

Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:
Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date:
16 June 2015

Meeting time:
09.00

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



For further information please contact:

Steve George
Committee Clerk
0300 200 6565
SeneddPetitions@assembly.wales

Kayleigh Driscoll
Deputy Committee Clerk
0300 200 6565
SeneddPetitions@assembly.wales

Agenda

- 1 Introduction, apologies and substitutions** (Pages 1 – 18)
- 2 New petitions**
 - 2.1 P-04-637 To Protect the Future of Youth Music in Wales (Pages 19 – 24)
 - 2.2 P-04-624 That Foster Carers be Permitted to be Registered with More Than One Local Authority (Pages 25 – 28)
 - 2.3 P-04-636 Statutory Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) (Pages 29 – 37)
 - 2.4 P-04-638 Emergency Services – Power of Entry (Pages 38 – 42)
 - 2.5 P-04-639 Save Further Education in Powys (Pages 43 – 46)
- 3 Updates to previous petitions**

Education

- 3.1 P-04-346 Free Childcare for 3-4 Year Olds in Wales (Pages 47 – 51)
- 3.2 P-04-522 Asbestos in Schools (Pages 52 – 55)

Health

- 3.3 P-04-571 Treating Pernicious Anaemia (Pages 56 – 61)
- 3.4 P-04-601 Proposed Ban on the Use of e-cigarettes in Public Places (Pages 62 – 68)
- 3.5 P-04-603 Helping Babies Born at 22 Weeks to Survive (Pages 69 – 82)

Communities and Tackling Poverty

- 3.6 P-04-597 Protect the future of Funky Dragon, the Children and Young People's Assembly for Wales (Pages 83 – 88)

Natural Resources

- 3.7 P-04-605 Save the Cwmcarn Forest Drive from Indefinite or Permanent Closure (Pages 89 – 90)
- 3.8 P-04-619 LOCALISM IN PLANNING and COMPENSATION FOR THIRD PARTIES RE. INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS (Pages 91 – 97)

Economy, Science and Transport

- 3.9 P-04-627 Improve Commuter Train Services in North Wales (Pages 98 – 100)

Document is Restricted

Agenda Item 2.1

P-04-637 To Protect the Future of Youth Music in Wales

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to protect musical tuition in schools and in particular to:

- Reinststate central ring-fencing of budgets for professional instrumental tuition in schools;
- Implement a national strategy to reverse the decline of Youth Music in Wales;
- Offer the children and young people of Wales their right to receive an education that develops their unique personalities, talents and abilities to the full.

Petition raised by: The Friends of Bridgend Youth Music

Date petition first considered by Committee:

Number of signatures: 1,363 Online signatures and 738 paper signatures
=2,101 signatures



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-637
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/00876/15
William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

20 May 2015

Dear William

Thank you for your letter of 11 May regarding the petition from The Friends of Bridgend Youth Music about the Future of Youth Music in Wales.

I fully recognise the contribution that music makes to the well-being of young people in Wales. Music is a statutory requirement in all maintained schools from the Foundation Phase to the end of Key Stage 3, the point at which young people make their choices for GCSE.

The provision of music services, including providing individual tuition, is a matter for the local authorities to fund from the revenue support grant provided by the Welsh Government. All decisions on funding to support music services rest with local authorities and they determine what level of support they wish to give, based on their understanding of local needs and priorities.

In January this year I set up a task and finish group to consider the provision of music services in schools across Wales and to develop proposals for ensuring that, despite the difficult financial climate, local authorities can continue to deliver high quality services to learners across Wales. The group met on six occasions to consider a number of issues, including:

- alternative methods of service delivery;
- options for charging policies, with a view to achieving greater parity across Wales, more equitable provision and access for eFSM learners;
- options for musical instrument supply, refresh, purchase, rental arrangements; and
- the potential for greater partnership working.

The group consisted of representatives from local authorities, Association for Directors of Education in Wales, the regional education consortia, Arts Council of Wales and Estyn.

I have now received the group's final report and recommendations which will be published on the Welsh Government website very shortly. There are recommendations for the Welsh Government and other stakeholders which will require further consideration once the report is in the public domain. It would therefore be premature for me to comment on the petition referred to in your letter before the publication of the task and finish group report.

I am committed to improving opportunities for the arts in our schools. In March 2015, along with the Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism, I launched *Creative Learning through the Arts - An Action Plan for Wales*. The 5-year plan sets out our vision and action to improve attainment through creativity; increase and improve arts experiences for schools; and support teachers and arts practitioners in developing their skills. Through the Lead Creative Schools Scheme, the first strand of the plan to be implemented by the Arts Council of Wales, schools will have an opportunity to work with creative practitioners to improve outcomes for their learners. This will see practitioners – for example, artists, musicians, film makers – working closely with teachers to develop, design and implement new approaches in teaching and learning. The Arts and Education programme, to be developed later this year, will enable schools to draw on the knowledge and practice of artists and arts/cultural organisations to enhance and complement the teaching of the arts in schools and provide arts and cultural experiences for learners, both within and outside the curriculum.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bolt Regards" on the top line and "Huw" on the bottom line.

Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills



P-04-639 To protect the future of Youth Music in Wales – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 10 June 2015

Dear William Powell AM – Chair of National Assembly for Wales Petitions committee,

Petition: To protect the future of Youth Music in Wales

Thank you for the opportunity of meeting with members of the committee today at the handover of our petition. Thank you also for forwarding the initial reply from Huw Lewis AM in his capacity as Minister for Education and Skills. We welcome this opportunity to work with all concerned to gain the best outcome for Youth Music for future generations in Wales. Please see our response to the Minister's initial letter below.

We are aware of the current arrangements for the funding for education through local authorities, in particular arrangements for music service tuition. This currently has the potential for all twenty two authorities to create their own very individual but differing scenarios. It is for this reason that we are calling for a national strategy which will remove all such anomalies in the provision of professional instrumental tuition through schools. This would lead to the parity of provision referred to in the minister's response. This alone, however, does not ensure that funding for music is channelled towards professional music lessons provided by LA run services as many are now turning to cheaper independent agencies as a way to providing tuition. The authority has no jurisdiction over these agencies in terms of quality control and this is a great concern. Under current arrangements all authorities encouraged music services to transfer money to schools' budgets. This has had a very positive effect until recently where evidence is now suggesting that

schools are using this money to cover shortfalls in areas of their budget other than music. It is for this reason that we ask for ring-fencing to be re-established.

We welcome that new ways of working are being considered and look forward to the findings of the Task and Finish group being presented. We are also hopeful of receiving more details of the methodology used in this process and a copy of the report.

Our reasons for bringing the petition forward are that, since the last review of Music Services published in 2010, Wales has seen a sharp decline in music provision through schools, inconsistency within schools and local authorities, as well as loss of performance opportunities fed by this. Our concern is that this may only be the start of a potential identity crisis for Wales, once regarded as a musical nation. Music is an intrinsic part of everyday life, but without protection, it is not a guaranteed part of the future landscape of Wales. Organisations such as the National Orchestra of Wales rely on young people discovering and nurturing their talent, having a chance to learn and early opportunities to perform. Music has the power to transform lives in many other ways. Wales had the first National Youth Orchestra in the world. We need to ensure that Wales is not the first country to experience the demise of such an illustrious organisation.

We would urge that Wales looks at lessons learned in England and Scotland where cuts in music education are being reversed in order to give children the undisputed opportunities and benefits that music brings, halting the idea of music as elitist.

We are heartened that the 'Successful Futures' review shows that Welsh Government is putting the rights of the child at the heart of the curriculum. We hope that this will be extended to include putting instrumental lessons at

the heart of learning, allowing each child to discover their talents and develop their potential to the full, regardless of background or postcode.

Whilst we see merit in the Lead Creative Schools scheme, this would be additional to, not a substitute for a sustained, continuous progressive and positive experience of instrumental learning to ensure the future of Wales as a musical nation. The benefits of music are closely aligned with the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, as identified in the 'Wales we want' conversation. We ask that action be taken now to safeguard the future of youth music and make a real difference to the future of Wales.

We hope that our petition will be taken forward and look forward to assisting in any way we can.

Yours sincerely,

Jeff Ryan

Lead petitioner

Friends of Bridgend Youth Music

Agenda Item 2.2

P-04-624 That Foster Carers be Permitted to be Registered with More Than One Local Authority

Petition wording

We, the undersigned, believe that the National Assembly for Wales should ask the Welsh Government to take the following actions to support foster carers:

That foster carers be permitted to be registered with more than one Local Authority , to reduce the money spent unnecessarily by LAs to Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA).

This would enable foster carers who are not being fully utilized by their Local Authority, and have empty rooms i.e. they may be registered to care for two Looked After Children but have only one in placement, to provide places for children from adjoining local authorities where there may be an excess of children coming into Social Services to be Looked After:- this is where the mismatch of funding occurs - whereby if there is no place available with FCs, the LA will outsource the placement to an IFA.

Additional Information

In view of the Williams report, when Councils merge any FCs with availability for space will become available to their adjoining LA, if they were registered to do so. Initial savings ahead of the implementation of local authority mergers a "Dual LA Registration" would further cut costs, and allow for cost effective, quality care for Looked After Children coming into the Care System. For example, if Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen implemented a FCs Dual Registration, it would mean that any child coming in to be Looked After would have double the pool of FCs to be matched with (skills, availability, current placements, ability to transport to school are all part of the matching process), thereby elimination the need for the far more costly use of IFAs.

Lead petitioner: John Watkins

First considered by the Committee:

Number of signatures: 159 online signatures.



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-624
Ein cyf/Our ref MD/00792/15

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

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

31 May 2015

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 26 February, seeking my views about the petition raised by John Watkins.

I agree with the petitioners that we need to increase the number of potential foster placements available to each local authority in Wales, and to ensure that the fostering services run by local authorities operate at the optimum level. Foster care accounts for more than three-quarters of placements of looked after children in Wales, and the rise in demand for placements is growing at a faster rate than the increase in foster carers.

There are particular problems in finding suitable matches for children in those authorities with high numbers of looked after children. A focus on prevention, early intervention and family support services should help ease the pressure in the longer term, enabling more children and young people to remain with their families or in kinship care arrangements. However, there is a recognisable need to do things differently and to explore more collaborative approaches between local authorities, as well as with the voluntary and private sectors.

Our Sustainable Social Services programme, launched in 2011, set out a vision for transforming the way social services are delivered in Wales. It acknowledged that delivering all aspects of social services on a local authority basis – doing everything 22 times – was no longer sustainable. This has led to the development of regional improvement collaboratives, to explore options for strategic planning, commissioning and procurement of services.

The legislation we have introduced as part of Sustainable Social Services will also put in place a new legislative framework for fostering services. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act will come into force in April 2016, and over the summer we will be consulting on draft regulations and a code of practice on Part 6 of the Act. This deals with looked after and accommodated children, including foster placements. In February, we published a Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Bill, which will introduce changes to reform the regulatory regime for care and support services, including fostering agencies.

It is within this context that we are exploring, with the Association of Directors of Social Services Wales, the Welsh Local Government Association, and the Fostering Network, what changes might be needed to the way fostering services are provided in Wales to deliver better outcomes for looked after children and foster carers. Some regions are already exploring how to deliver some aspects of fostering services on a regional basis (for example, around recruitment). Also, some neighbouring authorities already talk to each other about fostering vacancies. We want to build on this work and develop a more strategic and integrated approach to fostering across Wales.

The suggestion made by the petitioners, that foster carers be permitted to be registered with more than one local authority, is an interesting one, and certainly worth exploring as we take this work forward. There are practical issues that we would need to consider, such as the management oversight and supervision of foster carers who are registered with more than one local authority, and I would need to take advice from the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales on this. However, these are the kinds of issues we can discuss further as we develop our new approach.

Best wishes,
Mark.

