fail to achieve in, mainstream education and therefore general education targets are not relevant to them.²⁹ However, it is precisely this cohort of youth that the government’s April 2011 report on social mobility, *Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers*, identified as most in need of encouragement to stay on in education, in order to arrest and reverse the widening gap in young people’s academic attainment and employment prospects. Minors in the armed forces are prevented from closing this gap by an education policy which sets lower targets than the minimum

²³ *The Wolf Report*, page 15. Key Skills were replaced by Functional Skills in 2010.

²⁴ *BIS Research Paper: Part 1*, page 50.

²⁵ *BIS Research Paper: Part 2*, page 55.

²⁶ HC Deb, 10 January 2012, c10W.

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ *BIS Research Paper: Part 1*, page 52.

²⁹ The BIS study found that up to 50 per cent of recruits joining the Army in 2010 had literacy or numeracy skills at Entry Level 3 or below. The BIS study also reported that the more times a recruit had been suspended from school, the higher their drop-out rate from the armed forces. See *BIS Research Paper: Part 1*, page 22; *BIS Research Paper: Part 2*, page 242.

recommended for their (civilian) peers. As a result, an armed forces education is by definition of lower standard than that available in mainstream education.

18. Child Soldiers International also notes with concern the low ratio of professional teachers employed at AFC Harrogate compared to military training staff, and the negative consequences this may have on the quality of teaching. Just 51 of the 379 staff involved in training junior soldiers have qualified teacher status (42 civilian teachers and nine military education and training service officers).³⁰

II. The provision of education to service personnel throughout their careers

19. Elective study opportunities beyond the requirements of compulsory training are available to Army personnel. However, the transient nature of armed forces life, combined with demanding daily schedules and the pressures of preparing for – or deployment on – operations “significantly constrains opportunities to gain access to literacy and numeracy support.”³¹ The BIS study noted that “it can be difficult to fit educational provision into the busy military training lines”³² and “In the Army there are more urgent priorities than support for literacy and numeracy.”³³ Operational commitments, busy military training schedules and other demands “often prevent or dissuade personnel from accessing literacy and numeracy provision.”³⁴ None of the 14 soldiers in the BIS study qualitative sample had sought or taken any further educational provision once they had finished initial training.³⁵ It is evident that despite the substantial resources invested the Army is not the ideal institution, nor does it offer the most conducive environment, for providing broad, sustainable academic education for young people.
20. Furthermore, Army personnel can only undertake additional, elective courses if they extend their minimum service period beyond the terms of their original enlistment agreement.³⁶ This additional service period is up to one year for a course of two weeks to three months duration, or up to six years additional service for a course lasting more than three months. As a result, recruits must choose between committing to up to six years’ additional service in the Army (which would more than double the total minimum service period of a 17 year old recruit) or refusing all additional educational courses. In the latter case recruits retain the right to leave service sooner but could leave the Army no better qualified than when they joined.
21. Child Soldiers International considers that the burdensome additional service commitment imposed on Army personnel who wish to undertake supplementary study acts as a major disincentive to pursuing education.

III. The progress made by the armed forces in ensuring that training undertaken by service personnel leads to civilian qualifications

22. Child Soldiers International is deeply concerned that young recruits’ training results in few, if any, civilian qualifications and has very little transferable value to civilian employment. Apart

³⁰ HC Deb, 8 December 2011, c426W.

³¹ *BIS Research Paper: Part 1*, page 24.

³² *BIS Research Paper: Part 2*, page 43.

³³ *ibid*, page 104.

³⁴ *BIS Research Paper: Part 1*, page 25.

³⁵ *BIS Research Paper: Part 2*, page 44. Child Soldiers International suggests that the Defence Committee request the MoD provide annual data on the number of soldiers who seek, undertake, and successfully attain, further educational qualifications after completing Phase 1 and 2 training.

