

Concise Minutes – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: Tuesday, 13 September
2016

Meeting time: 09.00 – 10.35

This meeting can be viewed

on [Senedd TV](#) at:

<http://senedd.tv/en/3702>

Attendance

Category	Names
Assembly Members:	Mike Hedges AM (Chair) Gareth Bennett AM Janet Finch-Saunders AM Neil McEvoy AM
Witnesses:	Margaret Hutcheson, Petitioner
Committee Staff:	Graeme Francis (Clerk) Kath Thomas (Deputy Clerk) Jessica England (Deputy Clerk) Jonathan Baxter (Researcher) Katie Wyatt (Legal Adviser)

Transcript

View the [meeting transcript](#) (PDF 673KB) [View as HTML](#) (177KB)



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Wales

1 Introduction, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies.

2 New petitions

2.1 P-04-688 TATA Steel Port Talbot Power Plant

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and, given that the then Enterprise and Business Committee met to consider the issues around TATA Steel at the end of the 4th Assembly, agreed to ask the new Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee whether it plans to consider the issue further and if so, whether they would include the issues raised by the petition as part of that consideration.

2.2 P-05-698 Rename Cardiff Int. Airport to Princess Diana International Airport

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to Cardiff Airport, seeking their views on the specific proposal and on whether the principle of naming the airport after a prominent Welsh person has been considered.

2.3 P-05-699 A Treatment Fund for Wales – There Must be an End to the Healthcare Postcode Lottery

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and, given that the announcement of a new treatment fund might address the issues raised by the petition, agreed to seek the views of the petitioner before deciding whether to take any further action.

2.4 P-05-700 Student Finance Funding For Postgraduate Courses

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and, given that the loan scheme for post-graduate students will be in place for the 2017-18 academic year, agreed to close the petition.

2.5 P-05-701 Road Safety Improvements Along the A487 Trunk Road between Cardigan and Aberystwyth, to Include Passing Places

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure:

- Seeking a more specific timetable for the review that his officials are currently undertaking and asking that the Committee is informed as soon as its outcome is known; and
- Drawing the petitioner's specific comments requesting a study into the provision of safe overtaking lanes to his attention and asking that they are taken into consideration as part of the review.

2.6 P-05-702 EMA Attendance Requirements for Young Adult Carers

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to seek the views of the petitioner on the generally positive response from the Cabinet Secretary for Education.

2.7 P-05-703 Proposal to Postpone the Restrictions on Fishing in Welsh Rivers

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to close it and in doing so, to send the petitioner's comments to Natural Resources Wales (NRW) in advance of their planned consultation on salmon stock control measures due to take place in late 2016/early 2017.

2.8 P-05-706 Keep our Councils Rejuvenated by Introducing a Fixed Term

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and, given that the proposal has been considered and rejected by the Welsh Government, agreed to close the petition.

2.9 P-05-708 To Make Mental Health a Part of the National Curriculum

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and, given the positive response from the Cabinet Secretary for Education, agreed to close the petition.

3 Updates to previous petitions

3.1 P-04-683 Trees in Towns

The Committee considered correspondence from the petitioner and agreed to write to:

- The Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs to ask if guidance will be produced on the benefits which trees can offer in towns and cities and on improving canopy cover;
- Natural Resources Wales to ask what support it provides for planting individual street trees in towns and cities.

3.2 P-05-691 A Fair Deal for Forest Rallying in Wales

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs and further comments from the petitioner and agreed to ask the petitioner and Natural Resources Wales whether they have managed to reach an agreement and consider further action in the light of the response.

3.3 P-05-654 Objection to the Current Proposals for the Designation of SAC's for Porpoises

Janet Finch-Saunders declared the following interest under Standing Order 17.24A: She is a harbour porpoise champion.

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs and, given the information provided by the Cabinet Secretary, agreed to close the petition.