Mark Drakeford AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

Agenda Item 2.3

P-04-636 Statutory Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) for all schools and educational establishments in Wales

Petition wording:

We ask the Welsh Government to make SRE a statutory subject in the curriculum for all schools and educational establishments in Wales. We submit this petition on behalf of the ABFABB project's service users and the Bridgend LGBT Forum. SRE is currently delivered as part of Personal and Social Education (PSE). Delivery is inconsistent and often non-inclusive of LGBT relationships. Evidence shows that 85% of young people are not taught the biological and physical aspects of same-sex relationships, while only 22% discussed LGB issues in SRE classes (Stonewall Cymru, 2012). Inclusive SRE allows a greater awareness of different families, relationships and feelings. It ultimately contributes to combat homophobic, transphobic and biphobic bullying and language in schools. It also favours a more transparent working environment for teachers and all staff.

Inclusive delivery can only be achieved if SRE is granted statutory status across Wales. We propose that a statutory status should allow for:

- A compulsory element to the subject which will ensure implementation.
- An inclusive, age-appropriate delivery with set learning expectation for each progression step.
- A comprehensive training programme for teachers and all staff.
- Information on both sexuality and gender identity; although these are distinct from one another, awareness of all positive relationships from an early age will benefit all children, regardless of identity or sexuality.

Petition raised by: Cristina Lepri

Date petition first considered by Committee:

Number of signatures: 152 Online signatures



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-636
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/00875/15

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

19 May 2015

Dear William

Thank you for your letter of 11 May on behalf of the Petitions Committee seeking my views on the inclusiveness of sex and relationship education in schools.

The Welsh Government recognises that sex education is an important part of growing up and that all young people need to understand the physical and emotional aspects of sexual relationships and clearly, schools play a central role in providing this. Since 2008, Sex and Relationship education (SRE) has been a statutory part of the curriculum in Wales.

Primary schools must provide sex education as contained within the national curriculum in Wales, for example in the science subject order. Primary schools can provide a broader SRE programme but whether they do so is at the discretion of the school's governing body. Whether or not schools decide to deliver a broader SRE, they must have in place a SRE policy that is accessible by parents and carers.

In secondary schools and other settings that cater for learners of secondary school age, sex education forms part of the basic curriculum for all registered pupils at maintained schools who are of compulsory school age.

SRE programmes must be relevant to learners and sensitive to their needs. Equally it is important that young people recognise diversity and show respect for others regardless of their sexual orientation. Therefore I would expect that teachers should deal with matters of sexual identity or sexual orientation honestly, sensitively and in a non-discriminatory way, providing factual information.

Some parents/carers might have concerns about the inclusion of sexual identity and sexual orientation within a SRE programme and how these are taught in schools. Equally, some parents/carers may find it difficult to accept their children's emerging sexuality. Schools should liaise closely with parents/carers when developing their sex education policy to reassure them of the content of the SRE programme and the context in which it will be presented.

In his report, 'Successful Futures' Professor Donaldson has recognised the integral role that health and wellbeing, including sex and relationship education, plays in enabling learners to make positive, informed life choices and understand and respect the choices made by others.

Following the publication of the report, I launched a 'Great Debate' for people across Wales to consider whether the vision and purposes of education suggested in the report are right for our children and young people. Though the first phase of the Great Debate reached its conclusion on 8 May, there will be further opportunities for stakeholders to engage with the development of the new curriculum as work progresses.

I will be responding formally to Successful Futures later in the summer.

Finally, in October 2011, the Welsh Government published 'Respecting Others', a suite of comprehensive anti-bullying guidance covering 5 key areas – bullying on the basis of race, culture and religion; sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying; homophobic bullying; bullying involving pupils with SEN and disabilities; and cyber-bullying.

We are currently developing lesson plans on gender and transgender-based bullying which we will be publishing in the summer.

Yours sincerely



Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills

Dear

Mr. William Powell AM (Chair)

Mr. Russell George AM

Ms. Bethan Jenkins AM

Ms. Joyce Watson AM

10/06/2015

REF.: P-04-636 Statutory Sex and Relationships Education (SRE)

I am writing in response to the letter from Mr. Huw Lewis AM, Minister for Education and Skills, which was forwarded to us on Thursday 4th June 2015.

We understand and acknowledge the efforts and the work that has been undertaken to make the school curriculum in Wales relevant and fit to prepare young people for the challenges ahead. We also acknowledge the commitment already shown to equality, especially in passing recent legislation that will allow for further work to be delivered in schools. However, we feel that this issue has been addressed with a 'majority view' in mind, and believe that it is the responsibility of the Welsh people to bring the needs of the minority to attention. For this reason, please let us address the different points raised in the letter in turn.

Primary Schools

The current policy regulating Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) delivery in primary schools fails both children with same-sex parents and those children that indeed start to identify in those early years of life, insofar that their family environments are not recognized and acknowledged. Recent research shows that only 33% of primary teachers have addressed family relationships that include same-sex parents, while 37% say their school does not allow them to teach LGBT issues (*The Teacher's Report*, Stonewall Cymru). This exacerbates the feeling of difference and undermines the principles of respect and equality the current system is based upon.

Although the Minister rightly states that primary schools must have an SRE policy and that it must be accessible to parents, this still leaves LGBT children and parents with no guarantee that the policy will be used in practice to its full extent. A statement of commitment to equality, as seen from the research mentioned above, does not automatically produce a delivery inclusive of LGBT families, especially if the teachers have no experience of the issues and/or have not had specific training.

Secondary Schools

In Key Stages 3, 4 and 5, delivery includes information about Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STIs), HIV and how young people can keep themselves safe and healthy. Despite this, recent research shows that 75% of those young people have not received any information about the biological and physical aspects of same sex relationships in SRE classes (NAT, 2015). This is confirmed in Stonewall Cymru research (2012), which gives a value of '*more than four in five*'. This situation leaves children and young people open to mis-information and confusion and at risk of potentially dangerous consequences for their health. We believe the school environment to be an appropriate and safe vehicle for that information to be delivered but, under the current system, children and young people who identify as LGBT are effectively denied that right.

Parents/carers

We are mindful of the concerns of parents/carers and the difficulties and worry some might experience regarding their children's sexual orientation/gender identity or indeed the type of information their children are exposed to. We also respect the right of parents/carers to make decisions about their own children's education and their right to withdraw their children from SRE classes. However, the way to reassure them and deliver quality information is not to leave decisions to individual primary schools, or leave LGBT issues out of the curriculum completely, as this creates a 'post code lottery' system as to how and what the children are going to be taught.

The way to reassure parents/carers – including LGBT families – is to provide a curriculum that is inclusive and relevant, consistent across Wales and delivered within an age-appropriate framework by properly trained teachers who are equipped to do their job well. We believe this can only be achieved if a compulsory element in the

contents of the curriculum is introduced that will in turn guarantee uniform standards across Wales.

Inclusive SRE is not about teaching children and young people about subjects that are inappropriate for their age or understanding, but it is about teaching them respect and equality in a way that reflects the realities of the society they live in. We believe that the word 'sex' in SRE may be the barrier, and we understand the subject to be Relationship Education, within which 'sex' can gradually take its place as and when it becomes relevant to the young people's life. Let us also make clear that when we talk of a compulsory element in provision, we do not refer to forcing children and young people into classes they or their families don't agree with, but rather a compulsory duty on the school to provide inclusive SRE, in line with the current legislation.

The curriculum review

We recognize the importance of the curriculum review (*'Successful Futures'*) and the new *Violence against women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Bill* as vehicles to deliver inclusive SRE. The latter in particular establishes a training framework for schools that could be shared and utilised further. Our concern is that relevant LGBT issues should be part of that training package and are willing to work with other stakeholders to ensure this is the case. NAT (2015) also recommends a statutory requirement for SRE in primary and secondary schools and calls for the current guidance to be updated to include LGBT relationships and issues.

In regard to The Minister's comment about a 'Great Debate' we would be thankful if information could be provided to us on the outcomes of that debate (albeit we understand these are partial ones) and we would ask to be involved as stakeholders in the next stages of discussion.

We would also like to make clear that, as part of the drive to inclusive SRE we are proposing to address both sexuality and gender identity, as we believe that, although these are separate issues, awareness of all types of positive relationships at the earliest opportunity will be beneficial and relevant to all children, regardless of how they identify themselves. In 2013/14, 19 people from Wales attended the Tavistock and Portman Clinic in London for gender identity assessment and support; in general, the clinic has seen a +50% increase in referrals every year since 2009 (BBC, 2015).

We also appreciate the importance of the '*Respecting others*' guidance as a resource against bullying, but will reaffirm the necessity of having monitoring systems in place to measure the effectiveness of such guidance in practical terms and the actual difference it has made to LGBT children, young people and families. Research states that '*Only 27 per cent primary school staff in Wales say their school has a policy that addresses homophobic bullying (53% in secondary schools). 90 per cent primary school staff in Wales have not received any specific training on how to tackle homophobic bullying (79% in secondary schools)*' (Stonewall Cymru).

Also, please let us refer you to an opinion poll dated 17/02/2015; when the public was asked the question 'Should primary school children receive compulsory sex education lessons?' 86% of respondents voted yes while 14% were against.

Lastly, we would like to reiterate that we now have a once-in-a-generation chance to deliver a truly remarkable curriculum that ensures that all children and young people in Wales are prepared for adult life. We urge you, the Members and the Committee Members not to let this chance pass by. Thank you for your time and support.



Yours sincerely

On behalf of ABFABB's participants and the Bridgend LGBT Forum

Cristina Lepri
ABFABB
Project Co-ordinator
46-48 Dunraven Place
Bridgend
CF31 1JB
Tel.: 01656 647601
Mob.: 07763 907532
www.abfabb.org.uk

Research

The Teacher Report, Stonewall Cymru

The School's Report, Stonewall Cymru, 2012

Boys who like Boys, National AIDS Trust (NAT), 2015

'Sex and relationship education for children in Wales isn't fit for the 21st century': Calls made for compulsory lessons in the subject for primary school children, Walesonline.co.uk, 17th February 2015

Referrals for young transgender people increase, BBC, 5th February 2015.

Agenda Item 2.4

P-04-638 Emergency Services – Power of Entry

Petition wording:

To seek the provision of a legislative power of entry for the Ambulance Service, which would allow its employees, when acting in the lawful execution of their duty, to force entry to property for the purpose of saving life and limb.

Additional Information

Under current legislation, the Fire Service may force entry to property under section 44 Fire and Rescue Services Act and the Police likewise under Section 17 Police & Criminal Evidence Act. The Ambulance Service does not have the protection of such legislation and, for example, may attend an emergency call only to find a casualty lying on the floor of a secure premise. The Ambulance Service must then request Police attendance to exercise its power of entry under Section 17 PACE. This position extends the time before assistance can be offered to the casualty and is a injudicious use of public resources.

Petition raised by: Mr Fran Richley

Date petition first considered by Committee: 16 June 2015

Number of signatures: 67 Online signatures

Vaughan Gething AC / AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Iechyd
Deputy Minister for Health



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-638
Ein cyf/Our ref VG/00431/15

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

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

2 June 2015

Dear William

Thank you for your letter of 11 May on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding petition P-04-638 which calls for the provision of a legislative power of entry for the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust.

This is not a matter which has previously been raised by any professional body and there is currently no intention to consider creating a power of entry for Welsh ambulance staff.

I hope the committee find my response helpful.

Yours sincerely

Vaughan Gething AC / AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Iechyd
Deputy Minister for Health

P-04-638 Emergency Services – Power of Entry – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 04.06.15

Objective

To seek the provision of a legislative power of entry for the Ambulance Service, which would allow its employees, when acting in the lawful execution of their duty, to force entry to property for the purpose of saving life and limb.

1 – An Unusual Omission

I have raised this petition in my capacity as a retired Gwent Police Inspector and a former Police Officer with 26 years of policing experience. I believe that the overview I initially provided to the National Assembly Petitions Committee outlines the current position and the reason why I have chosen to raise the matter.