³⁶ The Army Terms of Service Regulations 2007, Regulation 15: *Return of service commitment*.

from the IT Level 2 Diploma (NVQ) there are no GCSE, AS level, A level, BTEC, HNC, HND or NVQ qualifications on the curriculum at AFC Harrogate.³⁷

23. Recruitment materials for AFC Harrogate emphasise the possibility and benefits of undertaking an “apprenticeship”. However, the “apprenticeships” referred to here and elsewhere by the MoD refer to the Functional Skills, IT diploma and specific military training listed below which, combined, are termed “an Army apprenticeship”. They are not apprenticeships in the commonly understood meaning of the term, i.e. transferable vocational training leading to a nationally recognised professional qualification in, for example, mechanics, plumbing, carpentry or electronics. The MoD has confirmed that vocational training in these areas is not on offer at AFC Harrogate.³⁸
24. Aside from the Functional Skills curriculum in English and maths, the predominant focus of education at AFC Harrogate - unsurprisingly - is on military training. Recruitment materials state that recruits spend “most of the course” learning basic military skills, including “weapon handling, fieldcraft, camouflage, survival...[how to] handle and shoot the SA80 rifle...drill...march and parade”.³⁹ This is particularly the case for recruits entering into “combat oriented roles” in the Infantry, Royal Armoured Corps, Royal Artillery and some Royal Logistic Corps.⁴⁰ Almost half of recruits enlisting as minors - 46 per cent - join the Infantry, which entails some of the most specialised combat-specific training of all.⁴¹
25. This specialised military training, whilst clearly essential for a combat-related career, does not lead to civilian qualifications and has very little, if any, direct transferable value to future civilian employment. In contrast, mainstream education offers young people the opportunity to undertake training with far greater transferable value and therefore better long-term employment prospects.

IV. The impact of education on the resettlement of armed forces personnel

26. Recruits who enlist as minors have a high dropout rate from the armed forces and are therefore more likely than adults to need to find alternative civilian employment.
27. In 2010/2011, 27 per cent of minors in initial armed forces training (Phase One and Phase Two) dropped out.⁴² The BIS study also found that “younger recruits [in the quantitative sample] were more likely to leave as compared to their older peers”⁴³ and that “trainees from AFC(H) and ATFC(W) were more likely to leave”.⁴⁴ In 2010/2011 36 per cent of all Early Service Leavers⁴⁵ had enlisted below the age of 18. Early Service Leavers are known to be at greater risk than longer serving armed forces personnel of experiencing serious difficulties transitioning to civilian life, including greater vulnerability to unemployment (as well as other

³⁷ HC Deb, 30 November 2011, c966W; HC Deb, 30 November 2011, c977 W; HC Deb, 18 July 2011, c578 W; HC Deb, 19 July 2011, c862w.

³⁸ HC Deb, 13 September 2011, c1147W.

³⁹ See “Army Colleges” brochure available at www.army.mod.uk/documents/general/ArmyJuniorE-LowRes.pdf.

⁴⁰ The combat-focused nature of these roles is highlighted by the fact that the corps which Harrogate “Long Course” graduates enter have consistently had the highest death and injury rates throughout the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan – HC Deb, 6 December 2010, c2W.

⁴¹ HC Deb, 10 January 2012, c12W.

⁴² HC Deb, 7 February 2011, c26W. This is a substantially higher drop-out rate than for adult personnel.

⁴³ *BIS Research Paper: Part 2*, page 100.

⁴⁴ *ibid*, page 242.

⁴⁵ Early Service Leavers are armed forces personnel discharged within four years of enlisting or who have been compulsorily discharged.

forms of social exclusion such as homelessness, criminality, and substance misuse).⁴⁶ MoD guidelines for resettlement staff recognise minors as a sub-group of Early Service Leavers at especially high risk of such exclusion.⁴⁷

28. For those who successfully complete initial training, the average length of service for Infantry soldiers who enlisted below the age of 18 is 10 years.⁴⁸ This means that most recruits who enlisted as minors will be seeking alternative civilian employment by the age of 26 or 27, with some 40 years of working life ahead of them. Civilian qualifications and transferable skills are therefore essential for their successful resettlement.
29. The essential importance of “generalisable and transferrable skills” to allow young people to succeed in employment - in both the short-term and throughout their lives - was emphasised in the Wolf Report, in the Department for Education’s response, and in submissions to the Wolf Report from employers’ bodies and the Confederation of British Industry.⁴⁹ The Wolf Report recommended that:

“16 – 19 year old students pursuing full time courses of study should not follow a programme which is entirely ‘occupational’”.⁵⁰