3.4 P-04-547 Ban Polystyrene (EPS) Fast Food and Drinks Packaging

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs and, in the light of the Cabinet Secretary's reply and that there was little more that the Committee could do to take the issue forward, agreed to close the petition.

3.5 P-04-516 Make Political Science Compulsory in Education

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Education and, in line with the previous Committee's decision, agreed to close the petition.

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

The Committee considered correspondence from the WJEC and, given that there was nothing further they could do to take the issue forward, agreed to close the petition.

3.7 P-04-677 Equal Access to Welsh Language

The Committee considered correspondence from the Minister for Lifelong learning and the Welsh Language and further comments from the petitioner and agreed to close the petition. In doing so, they also agreed to ask the Culture Welsh language and Communications Committee to take the petition into account in their forthcoming scrutiny of the Welsh language Commissioner and the Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh language.

3.8 P-05-694 School Times an Hour Later

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Education along with further comments from the petitioner and agreed to write to the Cabinet Secretary to ask:

- if she will consider issuing guidance to local authorities as suggested by the petitioner; and
- whether this is an area where further research is needed and whether the Welsh Government would support such research.

3.9 P-05-695 Introduce Compulsory Mental Health Education in Secondary Schools

The Committee considered the petition alongside agenda item 2.9 (P-05-708 To Make Mental Health Part of the Curriculum) and agreed to close the petition.

3.10 P-04-553 A Full and Independent Investigation in to the Health Risks of Wireless and Mobile Phone Technologies in Wales Including All Schools

The Committee considered correspondence from Simon Mann, the head of CRCE's Radiation Dosimetry Department together with further comments from the petitioner and agreed to close the petition.

3.11 P-05-693 Give Every Child in Wales the Meningitis B Vaccine for Free

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport and agreed to seek the views of the petitioner before deciding whether to ask for a debate on the issue in Plenary.

3.12 P-05-697 45000 Reasons Wales Needs a Dementia Strategy

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport and agreed to write to the petitioners, who have been invited to be part of a task and finish group to be established to develop a dementia strategy, to ask them to encourage signatories to the petition to provide their views on the strategy when it is opened for consultation.

3.13 P-04-564 Restoration of Inpatient Beds, Minor Injuries Cover and X-Ray Unit to the Ffestiniog Memorial Hospital

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport along with further comments from the petitioner and, as requested by the petitioners, agreed to keep the petition open and to write to the Cabinet Secretary and the petitioners again later in the autumn for a report on progress.

3.14 P-04-667 Roundabout for the A477/ A4075 Junction

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure and agreed to write to him, expressing disappointment at the delay in progressing the Stage 4 road safety audit and asking him for a firmer timescale.

3.15 P-05-689 Improvements to the Railway Provision at Kidwelly Carmarthenshire

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure and, given the helpful information set out in the response, agreed to close the petition.

3.16 P-04-686 Install a Traffic Lights System at Cross Hands Roundabout

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure and agreed to seek the views of the petitioner before deciding how to take the petition forward.

3.17 P-05-690 Resurfacing of the A40 Raglan-Abergavenny Road

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure together with comments from Nick Ramsay AM and agreed to write to the Cabinet Secretary seeking clarification on:

- Plans to erect a noise barrier alongside part of the A40;
- Whether it is still the intention of the Welsh Government to resurface this section of the A40, as identified in the Noise Action Plan 2013–2018.

3.18 P–04–672 End Use of Welsh Language

The Committee considered correspondence from the petitioner and, given that it was clear there would be little scope for a meeting of minds, agreed to close the petition.

4 P–04–668 Support Yearly Screening for Ovarian Cancer (CA125 blood test)

The petitioner answered questions from the Committee.

The Chair noted that the Minister for Social Services and Public Health was scheduled to attend Committee on 27 September and the Committee agreed to write to her to seek further details on the estimated cost for introducing screening for ovarian cancer in Wales using the CA125 blood test.