Under current legislation, the Fire Service may force entry to property under Section 44 Fire & Rescue Services Act and the Police likewise under Section 17 Police & Criminal Evidence Act. In view of the essential work carried out by *all* of the primary Emergency Services, it seems strange to have omitted the Ambulance Service from this legal power and it is my submission that legislation should be amended to include this Service too.

Most importantly, the current position potentially extends the time before medical assistance can be offered to a casualty. The Ambulance Service having to wait for Police attendance could also, in certain circumstances, amount to an injudicious use of public resources.

2 – Current Practice by Ambulance Staff

Having made enquiries with the Ambulance Service NHS Trust Headquarters (Duty Manager) a few weeks ago, I am aware that, currently, one of two things happen in such circumstances: –

!) Ambulance staff contact the Police and await their arrival, whereupon the Police force entry on their behalf. – Whilst the Emergency Services have strict response time targets for answering emergency calls, such targets are not always achieved. Furthermore, in terms of medical aid, surely there should

never be a circumstance where the critical 'Golden Hour' may be eaten into simply due to Ambulance staff having to wait for the Police to arrive and force entry?

2) The Ambulance staff take it upon themselves to force entry without any protection from such primary legislation as afforded to the Police and Fire Service. – By adopting this, understandable but questionable, approach, Ambulance staff are leaving themselves open to criticism or even potentially, civil litigation. Surely it is unfair to put them in this difficult position?

3 – Public Awareness

I have spoken to many members of the public about this matter over the last few weeks and the majority were of the misguided opinion that the Ambulance Service already had a power of entry. With this in mind, I believe that a more widespread canvassing of public opinion on this proposal by the National Assembly would find widespread support for the suggested amendment.

4 – The Deputy Minister for Health response

I appreciate the comments made by the Deputy Minister for Health, Vaughan Gething AC / AM and, in the bigger scheme of operational demands, I am not at all surprised that the matter has not previously been raised by such professional bodies. I would submit that, at the very least, the proposal is worthy of wider discussion with all of the Emergency Services lead by the National Assembly.

If there is currently no intention to consider creating a power of entry for the Ambulance Service I would also simply ask the Petitions Committee to consider the simple question; why not? Surely this is a reasonable, proportionate and relatively straight forward amendment to the current position?

5 – A lack of support for the e-petition

Although I raised the petition, I have not had the time to drive any kind of campaign for signatures and accept that the number of signatures on the e-petition is low. I would however refer back to my comments at point 3 above about public awareness in answer to this.

I also I fully accept that the occasions where the circumstance I have outlined are likely to be very few. However, this does not mean that the amendment is unworthy of consideration.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

P-04-639 Save Further Education in Powys

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to reconsider the funding cuts that have been made to the NPTC group of colleges and to ensure that the educational futures of the students are safe.

We are students in NPTC Group, Newtown Campus. The Welsh Government have given NPTC group of colleges 12% less money for the next academic year, which equates to approximately £4 million. This means we have lost 50% of our part time courses and 80% of staff have been made redundant. This also means that the teaching we receive on a full-time course will be cut by 50 hours putting strain on the students and the staff. Many of our students depend on college to keep them going and without it we would have little hope and opportunities for the future. The mature students would have to pay an estimate of £400 to attend college which provides a great future for them rather than relying on the benefit system. These cuts are going to make it impossible for some people to make a future for themselves.

Additional Information

In Powys there aren't many job opportunities, and going to college provides the knowledge, skills and experience needed to get a job or progress to university. A levels are not suitable for everyone. We need plumbers, hairdressers, carers, bricklayers etc to ensure the economy of Mid Wales is sustainable and can grow. We need your help to ensure our futures and yours.

Petition raised by: NPTC Group Students

Date petition first considered by Committee: 16 June 2015

Number of signatures: 1,673 Online signatures

Julie James AC / AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Sgiliau a Thechnoleg
Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-639
Ein cyf/Our ref JJ/00345/15

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

Dear William

20 May 2015

Thank you for your letter of 11 May to Huw Lewis AM on the petition you have received regarding Saving Further Education in Powys. As this falls within my portfolio I am replying to the concerns that have been raised.

Following discussions with NPTC Group of Colleges I would like to highlight a number of inaccuracies that have been stated in the petition:

- The actual Welsh Government cut in their budget was £3.6 million not £4 million;
- Not all “part time courses” have been cut. NPTC Group have received a reduction of £262, 255 in their part time funding for 2015/16;
- NPTC Group has entered a 45 day consultation period with staff. The aim is to make cost savings which has resulted in some staff being put “at risk of redundancy”. However, actual numbers are still not known but the figure of 80% is very inaccurate;
- Some learning programmes are at risk of 50 hours reduction but this is still subject to consultation and NPTC Group are looking to increase the use of “blended and e-learning” to ensure learners still receive an appropriate learning experience. This could be an average cut as some programmes would not require the full amount of time allocated due to the size of the qualification; and
- £400 for “Mature Learners “course fees in completely inaccurate. The NPTC Group have made no proposals which would specifically impact on mature students.

As a result of the cuts imposed on Wales by the government at Westminster, the Welsh Government’s budget is around 8% lower in real terms than it was in 2010/11. We have been clear with everyone working in every public service in Wales about the financial challenges this has created.

The Post-16 FE budget has had to be reduced by £14 million. As a consequence, part time provision delivered in Further Education has been the hardest hit, with a 50 per cent reduction in funding. We have striven to protect learners as much as possible, and have protected provision for our 16-19 year olds.

As we work through these difficult times, it is more important than ever that we focus not just on the resources that are available but how we use them to best effect to achieve the best outcomes for young people.

The Welsh Government has statutory duties to provide education for learners up to the age of 18, therefore proposals for cuts to public funding have been designed to protect these learners as much as possible. However, in contrast to previous years, this funding will be subject to a 2.6 per cent efficiency reduction. This is also true for school sixth forms.

We have also protected our most vulnerable learners, so Adult Basic Education (ABE), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and discrete provision for learners with moderate or profound learning difficulties have not been subject to the 50 per cent cut.

It is no small thing to have protected provision for those aged 16-19. We have been able to maintain funding for Traineeships, and are continuing to fund Apprenticeships for those aged 16-24 and Higher Level Apprenticeships. We fought hard in the recent budget settlement to mitigate some of these cuts and we secured an additional £5m funding for additional apprenticeships in 2015-16 and 2016-17.

Mindful that we have to plan for the future and that we will continue to have to make tough decisions about funding priorities into the future, our new Policy Statement on Skills is designed to prioritise funding for learners aged 16-24 as well as ensuring continued support for all-age Higher Apprenticeships. Part of this is a recognition that we simply cannot continue with a situation where the government is the sole source of funding for skills training. Clearly, we will continue to provide support where we can but we need to see employers increasing their level of investment. This long-term challenge requires cultural change but is something which must be tackled if we are to achieve our key goal of a financially sustainable skills system in Wales over the next decade. Our new *Flexible Skills Programme* will receive £3.9 million to support the skills and employment needs of companies that play a strategic role in the economy

Officials are also working on establishing a new Skills Priority Programme to deliver part time high level skills training to employed adults.

We will, therefore, expect both Local Authorities and FE institutions to prioritise their delivery and deliver not only to the 16-18 cohort, but also to maintain their high level skills provision and support for those learners considered most vulnerable.

I must also stress that all Further Education Institutions in Wales are autonomous bodies and it is up to them how they prioritise their provision in line with Welsh Government priorities.

We have striven to protect our young people from the worst of the cuts we have had to endure from Westminster and we will continue doing this over the next few years. We also remain committed to Further Education and officials are working across departments to mitigate some of the damage caused by the reductions in funding and to determine new, and more sustainable, ways of working in the future.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie', written in a cursive style.

Julie James AC / AM

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Sgiliau a Thechnoleg
Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology

Agenda Item 3.1

P-04-346 Free Childcare for 3-4 Year Olds in Wales

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure that free childcare for 3-4 year olds is delivered more flexibly across Wales allowing parents, and in particular working parents, to choose when and where they access the free childcare.

Supporting Information:

All three and four year olds are entitled to 15 hours of free nursery until they reach compulsory school age however many parents living in certain local authority areas in Wales are unable to utilise this free childcare due to the restrictions in place.

For example, parents living in the Vale of Glamorgan are only able to redeem free childcare at nurseries attached to schools and this childcare is split into 2.5 hours a day from Monday to Friday. In Newport Council however parents are offered a wrap around service where by 12.5 hours are available for parents to use against childcare provided in either a nursery school or private nursery setting of their choice. This essentially means that working parents in certain local authority areas who are unable to drop and collect their children for 2.5 hours of childcare a day are being discriminated against and losing out on free childcare whilst parents in other areas are receiving a disproportionate amount of money towards their childcare costs. I would urge the Welsh Government to standardise this system so that parents in all local authority areas can use a wrap around service thus making the free childcare accessible to all including working parents.

Petition raised by: Zelda Smith

Date petition first considered by Committee: 29 November 2011

Number of signatures: 67

Title: Petition P-04-346 Free Childcare for 3-4 Year-Olds in Wales – Update on the Foundation Phase Flexibility Pilot

Introduction

1. This paper provides information and updates the Committee regarding the pilots to improve flexibility in the Foundation Phase for the purpose of the Petition P-04-346: Free Childcare for 3–4 Year-Olds in Wales.

Background

2. In November 2011 the Committee received a petition asking the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure that free childcare for 3–4 year olds is delivered more flexibly across Wales allowing parents, and in particular working parents, to choose when and where they access the free childcare.
3. At a meeting in May 2012 the Committee considered correspondence, in relation to this issue, from the Minister for Education and Skills, the Welsh Local Government Association and the Children’s Commissioner for Wales. The Committee raised further key issues around:
 - a. Variability and flexibility in how local authorities provide the early education offer (Foundation Phase) for 3–4 year-olds and how some children might be disadvantaged if they cannot access the free provision before they reach statutory school age
 - b. The provision of wrap-around childcare to enable children to remain in the same setting for however long the parent needs them to be in care
 - c. Transition from Flying Start provision directly into the Foundation Phase early education entitlement without delay or gaps in provision

Response

4. This paper provides an update on the Foundation Phase Flexibility Pilot which is due to finish at the end of the summer term 2015, with the evaluation report due in January 2016.

Context

Local authority provision of the early education offer (Foundation Phase)

5. All local authorities have a statutory duty in Part 5 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to ensure there is sufficient nursery education in their area. Nursery education is defined as such education as is suitable for those children who have not yet reached compulsory school age. A local authority is also under a duty to review annually the sufficiency of childcare provision in their area. What is

sufficient is not set out in legislation; although local authorities have to have regard to guidance issued by the Welsh Ministers.

6. Local authorities in Wales meet these duties by making a free part-time Foundation Phase early education place available for all children from the term following their third birthday. Local authorities provide a minimum of 10 hours a week for the same number of weeks as a normal school year (about 38 week). Some local authorities including the Vale of Glamorgan and Newport offer more (12.5 hours).
7. In most local authorities early education is provided in schools or in funded nurseries (non-maintained settings). A place can only be provided where the non-maintained setting is approved by the local authority as an early education provider and is registered with CSSIW as a childcare provider.
8. The Foundation Phase statutory guidance for local authorities allows for provision to be organised flexibly based on their assessment of local need. In most local authorities the hours are offered in equal amounts over 4 or 5 days. Our statistics tell us that in Wales, 88% of 3 year-olds and 98% of 4 year-olds are registered in schools for the early education entitlement. There are currently about 660 Foundation Phase funded non-maintained settings approved to offer the early education entitlement and, based on population census figures, there are potentially up to 5,000 places for 3 and 4 year-olds in these settings.