30. In this respect, the Wolf Report explicitly distinguishes between the suitability of specialised training programs for adult versus teenage employees or apprentices. Job-specific training which is necessary for adults in skilled trades is not a suitable substitute for the general educational needs of minors, as it severely restricts their future employment and education options. The Wolf Report noted that occupation-specific training programs and qualifications:

“may be appropriate for adults who are in employment or have made definitive decisions about their occupation and job of choice, [but they] should not be the main, let alone the only, type of vocational qualifications offered to 14 - 19 year olds in education and training”.⁵¹

31. In conclusion, the Wolf Report argues that:

“all young people should receive a high quality core education which equips them to progress, whether immediately or later, to a very wide range of further study, training and employment...**We have no business, as a society, placing 16 year olds...in tracks which they cannot leave**”.⁵² (Emphasis in original.)

32. What is true of vocational education in general is even more pertinent to military training which, due to its highly specialised nature, has no direct transferable value to any other field of employment. The military skills which constitute “most of the course” at AFC Harrogate clearly have no direct civilian use and so cannot be interpreted as providing the “generalisable and transferable” skills identified as essential for successful civilian employment.
33. These concerns about young recruits’ prospects for successful transfer to civilian life are borne out by an investigation by the Royal British Legion in 2006 which found that the

⁴⁶ Ministry of Defence, *Early Service Leavers: Guidance notes for resettlement Staff*, JSP 575 Issue No: 4. March 2010.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*

⁴⁸ HC Deb, 12 September 2011, c1007W.

⁴⁹ *The Wolf Report*, page 107 and page 122; Department for Education, *Wolf Review of Vocational Education: Government Response*, p.6.

⁵⁰ *The Wolf Report*, page 115.

⁵¹ *ibid*, page 86.

⁵² *ibid*, page 141.

unemployment rate of 18 - 49 year old ex-service personnel was double the national unemployment rate for civilians in the same age group. Significantly, the study found that “lack of training, qualifications or skills is also more of a problem among this age group”.⁵³

V. The adequacy of oversight of the education of armed forces personnel

34. Child Soldiers International considers that there is inadequate independent oversight of education for minors in the armed forces. Since 2009 Ofsted has produced four reports on armed forces initial training, but all four related to welfare and duty of care issues rather than the suitability and quality of the educational curriculum. There has been no specific review of these areas since the 2005 Adult Learning Inspectorate report into the ICT curriculum at the Army Foundation College Harrogate, and the MoD has not commissioned any specific research into the education and transferable skills acquired by minors in the Army.⁵⁴ As a result, there is no independent, objective evidence base on which to assess the quality of education provided to armed forces personnel and to minors in particular.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

35. Child Soldiers International considers that young people, including those with low prior educational attainment, have greatly reduced opportunities in the armed forces to achieve qualifications regarded as “fundamental” than they would have in mainstream education. Despite the substantial resources invested, the armed forces are not institutionally or environmentally suited to providing minors with the range and depth of education required for successful long-term employment.
36. Child Soldiers International therefore concludes that raising the minimum recruitment age to 18 years would be in the best interests of recruits’ educational attainment and long-term employment prospects. This measure would ensure that all recruits had completed a broad, transferable secondary level education with the opportunity to attain GCSEs in English and maths under the guidance of professionally qualified, subject-specialist teachers before joining the armed forces. This would ensure that government strategies on education and social mobility are implemented consistently across all government departments, to the benefit of all young people irrespective of their prior level of educational attainment and future career path. It would also address the need identified by the Strategic Defence and Security Review to recruit better educated and more highly trained personnel.
37. By recruiting only from age 18 and above the MoD would ensure that personnel leaving the armed forces (at any stage in their training or career) would be able to resettle into civilian life more easily than at present, as their employment options would no longer be limited by early specialisation in military training to the exclusion of broader, more transferable skills. Their military training would therefore act as an additional qualification, rather than a substitute for a full secondary level education, as is the case at present. This should reduce some of the post-service welfare problems experienced by many veterans and Early Service Leavers in particular.
38. Raising the recruitment age would also save MoD resources. The BIS study found that there were higher retention rates among Army recruits who had “stayed in full time education for longer”.⁵⁵ The BIS study also noted that “delivering literacy and numeracy education to

⁵³ Royal British Legion, *Profiles and Needs: Comparisons between the Ex-Service Community and the UK Population*, 2006. Section 4.9.

