

Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue: **Committee Room 1 – Senedd**

Meeting date: **Tuesday, 21 October 2014**

Meeting time: **09. – 10.30**

This meeting can be viewed on Senedd TV at:

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Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Concise Minutes:

MeetingTitle

Assembly Members:

William Powell (Chair)
Russell George
Bethan Jenkins
Mike Hedges (In place of Joyce Watson)

Witnesses:

Committee Staff:

Steve George (Clerk)
Kayleigh Driscoll (Deputy Clerk)
Kath Thomas (Deputy Clerk)
Matthew Richards (Legal Advisor)

1 Introduction, apologies and substitutions

2 Updates to previous petitions

2.1 P-04-526 Please make Senedd TV accessible to deaf people

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to ask Assembly Commission staff to contact Mr James direct to pursue any outstanding issues in relation to the nature and role of Cross Party Groups.

2.2P-04-468 Road Safety Concerns A48 Chepstow

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to write to the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport:

- Drawing her attention to the petitioner's views and in particular the relative ease with which the speed limit could be adjusted back to 30mph; and
- Asking her to provide further information, including a timeline, for the feasibility study mentioned in her letter of 7 October 2014 .

2.3P-04-416 North-South Rail Services

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to:

- write to the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport:
 - Seeking an update in the light of her written statement and the petitioner's comments;
 - Seeking further information on her preparations ahead of the franchise renewal due in 2018, including how she will be collecting and collating information received on views expressed relating to the provision of rail services; and
- draw the petitioner's attention to the upcoming tender.

2.4P-04-522 Asbestos in Schools

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to write to the Minister for Education and Skills:

- Seeking his views on the further correspondence received and ask that he keeps the Committee informed of his consideration of the consultation in England;
- Asking him to outline the reasons for not carrying out a consultation at this time; and
- Conveying the Committee's view that this is an area where Wales should be proactive and that it would be regrettable if Wales lagged behind England in the accessibility of information about the presence and management of asbestos in school buildings.

2.5P-04-576 Allow Children in Wales to Have a Family Holiday During Term Time

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to write to:

- The Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee to ask the Committee to consider including the issue raised in this petition and also a petition currently collecting signatures – Ensure schools exercise their statutory powers under regulation 7 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 without interference or bias – on their Forward Work Programme;
- Estyn to ask for clarification on how the issue of attendance is considered within the inspection regime;
- All Local Authorities asking each one to set out how they interpret the guidance on school attendance; and
- The Children's Commissioner to ask for further information on the nature of the concerns raised with his Investigation and Advice Service.

2.6P-04-492 Diagnosis of autism in children

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to:

- Write to the new Minister responsible for this area to confirm that he is still committed to the approach and commitments made by the previous Deputy Minister for Social Services and how the policy will be developed beyond the life of the current Action Plan and across Wales; and
- Seek a progress report from Hywel Dda Local Health Board as requested by the petitioners.

2.7P-04-494 Robotic assisted laparoscopic prostatectomy must be made available to men in Wales now

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to seek further comments from the petitioner.

2.8P-04-527 Campaign for a Special Cancer Drug Fund in Wales

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to:

- Seek further comments from the petitioner; and
- Write again to Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board seeking the outstanding response and expressing concern at their lack of response to letters from the Committee.

2.9P-04-553 A full and independent investigation in to the health risks of wireless and mobile phone technologies in Wales including all schools

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to:

- Write to the petitioner asking him to provide succinct, robust, peer-reviewed evidence to demonstrate the need for an enquiry; and
- Once the petitioner's response has been received, write to the Minister for Health and Social Services seeking his views on that evidence and the information provided by OFCOM and on whether the Public Health England Centre for Radiation, Chemical and Environmental Hazards (PHE-CRCE) takes account of evidence from within Wales in providing advice to the Welsh Government.

2.10 P-04-539 Save Cardiff Coal Exchange

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to write to:

- the leader of Cardiff Council asking for an update on the latest position and asking for further information on the liquidators if available, to allow the Committee to pursue arranging a visit to the building;
- the Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism asking what the Welsh Government role is in the light of the holding company's liquidation; and
- Stephen Doughty MP, copying in Vaughan Gething AM, to draw the petition to his attention and ask about progress on his campaign.

2.11 P-04-422 Fracking

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to:

- Write to the new Minister for Natural Resources seeking his response to the petitioner's document and his views on the related 'petition' submitted to the First Minister which had purportedly gathered 90,000 signatures; and
- Forward the information submitted by Friends of the Earth Cymru to Natural Resources Wales (NRW), drawing their attention in particular to the comments on page 2 about the lack of guidance provided by NRW.

2.12 P-04-524 Planning Control and the Welsh Language

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to:

- Seek further comments from the petitioner; and
- Write again to the Welsh Language Commissioner seeking a response to earlier correspondence.

2.13 P-04-536 Stop Factory Dairy Farming in Wales

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to:

- Seek the Minister for Natural Resources' views on the petitioner's further comments and asking him to clarify why it is not appropriate to read across the findings and conclusions from the PCIFAP study in the USA and to provide further evidence for his view that larger farms don't affect the viability of smaller farms; and
- Write again to the Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Committee asking whether they could consider looking at these issues as part of their forward work programme.

2.14 P-04-519 Abolition of Park Homes Sales Commission

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to ask the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty if her officials, whose diary commitments may not be so extensive, would be prepared to meet the petitioners as requested.

2.15 P-04-597 Protect the future of Funky Dragon, the Children and Young People's Assembly for Wales

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to arrange an evidence session as requested by the petitioners.