Update

A. Foundation Phase Flexibility Pilot

9. We are currently undertaking a flexibility pilot with four participating local authorities - Carmarthenshire, Denbighshire, Neath Port Talbot and Newport - which is:
 - testing flexibility options across the Foundation Phase
 - identifying issues that may surface for local authorities and settings as a result of greater flexibility
 - considering how those issues can be addressed
 - gaining a better understanding of whether increased flexibility makes a difference to a parents ability to access the Foundation Phase for their child and
 - considering the impact of flexibility on the child

The local authorities will complete the pilots by August 2015 and an evaluation (by WISERD) of the flexibility pilot will report in January 2016. Once this final report has been submitted we will then be able to consider its findings in conjunction with other key reviews, reports and policy areas going forward.

10. At the time of the interim review (January 2015), each of the four participating local authorities have approached piloting the flexibility of the Foundation Phase early education entitlement very differently reflecting their local circumstances, and have provided a mix of provision across rural and urban locations and areas of high deprivation.

11. Flexibility being tested includes:

schools and settings offering sessions either in the morning or afternoon, or combination of both, or across blocks of whole days

one school has set up wrap-around childcare on site which previously did not exist

one rural school has set up a mixed age (nursery and reception) class which previously did not exist

offering the Foundation Phase early education entitlement across:

- i. unsociable hours to accommodate shift working
- ii. a number of settings
- iii. 50 weeks of the year

employing “family link workers” assigned to clusters of schools to encourage (through a range of targeted support) the more hard to reach families in some of Wales’ most deprived areas to take up their Foundation Phase early education entitlement in some of Wales’ most deprived areas, employing advisory teachers to work with non-maintained settings funded to deliver the Foundation Phase early education entitlement – those teachers work with individual children to prepare those children developmentally for their transition into schools. Additionally the advisory teachers provide direct and targeted support, guidance and development for the setting practitioners each week

12. The Foundation Phase Flexibility Pilot will be evaluated to test the effect increased flexibility has on families. The findings, along with those from other reviews and reports, will inform the work of the Foundation Phase Expert Group currently working with Welsh Government to develop a strategic action plan, over the short, medium and longer term. The Group has already recognised that reducing inequalities and improving accessibility have to be key areas of their work.

B. The provision of wrap-around childcare to enable children to remain in the same setting for however long the parent needs them to be in care

13. All Welsh local authorities must secure, as far as is reasonably practicable, childcare for parents who are working or undertaking training. They carry out a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment each year to understand the need for, and supply of, childcare within their area. The assessment helps local authorities to identify where there are gaps

in the market and, in consultation with parents, communities and employers, plan how to support the market to address them.

14. The Family Information Service (FIS) in each local authority provides advice and information on childcare and free early education places in their area. The FIS also provides a range of information, including support that might be available to help parents who are eligible to reduce the costs of childcare, for example through financial assistance and/or child tax credits.
15. We recognise the importance of the issue of wrap-around care in a school or non-maintained setting and are working to address this through the flexibility pilots. For example, in Carmarthenshire, they have set up a fee-paying wrap-around childcare on a schools site. This, from early feedback, is working well and more details will be provided through the evaluation of the flexibility pilots being conducted by WISERD.

C. Flying Start

16. Flying Start was launched in 2006-07. The programme is targeted in some of our most disadvantaged communities and aims to make a decisive difference to the life chances of children under the age of 4 in the areas in which it runs. The core elements are:
 - free, quality, part-time childcare for 2-3 year olds;
 - an enhanced health visiting service (where the health visitor caseload is capped at 110 children);
 - access to parenting support programmes; and
 - support for early language development
17. The childcare element is offered to parents of all eligible 2-3 year olds for 2 ½ hours a day, 5 days a week for 39 weeks. In addition, there is an expectation that local authorities should deliver at least 15 sessions of provision for a Flying Start family during the school holidays. It is available from the term following the child's 2nd birthday, until the term following their 3rd birthday.
18. By the end of Flying Start expansion programme, approximately 25 per cent (or 9,000 children) of the 2 year-old age cohort in Wales will benefit annually from Flying Start childcare. The Strategic Guidance for Flying Start includes an expectation that "the childcare offer should be linked to Foundation Phase entry into schools to ensure a seamless transition between the two offers with no gaps in provision". Flying Start and Foundation Phase officers in local authorities are working together to ensure that this happens.

Agenda Item 3.2

P-04-522 Asbestos in Schools

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to put measures in place to ensure that parents and guardians of children across Wales can easily access information about the presence and management of asbestos in all school buildings.

Given the health risks associated with the presence of asbestos in public buildings, we believe parents and guardians across Wales have the right;

- to know if asbestos is located in their school;
- to know whether, where asbestos is present, it is being managed in line with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012;
- to access that information easily online

Petition raised by: Cenric Clement-Evans

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 10 December 2013

Number of signatures: 448

Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-522
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/00717/15

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

4 June 2015

Dear William

I wrote to you in April, regarding asbestos management in schools.

In that letter I advised you that I would be in a position to respond in full to the key points raised by petitioner Cenric Clement-Evans.

I have since been advised by my officials that due to the complexity of issues around the management of asbestos further work and consideration is required, which means that I am unable at this juncture to respond in full. I apologise that I can not be more definitive at this stage, but assure you that I am committed to securing the most appropriate action for Welsh learners on this matter.

With regards to the question on the provision of information on asbestos, and its management, for individual schools being available for parents and guardians, there are statutory regulations with regards to asbestos management in place including the requirement for there to be asbestos management plans. I cannot see any reason why an individual cannot obtain this information either from the local authority and/or school governing body.

I will seek to update further by August.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Huw Lewis'.

Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
Correspondence.Huw.Lewis@wales.gsi.gov.uk

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

Pack Page 53

Printed on 100% recycled

P-04-522 Asbestos in Schools – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Chair, 11.06.15

Dear Chair,

Firstly I would like again to express my appreciation for the continued consideration of the Petition by the Committee. I would also like to thank the committee for its unanimous support for my call for an Asbestos in Schools Steering Group to assist the Department for Education and Skills as it forms and reviews policy on the issue.

The importance of the issue of Asbestos in Schools was confirmed by the UK Prime Minister no less, on 11 March 2015, at Prime Minister's Questions, in response to a question raised by the then Chair of the Asbestos in Schools group Annette Brooke MP.

"PQ 11th March

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmhansrd/cm150311/debtext/150311-0001.htm#15031163000007>

Annette Brooke (Mid Dorset and North Poole) (LD): Seventy-five per cent. of our schools contain asbestos, more than 20 teachers a year are dying from exposure to asbestos and our children are known to be particularly vulnerable. Will the Prime Minister ensure that the Government publish their completed policy review on asbestos in schools before Dissolution?

11 Mar 2015 : Column 294

The Prime Minister: My right hon. Friend raises a very important issue, which has been well broadcast and covered in the media in the past couple of days. That is why we are carrying out an asbestos review going through all schools. We will publish it in due course, and action will have to be taken."

The review was in fact published on or about 12 March. As can be seen the Prime Minister clearly accepts that it is "a very important issue" and "moreover action will have to be taken". I agree and it is clear that the Committee does so too.

I am grateful also that the Minister for Education and Skills is continuing to review matters. I welcome his continued consideration and wholeheartedly agree that the issues surrounding the management of asbestos are complex. This amplifies the call for a Steering Group to assist with that work now and in the future.

That the issue is complex, is highlighted by the fact that the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman is investigating the Health and Safety Executive investigation into Cwmcarn High School.

While the Minister rightly points out that every school should have an asbestos management plan in place and that local authorities should be able to supply information on asbestos levels in schools, in our experience, this varies enormously from council to council.

Then, once the parent or guardian or the person (e.g. a teacher) working in a school enquires and has the information and the management plan, they are unlikely to be able to assess the risk and make a judgement on the safety of their local school.

This is why I feel, for a public health issue (and make no mistake this is a matter of health as well as education) that can be so hazardous and can have such devastating effects, the Welsh Government needs to take a lead in providing parents and guardians and those working in schools in Wales, including teachers with easy access to information as well as leading national policy on asbestos management.

I am however concerned by the Minister's final paragraph where he states that he will seek to update further by August. This would not appear to be a firm commitment to provide a final response by that date and the Committee has already expressed its own concern earlier this year, that the matter is dragging on.

The petition in its call for transparency has highlighted the fact that the Welsh Government has not accepted responsibility for the issue of asbestos in schools in Wales. The process has also highlighted the need for a Steering Group in Wales to mirror that in England.

At an earlier meeting the Committee discussed the possibility of hearing evidence on the issue and also calling for a plenary debate. I hope that the petition agrees with the UK Prime Minister that "action will have to be taken".

Yours sincerely

Cenric Clement-Evans

Right to Know Asbestos in Schools Wales/ NewLaw Solicitors

11th June 2015

Agenda Item 3.3

P-04-571 Treating Pernicious Anaemia

Petition Wording

We call on the Welsh Government to change the way Pernicious Anaemia is treated away from the current one-size-fits-all format towards a regimen based on the patient's individual needs and where the patient is offered a choice of how he or she receives their replacement therapy B12 including self-administered injections.

Additional Information: The usually prescribed treatment of Pernicious Anaemia is one injection every three months. For a great many patients this is totally inadequate. Some doctors will prescribe more frequent injections but where this isn't the case patients are sourcing B12 injections from various sources including the internet which is unsatisfactory. They then inject themselves without any training and without using antiseptic wipes or lockable sharps bins.

Petition raised by: The Pernicious Anaemia Society

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 15 July 2014

Number of signatures: 126

Mark Drakeford AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref: P-04-571
Ein cyf/Our ref: MD/01359/15

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

21 May 2015

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 23 April requesting the outcome of my letters to Jane Ellison MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary for Public Health, and to Professor David Haslam, chair of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).

No response has been forthcoming from Jane Ellison MP, although my officials have been in contact with their policy colleagues at the Department of Health in an effort to encourage this. My officials have also been pressing for the Department of Health's medicines, pharmacy and industry group to give consideration to encouraging the availability of an appropriate licensed product. Again, we are waiting to hear the outcome of this.

I have received a response from Professor Haslam who has advised that, as the British Committee for Standards in Haematology has published guidance on pernicious anaemia and B12 deficiency, they are unlikely to be asked by the Department of Health to produce alternative guidance. He has said, however, that a published Clinical Knowledge Summary on the topic of anaemia is available at:

<http://cks.nice.org.uk/anaemia-b12-and-folate-deficiency>

Clinical Knowledge Summaries are not developed by NICE but are a collation of all available evidence on a topic. NICE commissions this service to provide practitioners with a readily accessible summary of the current evidence base and best practice in respect of about 330 common and/or significant primary care presentations.

While it will be some time before the next batch of topics for NICE consideration are identified, Professor Haslam has suggested that I consider asking the Department of Health about referring this topic on an exceptional basis. It is my intention to seek advice from the National Specialist Advisory Committee and I would be happy to receive the Petitions Committee's thoughts about this.

Best wishes,

Mark

Mark Drakeford AC/AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

PETITION'S COMMITTEE BRIEFING

BACKGROUND

- Vitamin B₁₂ Deficiency is a worldwide problem.
- In the UK it is estimated that nearly 6 million of the general population are deficient in this essential nutrient.
- The biggest cause of B₁₂ Deficiency is Pernicious Anaemia.
- Patients who have Pernicious Anaemia are unable to absorb Vitamin B₁₂ from food (animal products).
- Vitamin B₁₂ is needed to produce healthy red blood cells that transport oxygen around the body.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Problems with the symptoms:

- The symptoms are insidious and can easily be associated with advancing age – they are often ignored and they include: continual tiredness, lethargy, shortage of breath, changes in behaviour, mood swings, irrational behaviour, memory loss, difficulty with finding the right words for everyday things, desire for solitude, aversion to bright lights and noisy environments, digestive problems, sudden unaccountable bouts of diarrhoea.

Problems with the diagnosis:

- The current test used to determine B₁₂ status in patients gives false high results in up to 35% of cases. This leads to misdiagnosis.
- **The British Committee for Standards in Haematology recently suggested that doctors pay more attention to the patient's symptoms than to the currently used test to determine any deficiency as the test is seriously flawed and not fit for purpose.**

- Common misdiagnoses include: Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Depression, Hypochondria, Multiple Sclerosis (left undiagnosed and untreated PA leads to severe and irreversible nerve damage).
- 21% of our members waited over two years for a correct diagnosis.
- 19% waited over five years.
- 14% waited over ten years to be told the reason for their symptoms.

Problems with the treatment:

- The biggest cause of complaint by members of the PA Society is about their treatment.
- The treatment is extremely cheap (less than 40p) and extremely safe.
- For a great many UK patients the usually prescribed replacement therapy injection once every three months is woefully inadequate. Often it is the patient's family, friends or work colleagues that notice a change in personality or workplace performance as the time from the last treatment progresses.
- In the 1960's replacement therapy injections were prescribed every month, in 1974 that was changed to every two months and then to every three months in 1984. We are unaware of any research that these changes were based on.
- While some doctors will allow more frequent injections most refuse which means the patient has two alternatives. Either they suffer the return of their symptoms which impacts on work and family life, or they obtain more B₁₂ from alternative sources including internet 'pharmacies', beauty therapists, private clinics or travel to mainland Europe where the injections are available from pharmacies – in the UK the injections are available only on prescription.
- There are other ways in which replacement therapy B₁₂ can be delivered including trans-dermal patches, sub-lingual sprays, sub-lingual lozenges, nasal sprays and large dose oral tablets – none of which are available in the NHS. With the exception of the large dose oral tablets none of these alternative delivery methods has been evaluated.

- Left untreated Pernicious Anaemia leads to a slow inevitable death.

WHAT WE WANT FROM YOU

- We want you to be aware of how the problems with the diagnosis and treatment of Pernicious Anaemia could be affecting not only your constituents but also your families and friends.
- We want you to use your influence to help us bring about our main objective.
- We want you to suggest ways in which we can get the issues outlined above addressed.

WHAT WE WANT

Our main objective is to procure a thorough review of the way in which Pernicious Anaemia is diagnosed and treated by a suitably qualified and experienced individual or group.

Thank you for taking the time to read this briefing.

Further information from:

Martyn Hooper – 07545897608/ 01656769717

www.pernicious-anaemia-society.org

The Pernicious Anaemia Society is based in south Wales and has nearly 10,000 members from around the world. It is a registered charity, run entirely by volunteers. Our youngest member is 18 months old and the oldest has just celebrated her 100th birthday.

Agenda Item 3.4

P-04-601 Proposed Ban on the Use of E-Cigarettes in Public Places

Petition wording

We call upon the Welsh Government not to proceed with their proposed ban on the use of e-cigarettes in enclosed public spaces, substantially enclosed public places, and places of work in Wales. This proposal, if implemented, can only lead to fewer people using e-cigarettes and more people smoking cigarettes.

Additional Information:

Already 100,000 people in Wales are using e-cigarettes. These people are smoking fewer or no cigarettes; this should be a cause for celebration, not concern. A recent BBC poll found that 62% of the public opposed a ban on the use of e-cigarettes in public. In Spain where a ban on the use of e-cigarettes in public was introduced, there was a 70% decline in the use of e-cigarettes and a rise in the rate of smoking. We fear the same will happen in Wales if the Welsh Government implements their proposed ban. With a ban on the advertising and promotion of e-cigarettes soon to be introduced, following the passing of the Tobacco Products Directive, where are smokers to find out about e-cigarettes, particularly if they are banned in public places? Smokers need to see people using e-cigarettes in public, they need to be able to go up and speak to e-cigarette users so that they can find out further information and then hopefully make the switch to a safer alternative.

Petitioner: Simon Thurlow

First considered by the Committee: 7 October 2014

Number of Signatures: 1,196 electronic signatures



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-601
Ein cyf/Our ref MD/01345/15

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

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

7 May 2015

Dear William

Thank you for your recent letter on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding petition P-04-601 - Proposed Ban on E-Cigarettes in Enclosed Public Spaces.

I note the comments the petitioner makes with regards to the positions taken by the organisations cited in the correspondence. In particular, the petitioner references the Scottish Government's approach to e-cigarettes. The Scottish Government's analysis of the responses to their recent consultation on 'Electronic Cigarettes and Strengthening Tobacco Control in Scotland' was published on 5 May, and can be found at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/05/7711>

The analysis paper reiterates their position that 'the Scottish Government currently has no plans to legislate and is open-minded on the question of whether to take action on this issue. The consultation paper invited views on whether intervention is required on the use of e-cigarettes in enclosed public spaces and sought suggestions for evidence to be considered when developing future policy in this area.'

The Scottish Government's response to this consultation analysis can be found at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/05/5856/downloads>

As far as public engagement goes, we understand that the round table session on e-cigarettes in the meeting of the Scottish Parliament Health and Sport Committee on 18 November 2014 was organised by the committee themselves who wanted a hearing on e-cigarettes. Whilst it fell during the consultation period the Scottish Government had no role in organising it and it is not classed as part of the formal consultation.

In Wales, we have engaged with the vaping community on the White Paper proposal to restrict the use of e-cigarettes in public places. In addition to the formal consultation response process, a series of three public consultation events across Wales were held during the consultation period which provided an opportunity to discuss all the proposals contained in the White Paper. A range of organisations were also approached with an invitation to attend combined meetings specifically focussed on the tobacco, e-cigarettes and alcohol proposals in the White Paper. These included representatives from the local government sector, health organisations, universities, third sector organisations and industry representatives and meetings were held in Caernarfon and Swansea.

As you are aware, the petitioner met with my officials in January to discuss their concerns. My officials took the opportunity to explain the legislative process and so the petitioner is aware of the opportunities for continuing dialogue on this matter.

We continue to review the evidence on e-cigarettes as it emerges.

Finally, as the First Minister announced on 28 April the Public Health Bill is due to be presented to the National Assembly before summer recess.



Mark Drakeford AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

**Y Pwyllgor Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol
Health and Social Care Committee**

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National
Assembly for
Wales



William Powell AM

Chair, Petitions Committee

12 May 2015

Dear William,

P-04-601 Proposed Ban on the Use of E-Cigarettes in Public Places

Thank you for your letter relating to the above subject, received on 22 April 2015.

You will be aware that the Welsh Government's consultation on the Public Health White Paper asked whether electronic cigarettes should be banned in enclosed and substantially enclosed public and work places. It is anticipated the Welsh Government will introduce a Public Health Bill before the summer recess which may propose primary legislation to implement such a ban.

In response to your letter, subject to the proposed Public Health Bill being referred to the Committee for consideration, and subject to such a ban on the use of electronic cigarettes being proposed in the Bill, the Committee will consider the petition as part of its scrutiny of that Bill.

Yours sincerely,

David Rees AM

Chair, Health and Social Care Committee

Bae Caerdydd
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA
Ffôn / Tel: 0300 200 6354

Pack Page 65

E-bost / Email: Seneddlechyd@Cynulliad.Cymru /
SeneddHealth@Assembly.Wales

Trydar / Twitter: [@seneddiechyd](https://twitter.com/seneddiechyd) / [@seneddhealth](https://twitter.com/seneddhealth)

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg / We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh

William Powell AM
Assembly Member for Mid & West Wales
Chair Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1NA

Dear Mr Powell,

Once again, I would like to thank you and the Petitions Committee for continuing to keep myself and my colleagues at the Save E-cigs campaign informed as to the progress of our petition against the proposed ban on vaping in enclosed public places.

The latest reply from the Health Minister – Mark Drakeford – is again very carefully worded, but is yet another example of how Mr Drakeford is desperately trying to avoid answering the questions placed before him. Despite all of the evidence we have presented throughout the course of this petition, not once has Mr Drakeford made any attempt whatsoever to answer our concerns. From this, one can only assume that he knows his position on e-cigarettes is extremely tenuous and that he holds no evidence to support his position that is capable of standing up to any scrutiny.

I found Mr Drakeford's comments in regard to the Scottish Consultation interesting in that he painted it as supportive of his commitment to banning e-cigarettes in enclosed public spaces. However, Mr Drakeford should be aware that Save E-cigs are also heavily involved in the Scottish Consultation. We regularly speak to the people dealing with the Scottish Consultation, maintaining an ongoing dialogue, and so we are far more informed than he realises.

I would also suggest that Mr Drakeford should read the Scottish Consultation results very carefully. If he had done so, he would have noticed that when you get to Point 25 – e-cigarettes in Public Spaces, NOTHING is proposed. This means quite simply, there are NO PROPOSALS ON THIS ISSUE.

I would also draw Mr Drakeford's attention to page 18 of the original consultation document on eCigarettes in Scotland (<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0046/00460513.pdf>) which said:

"While we are clear that there are no plans to legislate at this time, we would like to invite views, suggestions and evidence that you think should be considered for longer term policy development"

So the Scottish Consultation did include questions on the use of e-cigarettes in enclosed public spaces, but the Scottish Government's position HAS NOT CHANGED since the consultation was launched. There are no current plans to include any new regulations on vaping in enclosed public spaces in the new legislation in Scotland that will be introduced later this year, and is expected to be passed before the end of February 2016.

I am also aware from discussions with senior colleagues in Scotland that there are no plans to legislate on vaping in public enclosed spaces in Scotland. There are other measures included, but a ban on vaping in enclosed public spaces is NOT one of them.

Mr Drakeford also states that there were three public consultations held in different venues across Wales which provided an opportunity to discuss all the proposals contained in the White Paper. However, those consultations were insufficient in the amount of time allocated. I have spoken to many people who attended those consultations and every one of them expressed frustration that not enough time was allocated to discuss the issues properly.

A proper consultation is one where the opposing views are fully explored. There is a big difference between talking to vapers and LISTENING to vapers. We have attempted to engage Mr Drakeford and his deputy - Vaughan Gething - on numerous occasions without success. Neither of these gentlemen were present at the consultations around Wales to discuss the legislation that they want to introduce.

Furthermore, you will be aware of the recent Cancer Research UK event on e-cigarettes that took place in Ty Hywel. I saw plenty of AM's in attendance from all parties. I also spoke to staff of AM's who had been sent there to make notes on the emerging evidence. The Chairman of the HSCC (David Rees AM) personally attended (I spoke to him there). However, neither Mark Drakeford nor Vaughan Gething was in attendance. I would have thought that an expert talk on such a subject they are working on closely would have been of interest to them. This really does cause us concern. As I have written, Mark Drakeford and his team continually fail to respond to the huge amounts of evidence we provide them, now they are even refusing to listen to independent experts who have taken the time to travel to Wales to address AMs.

Also of grave concern is how Mr Drakeford's own staff misrepresent the science. I am of course referring to the very public comments made Dr Ruth Hussey - The CMO for Wales - on national television recently.

The Save eCigs campaign wrote to Dr Hussey on this subject

<https://saveecigs.wordpress.com/2015/04/20/open-letter-to-chief-medical-officer-wales/>

To Dr Hussey's credit she took the time to reply:
<https://saveecigs.wordpress.com/2015/04/27/a-reply-from-the-chief-medical-officer-for-wales-dr-ruth-hussey/>

The most interesting part of her reply was: *"I recognise that this and other studies show regular e-cigarette use among young people is largely limited to current and ex-smokers at present. These studies also show that regular use of e-cigarettes, as currently defined, is limited to a small number of young people."*

That statement in itself completely undermines one of Mr Drakeford's key arguments in support of his plans.

As a campaign we make no apologies for maintaining that Mr Drakeford continually fails to address the evidence we are placing before him, nor the fact that his position on this subject has not changed despite the growing evidence in support of our position rather than his. This evidence is independent and credible and comes from institutions like University College London, Cardiff University, Queen Mary University, and Cancer Research UK to name but a few.

Perhaps I am naïve, but I thought all policy was supposed to be evidence based and that policy proposals would change as new evidence emerges? Why will Mark Drakeford not sit down with independent experts and debate this issue? If he is so convinced of his position he should relish the chance to argue his position with independent scientists, professors, and doctors.

With Mr Drakeford continuing to behave as he does, we as a campaign have only one route with which to try and challenge this and that is the Petitions process. There are thousands of vapers across Wales who are very worried by Mr Drakeford's proposal. Like us, they too are relying on your committee holding Mr Drakeford accountable for his actions in this area. To date we have been overwhelmed by the interest taken in our petition and by the support your committee has given us. We hope that this will continue going forward.

The key fact that remains from all of this is that the Welsh Government has failed to provide any independent evidence to support their position and have failed to respond to the significant amount of evidence that we have presented to them.

Yours sincerely

Simon Thurlow

On behalf of the Save E-cigs Campaign

P-04-603 Helping Babies Born at 22 Weeks to Survive.

Petition wording

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

- change the guidelines so that babies born after 22 weeks and who show signs of life are given appropriate medical care; and
- In changing these guidelines ensure that they include a guarantee that a Paediatrician will review and weigh every baby born after 22 weeks who shows signs of life immediately after their birth so that parents and clinicians can make informed decisions based on the individual baby's chance of survival.

Petitioner : Emma Jones

First considered by the Committee: 25 November 2014

Number of Signatures: 2,543 electronic signatures and 216 paper signatures collected. Total: 2,759

Mark Drakeford AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-603
Ein cyf/Our ref MD/01358/15

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

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

21 May 2015

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 23 April regarding Petition P-04-0603 'Helping Babies to Survive at 22 weeks'.

It remains the case that, despite medical advances, the care of extremely preterm babies is very challenging. Health boards follow guidance from both the British Association of Perinatal Medicine and the Nuffield Council. The current guidance does not prohibit resuscitation of babies at any age, but the guidance reflects the sad reality that babies born under 23 weeks have very low chances of survival.

Whilst the care of the mother and her baby will always need to be individualised, current guidance suggests that it would be standard practice for resuscitation not to be carried out under 23 weeks, considering the overall long-term best interests of the baby.

Following our previous correspondence, Ms Emma Jones took up the offer of a meeting with my officials Heather Payne, senior medical officer for maternal and child health, and Edward Rees, head of obesity prevention and children's health. The meeting was very positive and my officials have already taken forward Ms Jones' helpful suggestions about what parents want from clinicians when they experience such a sad situation.

The all-Wales neonatal and maternity networks were asked to undertake a piece of work on this topic.

They have drafted clinical guidelines and a patient information leaflet for use in decisions about the resuscitation of babies at the clinical limits of viability, the situation Ms Jones faced with her son. These documents are undergoing joint review by all the relevant groups, professional and service user and Ms Jones will be approached to share her views on the material. The networks envisage finalising these documents ready for dissemination and use throughout Wales following their executive meetings in July 2015.

I hope you and Ms Jones will feel this is a practical and constructive response.

Best wishes,
Mark.

Mark Drakeford AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

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

Ysbyty Athrofaol Cymru
University Hospital of Wales
UHB Headquarters

Heath Park
Cardiff, CF14 4XW

Parc Y Mynydd Bychan
Caerdydd, CF14 4XW

Eich cyf/Your ref: P-04-603
Ein cyf/Our ref: AC-jb-05-4783
Welsh Health Telephone Network:
Direct Line/Llinell uniongychol: 02920 745681

Professor Adam Cairns
Chief Executive

11 May 2015

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

Dear Mr Powell

Petition P-04-603 - Helping Babies Born at 22 Weeks to Survive

Thank you for your letter of 23 April 2015 in relation to the above petition. You requested that we let you know what lessons Cardiff and Vale University Health Board has learned from this case and how it intends to apply these lessons more widely.

I can confirm that the maternity service has completed a number of actions to ensure that:

- 1 E J has received the care she requires for planning next pregnancy
- 2 That wider lessons are learned and shared with colleagues across Wales.

1 Care and support for E

E has been reviewed within the service by the Clinical Director for Obstetrics and plans for management of subsequent pregnancies put in place. A named point of contact for E has been identified and E has been given appropriate telephone contact numbers and has been in touch with the consultant midwife for maternity services to ensure that E has ongoing support.

2 Wider organisational learning

- Cardiff and Vale University Health Board's guideline 'Diagnosis of Pre-Term Labour using Fetal Fibronectin' includes recommendations for management of fetuses and newborn infants at the threshold of viability. This framework for practice supports multi-disciplinary team involvement with a neonatologist to be present before and at the time of birth (>22/40) to assess whether the baby meets the criteria for resuscitation. This is in line with guidance developed by the British Association of Perinatal Medicine (2008). The current maternity services guidance is due to be renewed and a multi-disciplinary team

approach has been convened including neonatal representation to ensure that this is completed as soon as possible.

- E has been invited to work with the maternity service to review advice, information and support given to families following the death of a child that breathes.
- The maternity service is exploring the possibility of appointing a named midwife for bereavement who will work in partnership with E and other with members of the public to ensure that information and advice is reviewed and updated.
- An All Wales approach to developing guidelines for extreme prematurity has commenced. This workstream will also include the development for parent information leaflets. A meeting for members of the All Wales Neonatal and Maternity Network was held on Wednesday 8th April 2015 at the Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend. Actions from this meeting were to ensure that the draft parent information leaflets and guideline for extreme prematurity were shared widely for consultation and comments including seeking parental opinion. A further action for the group is to produce guidance to optimise communication and management for delivery at 22 and 23 weeks gestation for neonatal / paediatric personnel as well as obstetric / maternity professionals.
- The Head of Midwifery has planned to meet with the All Wales Maternity Network Manager on 14 May 2015 to discuss management of very premature babies as part of joint work between neonatal and maternity services across Wales and to ensure that in order to share learning widely, Cardiff and Vale are represented within the group.

Yours sincerely



Professor Adam Cairns
Chief Executive

Enc

Briefing Paper Maternity Services Action Plan – E J

Situation

A meeting was held between E J and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board. At this meeting, the Health Board agreed to undertake a number of actions in response to the concerns raised by E in relation to the death of her son R who was born at 22 weeks gestation.

Background

E gave birth to baby R at University Hospital of Wales in December 2012. Her baby was very premature at 22+ weeks gestation however showed signs of life and was breathing unaided at birth. R was not offered resuscitation or support after birth. R lived for 93 minutes.

Assessment

The Health Board has offered E an apology and has recognised that there are lessons to be learned as it appears that both national and local guidance was not followed; E and her partner did not receive any counselling from members of the multi-disciplinary team regarding R's life chances or subsequent management at birth. Maternity services were given clear actions to complete as outlined below.

Recommendations

- 1. Notes of the meeting were to be circulated by concerns team manager.**
This action has been completed.
- 2. Clinical Director Mr A Griffiths was to be briefed regarding future pregnancy care planning for E**
Mr Griffiths met with E on 27th March 2015, E also attended Gynaecology clinic on 27th April 2015.
- 3. To write a new protocol on the response and actions required for preparing for the birth of a very premature baby less than 23 weeks that is healthy. The protocol is to be developed in partnership with E and key members of the multi-disciplinary team.**
Cardiff and Vale University Health Board's guideline 'Diagnosis of Pre-Term Labour using Fetal Fibronectin' includes recommendations for management of fetuses and newborn infants at the threshold of viability. This framework for practice supports multi-disciplinary team involvement with a neonatologist to be present before and at the time of birth (>22/40) to assess whether the baby meets the criteria for resuscitation. This is in line with guidance developed by the British Association of Perinatal Medicine (2008). The current maternity services guidance is due to be renewed and a multi-disciplinary team approach has been convened including neonatal representation to ensure that this is completed as soon as possible.

4. Arrangements to be put in place for a midwife to be assigned to E. Clinical Director Mr A Griffiths will act as care co-ordinator for E

Consultant Midwife Karen Jewell is the named point of contact for E. Should E let us know that she is pregnant in the future, a named midwife and consultant obstetrician will be immediately identified and a clear plan of care put into place in partnership with E.

5. A review of the advice, information and support given to families on the death of a child that breathes should be reviewed and updated.

Consultant Midwife Karen Jewell has met with E to discuss postnatal care and information. The maternity service is exploring the possibility of appointing a named midwife for bereavement who will work in partnership with E and other with members of the public to ensure that information and advice is reviewed and updated. The Head of Midwifery has planned to meet with Maternity Network Manager Claire Roche on May 14th 2015 to discuss management of very premature babies as part of joint work between neonatal and maternity services across Wales.

Suzanne Hardacre
Head of Midwifery
1st May 2015

**Y Pwyllgor Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol
Health and Social Care Committee**

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National
Assembly for
Wales



William Powell AM

Chair, Petitions Committee

27 May 2015

Dear William,

Petition P-04-603 Helping babies born at 22 weeks to survive

Thank you for your letter relating to the above subject, received on 23 April 2015.

The Health and Social Care Committee (“the Committee”) is grateful to you for drawing this matter to its attention, and to Emma Jones for submitting a petition on this important subject. The Committee notes the correspondence that you have had on this issue, particularly the most recent letter you have received from the Minister.

In his letter, the Minister notes that decisions on whether medical assistance should be given to babies born alive and breathing before 23 weeks is both difficult and nuanced, and that they are best made by clinicians in discussions with parents. Your letter notes that while you agree with this general point, you do not necessarily believe that current guidelines strike the right balance or that they should not be subject to public scrutiny.

The Committee considered your request that it undertake an inquiry on this petition at its meeting on 13 May 2015. While committee members acknowledged the significant and sensitive subject to which the petition relates, you will be aware that the Committee has a heavy legislative workload at the moment. Unfortunately, this means that its programme is likely to be

Bae Caerdydd
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Ffôn / Tel: 0300 200 6354

E-bost / Email: Seneddlechyd@Cynulliad.Cymru/
SeneddHealth@Assembly.Wales

Trydar / Twitter: [@seneddiechyd](https://twitter.com/seneddiechyd) / [@seneddhealth](https://twitter.com/seneddhealth)

Pack Page 76

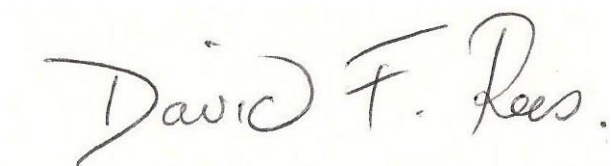
Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg / We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh

full for a significant amount of this calendar year and would not allow the time that is necessary to give this complex matter the consideration it requires. Nevertheless, the Committee agreed to:

- seek written clarification from the Chief Medical Officer about her expectations of individual hospitals' application of professional guidance for the treatment and care of extremely premature babies;
- reflect on the CMO's response, and options for future scrutiny of this topic, when it considers its forward work programme later this year.

I attach a copy of the Committee's letter to the Chief Medical Officer for your awareness, and will share her response once received.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David F. Rees." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'D' and 'R'.

David Rees AM

Chair, Health and Social Care Committee

**Y Pwyllgor Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol
Health and Social Care Committee**

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National
Assembly for
Wales



Dr Ruth Hussey OBE
Chief Medical Officer

27 May 2015

Dear Ruth,

Petition P-04-603 Helping babies born at 22 weeks to survive

The Health and Social Care Committee (“the Committee”) has received correspondence from the National Assembly’s Petitions Committee regarding the above subject. Background information relating to the petition, including correspondence between the Petitions Committee, the petitioner, and the Minister for Health and Social Services, is available on the Committee’s [website](#).

The Committee considered the petition at its meeting on [13 May 2015](#). It resolved to:

- write to you to seek clarification about your expectations of individual hospitals’ application of professional guidance for the treatment and care of extremely premature babies; and
- consider options for future scrutiny of this subject, to be informed by your response to this letter, when it next considers its forward work programme.

I would be grateful to receive a response by Friday 19 June.

Yours sincerely,

David Rees AM
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee

cc: William Powell AM, Chair of the Petitions Committee

Bae Caerdydd
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Ffôn / Tel: 0300 200 6354

E-bost / Email: Seneddlechyd@Cynulliad.Cymru/
SeneddHealth@Assembly.Wales

Trydar / Twitter: [@seneddiechyd](https://twitter.com/seneddiechyd) / [@seneddhealth](https://twitter.com/seneddhealth)

Pack Page 78

One in four babies who are born at just 22 weeks can now survive if they are given active treatment such as ventilation

- Quarter of babies born at 22 weeks can now survive, a study has found
- Experts say they have better chance with treatment such as ventilation
- Doctors unable to resuscitate or provide care to babies born at 22 weeks

By [Tom Payne For The Daily Mail](#)

Published: 00:44, 8 May 2015 | Updated: 00:47, 8 May 2015

•266 shares [52](#)

- Premature babies born at just 22 weeks are more likely to survive than doctors had thought, a study suggests
- Premature babies born at just 22 weeks are more likely to survive than doctors had thought, a study suggests.
- Experts found that a quarter of those born at this stage of the pregnancy survived – if they were given active treatment such as ventilation.
- According to current guidelines, doctors should neither resuscitate nor provide intensive care to babies born at 22 weeks or below.
- They should attempt to treat those born between 22 and 23 weeks only if parents and doctors believe it is the right thing to do. At the moment, Britain's abortion limit is 24 weeks.
- However, the study suggests the survival prospects for babies born at 22 weeks might be better than previously thought.

It looked at 5,000 premature births in the US between 22 and 27 weeks. It found that 5 per cent of those born at 22 weeks survived. The latest British studies have found a 3 per cent survival rate at the same stage.

However, the US research, published in the New England Journal of Medicine, also looked at the survival rates for those babies born at 22 weeks who were given 'active treatment' – intubation, ventilation and substances to support the lungs – compared with those who were not.

In the 78 cases where babies born at 22 weeks were given assistance, 18 survived. Of those, 11 were left with disabilities such as blindness, deafness and cerebral palsy. The research will raise hopes that babies born very prematurely are likely to survive if more doctors choose to use life-saving treatment.

The study will also be seized on by anti-abortion campaigners. Hundreds of babies are aborted at 23 weeks every year in the UK, official figures show.

Lead author Dr Edward Bell, professor of paediatrics at the University of Iowa, said the research proves that 22 weeks should now be considered a new marker of viability.

He said: 'That's what we think, but this is a pretty controversial area. I guess we would say that these babies deserve a chance.'

But the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health has said increased survival rates for babies born between 22 and 25 weeks should not be used as an excuse to pursue treatment in cases where babies could be left with a 'non-existent' quality of life.

Earlier this year, new UK guidance advised doctors that they should not always intervene to try to save the lives of premature babies just because medical advances meant there was a chance of success.

Doctors are advised to examine the potential benefits of continued treatment on a case-by-case basis. Survival rates for premature births have been steadily improving over the past 20 years, figures suggest.

- According to current guidelines, doctors should neither resuscitate nor provide intensive care to babies born at 22 weeks or below
- National studies found that between 1995 and 2006, the percentage of babies born between 22 and 25 weeks who survived increased from 40 per cent to 53 per cent.
- Last year, Daily Mail research revealed some hospital trusts in England would consider resuscitating a baby born at 22 weeks if it showed clear signs of life.
- Both Croydon Health Services NHS Trust and Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust said they would resuscitate babies born at 22 weeks.
- About 560 babies are aborted at 23 weeks' gestation every year.

But top paediatrician Dr Martin Ward Platt, consultant neonatologist at the Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle, told the Mail last year he believed 23 weeks was 'the new 24' in terms of survival chances.

He told the Mail: 'The conversations we are having with parents are very different from the ones we were having ten years ago. Twenty three [weeks] is in essence the new 24. Things have shifted so much that most parents tend to be up for saying, 'let's give it a go'.'

But Mark Bhagwandin, spokesman for the pro-life charity Life, said: 'We have long been calling for the abortion limit to be reviewed. Most babies born at 24 weeks now survive. That is the abortion limit.'

'There is no reason doctors should be aborting babies at 24 weeks at the same hospital where they are trying to save the lives of babies born at 24 weeks.'

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

Petition wording:

We, the undersigned, call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to protect the future of Funky Dragon, the Children and Young People's Assembly for Wales by restoring core funding. Wales must have an independent, youth led, publically funded, national platform for children and young people, democratically elected at a local level, to give voice to their views and opinions and to hold the Welsh Government to account. The national platform must be empowered to work with all elected members to further children and young people's issues and to report directly to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child as Funky Dragon did so successfully in 2008.

Funky Dragon still believes that:

1. Young people, democratically elected at a local level, should have a National Platform to voice their views and opinions.
2. That platform should be called The Youth Assembly for Wales.
3. It should be able to work with all Elected Members including Assembly Members and Members of Parliament to further young peoples issues.
4. It should be supported to allow Welsh young people to report directly to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, in commenting on the last UK State report stated: Concluding observation 33. That governments' 'Support forums for children's participation, such as the United Kingdom Youth Parliament, Funky Dragon in Wales and Youth Parliament in Scotland should be implemented.

Petitioner : Catherine Patricia Jones

First considered by the Committee: 23 September 2014

Number of Signatures: 1,212 electronic signatures and 429 paper signatures. Total 1,641

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

Your ref: P-04-597
Our ref: PO1013/RB/NG

21 May 2015

Dear William

Thank you for your letter received on 7 May regarding the Petitions Committee's ongoing consideration of Catherine Patricia Jones' petition. In your letter you ask about any further developments in relation to the issues raised in the petition.

Since July 2014, when the Assembly's party leaders and I signed our youth charter, Assembly committees have engaged 10,000 young people in their work, over 4,000 have responded to our votes@16 conversation and we have engaged with over 16,000 children and young people through our education and youth programme programme.

A number of improvements have been embedded into our education and youth engagement programmes. Young people explicitly told us that we should not make assumptions about the issues they want to get involved with and the breadth of issues and volume of responses committees have gathered over the past six months clearly back this up.

These improvements and their impact were presented to the Youth Engagement Advisory Group at the end of April – members include representatives from the Children's Commissioner's Office, Youth Cymru, the Funky Dragon trustees, the Urdd, Welsh Centre for International Affairs, Children in Wales, Scouts Wales, Girl Guiding Cymru and NUS Wales.

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg/We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
Bae Caerdydd, Caerdydd CF99 1NA
Swyddfa.Breifaf@cymru.gov.uk
www.cynulliadcymru.org
T +44 (0)29 2089 8230

National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay, Cardiff CF99 1NA
Private.Office@wales.gov.uk
www.assemblywales.org
T +44 (0)29 2089 8230



Llywydd
Presiding Officer

Established in July 2013 the group's remit is to advise and inform the development of the Assembly's new youth engagement strategy. The focus of our most recent meeting was the successful implementation of the Assembly's youth engagement programme and sharing information about any other relevant developments within the children and young people's sector since our last meeting.

In addition to this activity, we will announce the results of our Votes@16 consultation on 15 July which will be of keen interest to the committee. I will ensure that my officials keep you notified of any other relevant developments.

I hope that the above information highlights to you the progress we are making in our efforts to engage with young people in the Assembly's work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rosemary".

Dame Rosemary Butler AM
Presiding Officer

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cymunedau a Threchu Tlodi
Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-597
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00573/15

William Powell AM
Assembly Member for Mid & West Wales
Chair - Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

2 June 2015

Dear Bill

Thank you for your letter of 30 April, regarding the petition "Protect the future of Funky Dragon, the Children and Young People's Assembly for Wales".

My previous response to your Committee sets out the commitment of the Welsh Government to involve children and young people in proposing and implementing policy and laws which aim to improve the lives of everyone in Wales. We are providing a total of £1.8 million over three years to Children in Wales to create structures to enable children and young people to have their opinions heard and influence our work. Their participation model, called 'Young Wales', aims to reach hundreds of children and young people, including those who may be marginalised, shy, living in poverty, excluded or in challenging circumstances. It is a very different model to Funky Dragon.

I am pleased to say 'Young Wales' launched on the 27 March 2015. YoungWales.Wales is the new website for children and young people and those who work with them, to find out what is happening and how they can get involved.

'Young Wales' works with existing youth groups, forums and councils to gather their collective voice to influence legislation, policies and programmes. It also has a focus on social media as a way to contact those children and young people who do not always feel comfortable to speak up. This supports the Welsh Government's Commitment to the UNCRC and complies with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in their recommendation each Government should have a forum for children's participation.

At the launch event, 18 of the 22 Local Authorities Youth Forums were represented. Young people discussed and decided on the priorities for the coming year. As a result, Children in Wales will be working with children and young people, the Welsh Government and other stakeholders on the following areas:

- Bullying;
- Healthy relationships including domestic abuse;
- Sexual health;
- Mental health;
- Online safety;
- Substance misuse; and
- UNCRC.

Those who attended also felt very strongly that Personal and Social Education (PSE) in school should be considered further.

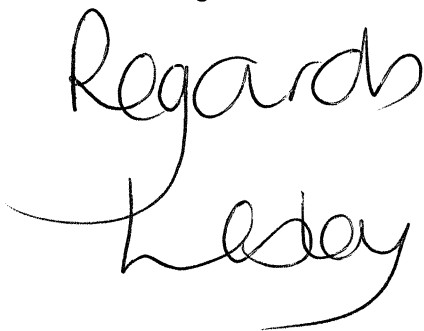
Young Wales asked for information on what we as a government are currently doing to address these issues. We now look forward to working with the young people on further addressing these issues.

In addition, Young Wales will be:

- leading on children and young people's involvement in the United Kingdom Youth Parliament (UKYP). Children in Wales have a good relationship with the UKYP and took 22 young people from across Wales to the UKYP Annual House of Commons Sitting in November 2014,
- leading on children and young people reporting directly to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child,
- promoting and driving the National Participation Standards,
- ensuring the Children and Young People's Workforce are informed of children's rights, including their right to participate.

Young Wales is careful to take into account the developments around youth engagement launched by the National Assembly for Wales and ensure the approaches compliment each other with no duplication.

It will, however, take time to embed a new way of working and a new model which carries a new name, but I am confident this model will allow more children and young people from more backgrounds and facing different circumstances to have their voices heard.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Regards" on the top line and "Lesley" on the bottom line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Cymunedau a Threchu Tlodi
Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty

P-04-605 Save the Cwmcarn Forest Drive from Indefinite or Permanent Closure

Petition wording

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to reverse the decision of Natural Resources Wales to close the Cwmcarn Forest Drive indefinitely on 2nd November 2014.

Additional Information

NRW have stated that the Cwmcarn Forest Drive will be closed indefinitely in November and that this is necessary because of the infection of the Japanese larches in the forest. I am not convinced as there are inconsistencies with NRW approach. There are ample harvest roads which can be used to facilitate removal of the trees. What needs to be removed via the drive could be done during its annual winter closure; however NRW say that removing the trees will not be completed until 2018 and after this the drive may not reopen due to funding issues. Other forest parks are only facing minimal disruption to their facilities as a result of tree removal. To single out users of the drive is unfair and unnecessary when other users will face only temporary disruption. We should save the drive for its users, many of whom are elderly, disabled and from our ethnic minority and immigrant communities. This deprives those people who are our most deprived of their main facility for health and well being.

Petitioner : Robert Jeffrey Southall

First considered by the Committee:

Number of Signatures: 2,392 electronic signatures and 602 paper signatures. Total 2,994

P-04-605 Save Cwmcarn Forest Drive – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Clerking Team, 19.05.15

Dear Jessica,

Thank you very much for this correspondence. Although I do not plan to submit any further evidence in support of my petition I would like to request that the Petitions Committee keep the petition open until the process of consultation with local groups by Natural Resources Wales has actually started.

I am concerned that NRW has been reluctant to engage on this, in spite of their reassurances to the contrary. At the time of the next meeting of the Petitions Committee (after the next one) please contact me for an update. If the consultation meetings with our group have commenced by this time I will ask for the petition to be closed.

I hope this is OK?

Best regards

Rob Southall

Chair, Friends of Cwmcarn forest Drive

Agenda Item 3.8

P-04-619 LOCALISM IN PLANNING and COMPENSATION FOR THIRD PARTIES RE. INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Petition wording

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government during its reform of the Welsh planning system, to ensure/guarantee that planning decisions will be taken at the most local level as possible to enable sufficient community engagement and support. Moreover, it encourages the Welsh Government to examine in detail, the impact that major infrastructure schemes have on Third Parties in Wales and considers the implementation of legislation to properly protect and compensate all Third Parties suffering actual loss from the construction, commissioning and operation of major infrastructure projects.

Lead petitioner: Mr Michael Halsey

First considered by the Committee:

Number of signatures: 462

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol
Minister for Natural Resources



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-619
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/00682/15

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

 May 2015

Dear Bill,

Thank you for your letter dated 23 April asking for my views on comments made in response to a petition relating to “localism in planning and compensation for third parties re: infrastructure projects (P-04-619)”. The petitioner asks me to safeguard democratic decision making processes of local communities and to provide protection and compensation for those affected by major infrastructure projects in Wales.

The Planning (Wales) Bill (“the Bill”) strengthens the democratic processes and participation of local communities through a number of measures. Namely:

- The introduction of a statutory purpose for the planning system in Wales which ensures that the development and use of land contributes towards sustainable development by improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015;
- A strengthened development plan framework supported by local democracy and requirements for community engagement;
- Formal pre-application community consultation requirements on prospective applicants for major developments and developments of national significance (“DNS”) and consultation requirements imposed on the Welsh Ministers when determining applications submitted directly to them;
- A requirement for the determining authority to notify town and community councils when making decisions on planning applications; and
- A requirement for local planning authorities to submit a report documenting the impact on the locality where a DNS application has been submitted in their area, as well as a voluntary arrangements for town and community councils to do so.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
Correspondence.Carl.Sargeant@wales.gsi.gov.uk
Printed on 100% recycled paper

Other measures that fall outside of the Bill include the introduction of place plans, which will encourage greater community engagement in local decision-making by allowing communities to shape their localities. Further detail on place plans is contained in the development plan prospectus:

<http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/150211development-plan-prospectus-en.pdf>

Regarding the impact of major infrastructure schemes on communities, amendments were tabled at stages 2 and 3 of the Bill to make provision by development order for the payment of compensation in respect of DNS applications. These amendments were considered and opposed by the Environment and Sustainability Committee and the National Assembly for Wales.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CS', written in a cursive style.

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol
Minister for Natural Resources

Michael and Claudi Halsey

Mr. William Powell, Chair
The Petitions Committee
Welsh Assembly
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay, CARDIFF
CF99 1NA

8th June, 2015

Dear Mr. Powell

PETITION ON : LOCALISM IN PLANNING and INFRASTRUCTURE COMPENSATION TO THIRD PARTIES.

Firstly we are sorry to note that our letter of 16th March that was approved by your Committee on the 24th March for referral to the Minister, didn't appear to reach him until nearly one month later on 23rd April? Could you please advise why this happened as this was indeed unfortunate as we understand this Bill was heavily debated by WAG towards the end of April ?

Secondly, my colleagues and I, having taken some considerable time and effort to compile our detailed response (in point form for ease of reference) to the Minister's earlier letter of 23rd.February, were very disappointed to see his response failed to answer most of the questions and comments we had made. This we believe shows the contempt in which this Minister holds local communities in Wales in this respect. Not only has he failed to answer and give account to citizens with genuine concerns but only 2 days after signing his reply approved the proposed Garreg Lywd Hill Windfarm development against the many objections and overtures of our LPA (Powys County Council) and local residents. We refer to this again later in this letter.

In view of the disdain in which this Minister has treated our Petition to your Committee it hardly seems worthwhile responding to the hollow words he incorporates in his letter. However for the record and for the benefit of a wider and more receptive audience we would comment as follows:-

1. Economic, Social, environmental and cultural well-being

There is indeed a duty on the government to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well being of Wales and this cannot be achieved through imposing planning policies that override those of the Local Authority and

of the economic and social well being of communities. Designation of rural areas as Strategic Search Areas for wind farms or for housing development *without recourse to a proper local planning regime and taking into full account the local situation and local opinion* is a dereliction of that duty.

2. Consultation

We can see no assurance that consultation will be a meaningful exercise. The 'consultation' on TAN8 was a case in point where over **90% of respondents** (including some developers) objected strongly and in an evidenced manner to a concentration approach and to the inclusion of specific areas, particularly where these were remote from any transmission connection. *The views of this vast majority were utterly ignored with disastrous consequences of the situation in which we now find ourselves.* How can the public have any faith in the mandatory 'consultations' when these are mere box ticking exercises ? For consultation to be meaningful, empowering and engaged *communities respondents have to see that the majority and evidenced view can influence decisions.* There is nothing in the Planning Bill or in the reply from the Minister to allay concerns

-2-

or cause any of our points to be withdrawn.

There is a serious disconnect between the proposed action, for example the requirement for a LPA impact report, and the implementation. How will this report be used? Will the LPA, in consultation with the local community, be able to reject or amend a DNS application and will this local decision be respected ? **Will local voices not only be heard but heeded ?**

Throughout England Local Authorities are being given ever greater powers, especially in planning matters. Wales is in danger of taking a seriously retrograde step and emasculating LPAs and giving LDPs ever more limited scope and weight. *It cannot be equitable to expect the people of Wales to have a lesser voice into shaping their future and their living places or to have major infrastructure projects imposed on their communities from a central authority who is not properly cognisant of the local environment and economy.* Even the proposals for Place Plans, welcome as this is as a starting point, are far diluted from that of the Parish or Neighbourhood Plan. A missed opportunity for true localism and one which will only alienate communities as they see how difficult it will be to have this adopted as SPG and how constrained it is in reality. By his own admission Mr.Sargeant confesses that Place Plans fall outside his Bill.

3. Compensation

We have a situation in Mid Wales where people are now facing living as close neighbours to windfarms, unable to sell their homes and move away if they wish either for personal reasons or because their health is suffering or business foundering. There are an ever increasing number of noise complaints arising from operational windfarms and health related issues resulting from sleep deprivation. *Their only option will be to abandon their homes, if they can afford to do so.* Tourism businesses, where owners have invested all their capital and energy but are dependent on visitors who walk or ride or just come for the unspoilt beauty and tranquillity of the surroundings will lose custom. Even a small drop in visitors, as predicted in the Regeneris study for the Welsh Government (2014), could be the difference between survival and closure. *Without compensation, what will these people do? This is neither social justice nor a promotion of well being.* The Minister provides no reasoning as to why the Environmental & Sustainability Committee and the National Assembly of Wales would not have voted in favour of tabled amendments that would ensure communities and individuals were properly compensated for losses they suffer as a result of imposed DNS applications. **Why did this happen? Could you please give us an explanation?** We will have situations analogous to that of HS2 except in Wales there will not be generous compensation for those who need to move away but cannot sell their homes.

We are in danger of centralisation of power in planning that will fail to achieve community cohesion and well being across the communities that make up Wales. *There must be recognition of the considerable variations between communities and the inherently differing needs of the urban and the rural reflected in a genuinely local decision making process.*

Referring back to Garreg Lwyd Hill Wind Farm (GLHWF) proposed development, he has now approved this post-election, against the fervent wishes of PCC's elected councillors and the residents they represent.

Despite the Inspector's report warning this development will significantly and adversely affect the surrounding Welsh and Shropshire Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the health and well being of the nearest resident; 12 kilometres of Glyndwr's Way National Trail, create substantial harm to 3 Scheduled Ancient monuments of UK importance et al.–he still choses to ignore it ! Perhaps the most significant impact will be on the lives of those distressed residents unfortunate

enough to be presently living in close proximity to this windfarm.

Having had the sale of their homes blighted for several years, this now sets the seal on their inability to sell at the very least at full and fair market value—if they are able to sell at all? Whilst Ministers sit in their fine air conditioned quiet offices in Cardiff these local residents will be forced to endure at least 25 years of noise, loss of visual tranquillity to say nothing of the impact of the construction period . Existing windfarms demonstrate that virtually no permanent local employment results and any 'community benefits' are not a local economic driver . On the contrary income from tourists is anticipated to be significantly reduced also. Only large overseas energy firms will continue to make substantial profits at the expense of rural communities.

This whole exercise through your Committee we thought was meant to demonstrate the democratic accountability of the Welsh Government toward its citizens. As you can clearly see it sadly falls way short of the mark with regard to these issues that we and our other Petitioners have raised.

We await the courtesy of your Committee's response and that of Mr. Sargeant.

Yours sincerely

Michael A. Halsey

Claudi Halsey

cc(by E-Mail)

Mr. & Mrs B. Crawford

Mrs. A. Davies (Chair- CUP)

Mr.G.Davies (Planning PCC)

Mr.Chris Davies MP

Mr.Glyn Davies MP

Mr.Russell George (AM)

Mr.& Mrs.J. Sandford

Mr. Barry Thomas (Leader Cabinet-PCC)

Cllr.Avril York-(Planning PCC)

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son Jesus Christ that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life" John 3v.16

Agenda Item 3.9

P-04-627 Improved Commuter Train Services for North Wales Residents

Petition wording

Although train fares across North Wales have risen at above the rate of inflation over a number of recent years the service offered to commuters has been reduced.

In particular the service offered at times convenient for most commuters to Bangor – home of one of Wales largest Universities, and also a major hospital (as well as North Wales busiest railway station in terms of passenger numbers!) – have been greatly cut over the last couple of years.

In particular we call for the reintroduction of the Chester – Bangor service which used to arrive at in Bangor at 09.36. (Ironically, whilst this service has been cut on week days, it still runs on a Saturday!).

Lead petitioner: Professor Tom Rippeth

First considered by the Committee:

Number of signatures: 36 online signatures.



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-627
Ein cyf/Our ref EH/02083/15

William Powell AM

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

19 May 2015

Dear William

Thank you for your letter of 23 April enclosing further comments from the petitioner regarding improved commuter train services for North Wales residents.

The pattern of commuting services for North Wales, including Bangor, is oriented towards travel eastwards in the morning and westwards in the evening reflecting passenger demand. That said, there are commuting options available for passengers travelling in both directions.

Morning commuting services into Bangor from the west include arrivals at 0705, 0721, 0752, 0842, 0921 and 1000, while arrivals from the east include 0749, 0837 and 1007. Evening commuter services from Bangor heading west include departures at 1643, 1737 and 1845, while departures towards the east include the 1623, 1718 and 1809.

My officials have examined the latest passenger count information on the these routes and there is no evidence of regular overcrowding on the Arriva Trains Wales (ATW) services, although there may be instances where this occurs, such as incidents of service disruption.

We continue to invest in additional services and capacity for North Wales, which include benefits for commuters. The original franchise let by the Strategic Rail Authority in 2003 specified sixteen services in each direction on weekdays between Bangor and Llandudno Junction, ATW currently provides nineteen.

As I previously outlined, there have been a number of timetable enhancements in recent years that have also improved the overall provision of train capacity in North Wales. In relation to the additional capacity provided by the recent introduction of the loco-hauled services, this is not limited to those services alone but has also enabled longer trains to be deployed on fourteen further services by a related cascade of other rolling stock.

I understand that stakeholders will have aspirations for further enhancements to services. I will continue to consider these, but will of course have to be mindful of budgetary consideration and, increasingly, the shortage of suitable available trains currently available.

We are engaging with rail user groups about their views on further enhancements, particularly with relation to specifying the next Wales and Borders franchise and modernisation of the North Wales network.

Network Rail's Welsh Route Study was published for consultation in April. This identifies potential improvements to infrastructure in North Wales during Control Period 6 (2019-2024) including modernisation of the North Wales Coast mainline and journey time improvements. The consultation closes on 9 June. We are working with Network Rail and the Department for Transport to develop the case for these schemes.

Edwina Hart