⁵⁴ HC Deb, 10 July 2012, c197W.

⁵⁵ *BIS Research Paper: Part 2*, page 100.

recruits with Entry Level skills represents a large claim on resources, including funding for provision and military training time for literacy and numeracy programmes⁵⁶ and recommended that the MoD “Seek to reduce the Services’ literacy and numeracy skills training liability for recruits by adjusting minimum literacy and numeracy standards for joining”.⁵⁷ Recruiting only those who have already completed their secondary level education would therefore benefit the armed forces by significantly reducing MoD expenditure on basic education. At present this is, on average, three times higher for recruits aged under 18 than for adults.⁵⁸

39. Raising entry standards would also improve operational efficiency in the armed forces, by reducing the time and resources spent supporting those with poor literacy and numeracy skills. This support, where extensive and routine, was identified as “likely to corrode...operational efficiency”, particularly on active service.⁵⁹ The BIS study questioned to what extent junior personnel could be considered “operationally effective” when they required extensive literacy and numeracy support on a consistent basis.⁶⁰ In contrast, it noted that “Trainees with sound literacy and numeracy skills are more flexible in the roles they can undertake and are able to work more effectively without supervision...improving levels of literacy and numeracy will improve the employability of recruits within the Services”.⁶¹ They also have far better prospects of successful promotion and consequently a longer armed forces career.

⁵⁶ *BIS Research Paper: Part 1*, page 36.

⁵⁷ *ibid*, page 14.

⁵⁸ HC Deb, 15 Dec 2011, c866W. Average expenditure per recruit (Junior Entry) on Phase One training at AFC Harrogate is £64,458 and was £53,985 at ATFC Winchester. Average expenditure per recruit for Phase One Training Standard Entry (i.e. for adult recruits) is £21,318 at the Army Training Centre Pirbright, £26,992 at the Army Training Regiment Bassingbourn and £26,543 at the Infantry Training Centre Catterick.

⁵⁹ *BIS Research Paper: Part 1*, page 10; *BIS Research Paper: Part 2*, page 207.

⁶⁰ *BIS Research Paper: Part 1*, page 59.

⁶¹ *ibid*, page 60.

CONWY COUNTY PEACE GROUP.



William Powell AM
Chairman, Petitions Committee.

Dear Mr. Powell,

I am writing to express the views of the above Group regarding the petition which calls for the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to recommend that the armed forces should not go into schools to recruit.

Our members are greatly concerned that introducing children to the military ethos of violence does not contribute to developing a culture of peace, justice and reconciliation in a world that is disturbed by increasingly violent conflicts. This is exacerbated by the weapons construction and 'security' industries who have a vested interest in their extension.

It is evident that, when Armed Forces career officers give advice, a picture of excitement, travel, educational benefits and security is presented in order to attract the natural interests of children. The real picture of war and violence is rarely mentioned, and the inevitability of suffering and death to themselves and their opponents is not highlighted. The fact that these children would be the ones who inflict death and mutilation on their fellow human beings, and the consequences of that, is not brought to their attention. Neither is the evidence that returning soldiers are often traumatized by their experiences and find it difficult to readjust to civilian life, resulting in a higher rate of domestic violence, criminality and suicide than in the population at large.

The army were allowed to recruit and advertise when St Athan's Military Academy was in the planning stage. This was also the case for all deprived areas such as the Valleys in Rhondda Cynon Taf and in Wreccsam housing estate. This is deliberate exploitation of long term unemployed families (as is the flooding of Job Centres with army leaflets.)

The National Curriculum does not contain Peace Studies. The real background of war, the interests behind it, the suffering and loss that was caused by the two World Wars, and alternative means to resolve conflict is not taught. This should be a priority.

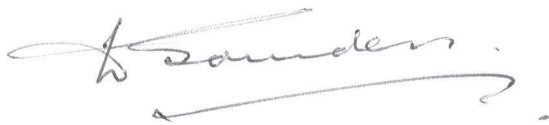
We have noticed that there has been a sharp increase in militarisation and it's propaganda in the last few years even though the real threat to the UK of external enemies is questionable. The attendance of the military at schools is

only one aspect of this. We consider this to be counter-productive to your own repeatedly proclaimed aim of achieving peace in the world.

