

Petitions Committee

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

Meeting date: **Tuesday, 12 May 2015**

Meeting time: **09.02 – 09.55**

This meeting can be viewed on [Senedd TV](#) at:

<http://www.senedd.tv/Meeting/Archive/025ca896-e19f-4fc9-b97e-5f2cecfddb6?autostart=True>

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Concise Minutes:

Assembly Members:

William Powell AM (Chair)

Russell George AM

Bethan Jenkins AM

Joyce Watson AM

Witnesses:

Committee Staff:

Steve George (Clerk)

Kath Thomas (Deputy Clerk)

Helen Roberts (Legal Adviser)

1 Introduction, apologies and substitutions

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

He extended a warm welcome to Members and staff of the Irish Parliament's Joint Committee on Public Service Oversight and Petitions, who were observing from the public gallery.

There were no apologies.

2 New petitions

2.1 P-04-630 Facebook Regulations for Looked After Children

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

- The Minister for Health and Social Services sharing the petitioner's further comments and asking if he or his officials could meet the petitioner to discuss the specific issues raised as part of the petition;
- The Children's Commissioner seeking her views; and
- Children in Wales to ask what information they hold on this issue.

2.2 P-04-631 Save Our Service- Large Animal Rescue in North Wales

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

- Write to:
 - The North Wales Fire and Rescue; and
 - The RSPCAseeking their views on the petition; and
- The Fire Brigades Union, Wales seeking information on the situation in South and Mid and West Wales.

2.3 P-04-632 Mynyddoedd Pawb

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

- write to:
 - The Welsh language Commissioner seeking her views on the petition;
 - Visit Wales and the Wales Tourism Alliance, given the petitioners' aim of using this issue as a way of promoting outdoor tourism ventures;
 - The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales; and
 - The Deputy Minister, seeking his views on the petitioners' further comments;
- Seek legal advice on the Welsh Government's role and specifically whether they could take a more direct role in the process, possibly via the Historic Environment Bill, once introduced.

2.4P-04-633 To Raise Awareness of the Poor Broadband in Our Area

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to await the petitioners' views on the Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology's letter.

3 Updates to previous petitions

3.1 P-03-236 The Charter for Grandchildren

The Committee considered correspondence from the petitioner and agreed to:

- Write to the petitioner thanking him for his thoughtful reply and for engaging with the petitions process; and
- Close the petition, given that events appear to have moved on since the petition was last considered.

3.2 P-04-587 A Dedicated Support Team for Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (M.E.), Chronic Fatigue Syndrome & Fibromyalgia Sufferers in South East Wales

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to:

- Await the response from the petitioners; and
- Write to the Minister for Health and Social Services thanking him for his helpful reply and asking to be informed of the main actions agreed as a result of the first meeting of the implementation group, due to be held on 13 May.

3.3 P-04-363 Town Centre Improvement Scheme for Fishguard

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and, in light of the petitioner's comments agreed to write to:

- The Minister for Economy, Science and Transport and Pembrokeshire County Council, asking for an update on any plans for town centre improvements for Fishguard; and
- The petitioner, asking if there are any specific further steps that the Committee could take to progress the petition.

3.4P-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 petitioner's further comments and in particular, asking for his views on the petitioner's proposal to set up a steering group to include experts from every sector; and
- Thanking him for undertaking to provide a written update to the Committee by 5 June.

3.5P-04-581 Opposition to Cuts in Provision for Learners of English as an Additional Language

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to:

- Write to the Minister for Education and Skills asking for his comments on the content of Swansea City Council's letter and the implicit criticism it contains; and
- Await further comments from the petitioner.

3.6P-04-615 A Fair Student Loan Payment in the Final Year of Training

- The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed await further comments from the petitioner.

3.7P-04-537 Planting Trees to Reduce Flooding

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to share the petitioners' concerns with The Minister for Natural Resources.

3.8P-04-544 Ban the Shooting of Greenland White-fronted Geese

Joyce Watson put on record that she is a member of the RSPB.

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to:

- Pass on Professor Fox's letter on to the Minister for Natural Resources and seek his views on its content and on why the Welsh Government appears to have set its face against statutory protection when other states have done so; and
- Ask him to reconsider the Welsh Government's position on this matter.

3.9P-04-539 Save Cardiff Coal Exchange

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to:

- Write to the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport asking her:
 - to let the Committee see the results of the initial feasibility study as soon as they are available; and
 - for further information on the process undertaken to select the contractors used for the feasibility study and in particular why CADW contractors are not being used;
- Visit the exterior of the Building, with the Petitioner so that Members can gain a better appreciation of the state of the Building.

3.10 P-04-617 Stop the Wholesale Hiving off of Public Libraries to the Voluntary Sector

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

- The Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism, seeking his views on the petitioner's further comments; and
- The WLGA to ask for their views on the Deputy Minister's letter.

3.11 P-04-578 Noise Mitigation Works on the M4 to the West of Junction 32

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to:

- Write again to the Minister to ask for an update on the latest position, including any estimate of when work to improve the situation for the petitioner is likely to take place.
- Decline the request for a site visit at this time, given the acceptance of the high noise level in the area.

3.12 P-04-609 Support Small Businesses – Support our High Streets

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

- Await comments from the petitioner; and
- If the petitioner agrees, given that the Minister's letter seems to suggest that the main thrust of the issue raised has been achieved, close the petition.

3.13 P-04-614 Support the Arriva Trains Wales First Class Service

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to:

- Await further comments from the petitioner;
- Consider closing the petition as it is difficult to see how the Committee could add any further value.

3.14 P-04-459 A Direct Rail Connection from Cardiff Airport to Cardiff Central and West Wales

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to:

- Seek comments from the petitioner;
- Consider closing the petition as the Minister's letter indicates that the subject of the petition is not actually devolved.

3.15 P-04-416 North-South Rail Services

The Committee considered correspondence on the petition and agreed to ask the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport for her views on the petitioner's further comments.

4 Correspondence

4.1 The Committee noted the correspondence from the Chair of the Health and Social Care Committee and agreed to work with the NHS Confederation to help facilitate replies from Local Health Boards.

4.2 Following a proposal from the Chair, the Committee agreed a Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting to consider a matter relating to the internal business of the Committee.