The Conwy County Peace Group has been active for many years with the aim to develop a climate that values a culture of peace, justice and reconciliation. Wales has a long history of peaceful activity and we wish this to be continued and extended.

We request that military recruiting in schools be prohibited, as well as any TV and radio advertising during hours when children are likely to be exposed to that. Children are to be protected and not to be used as cannon fodder.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Donald Saunders". The signature is written in dark ink and includes a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Donald Saunders Chairman

Petitions Committee
Inquiry into petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools
Response from Mererid Hopwood

William Powell AM
Chair of Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1NA

4/5/2013

Dear Mr Powell

Thank you for raising the above matter in your committee and for inquiring further into it. As you know, this is a cause of great concern to many of us – both as parents and as citizens.

One feels ashamed on the one hand that a country that prides itself on its humanitarian tradition – and which has practically adopted the phrase ‘chwarae teg/fair play’ as its motto, has allowed such a situation to arise. On the other hand, one feels pity and sympathy towards so many young people whose situation offers them very few employment and career opportunities, as the armed forces thrust themselves on them.

I understand that Britain is the only country within NATO which allows 16 year old children access to the army. This has been condemned by the United Nations. There are very few countries in the world which tolerate such uncivilized behaviour and I understand that Britain, by exercising this policy, is in the company of some of the world’s most oppressive regimes.

We look forward greatly to the day when our children here in Wales won’t even need to consider a career in an industry which alleges that it ‘defends’ by threatening to kill (and doing so). This is totally abhorrent to the concept of a conciliatory society. As has been said many times, any school teacher would be suspended for threatening to ‘keep the peace’ by firing a gun or setting off a bomb.

You will, by now, have received the appalling facts and statistics. I implore you now to lead your committee to make a brave stand and free us from this unacceptable situation.

Thank you for your kind consideration once again

Your sincerely

Mererid Hopwood

Agenda Item 3.16

P-04-467 January Exams

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to continue to support the provision of January examinations at GCSE, AS and A Level.

Petition raised by: A-Level Students

Petition first considered by Committee: 19 March 2013

Number of signatures: 90

Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref:
Ein cyf/Our ref: LA/00883/13

William Powell AM
Chair Petitions committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

10 April 2013

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 21 March informing me of a petition received from A level students calling on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to continue to support the provision of January examinations at GCSE, AS and A level.

In Wales, we conducted a wide-ranging Review of Qualifications for 14-19 year olds. The Review consulted extensively with stakeholders including GCSE and A level students. The final report and recommendations of the Review's independent Board was published on 28 November 2012 and the Deputy Minister for Skills accepted all 42 of the recommendations on 29 January 2013.

For GCSE, the current situation is that January assessment opportunities continue to be permitted in Wales for those centres that choose to follow modular GCSE specifications. Going forward, the Review Board recommended that "the Welsh Government should continue to allow unitised GCSEs, and January as well as June assessment opportunities, with a limit of one resit per unit and the higher mark counting" [Recommendation 24].

In terms of AS and A levels, the Review recommended that Wales should "maintain the same A levels as England and Northern Ireland where possible, but allow variation where necessary to meet the needs of learners in Wales" [Recommendation 25]. It also recommended that the Welsh Government should "recognise the range of views expressed by stakeholders about the continued use of units within AS and A2 and January assessment opportunities".

In light of the fact that evidence from the Review of Qualifications in Wales was inconclusive on this issue (the consultation did not ask a question specifically on January assessments), I asked my officials to undertake further consultation with stakeholders on the specific issue of January assessments. A six week online survey took place between 3 December 2012 and 14 January 2013.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400
Correspondence: Leighton.Andrews@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

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I am currently reviewing the evidence in relation to the future of the January AS and A level January assessment opportunities in Wales and will be making an announcement shortly. I can assure you that I am aware of strong arguments both in favour and against retaining the January AS and A levels assessment opportunities, and that my decision on this issue will, as always, be made with the best interests of Welsh learners in mind.

*Yours sincerely,
Leighton Adams*

Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills