

# Concise Minutes – Petitions Committee

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Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: Tuesday, 27 November  
2018

Meeting time: 09.03 – 10.52

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

<http://senedd.tv/en/5069>

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## Attendance

| Category          | Names   |
|-------------------|---|
| Assembly Members: | David J Rowlands AM (Chair)<br>Janet Finch–Saunders AM<br>Mike Hedges AM<br>Neil McEvoy AM<br>Leanne Wood AM  |
| Witnesses:        | Tim England, Natural Resources Wales<br>John Hogg, Natural Resources Wales<br>Gavin Jones, Natural Resources Wales<br>Gareth O'Shea, National Resources Wales |
| Committee Staff:  | Graeme Francis (Clerk)<br>Kathryn Thomas (Deputy Clerk)<br>Sam Mason (Legal Adviser)  |

## 1 Introduction, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

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



Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales

## **2 New petitions**

### **2.1 P-05-847 Create water fountains in the centre of cities and towns to eliminate plastic waste**

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to await the views of the petitioner on the response received from the Minister for Environment before deciding whether to take any further action on the petition.

### **2.2 P-05-850 Protect the Gwent Levels and stop the proposed M4 motorway**

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

- group this petition with [P-05-838 Support the M4 Relief Road Black Route](#) and consider them together in the future;
- share the additional comments from the petitioner with the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport;
- keep a watching brief on the petition in light of the comprehensive scrutiny given to this issue by the public inquiry, and the commitment by the Welsh Government to hold a full debate in the Assembly on this matter prior to a decision being reached; and
- consider the petitions again once any debates have taken place.

## **3 Updates to previous petitions**

### **3.1 P-05-736 To Make Mental Health Services More Accessible**

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services together with further comments from the petitioner and agreed to produce a report focusing on the issue of access to mental health crisis services, and to use this to facilitate a Plenary debate at a future date.

### **3.2 P-05-751 Recognition of Parental Alienation**

Neil McEvoy declared the following relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A:

He has been a service user and volunteer for Both Parents Matter; and

the petitioner currently works for him on a temporary basis.

The Committee considered correspondence from Cafcass Cymru and agreed to:

- seek the views of the petitioner on the information received from Cafcass Cymru;
- write back to Cafcass Cymru to request that a copy of the practice guidance is provided to the Committee when it is in its final form, and to outline the training and development opportunities that have been provided to Cafcass Cymru practitioners which cover alienating behaviours at that time; and
- consider seeking further information from other organisations in this field.

### **3.3 P-05-797 Ensure access to the cystic fibrosis medicine, Orkambi, as a matter of urgency**

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services together with further comments from the petitioner and agreed to:

- write to Vertex Pharmaceuticals to urge them to make a submission to NHS Wales or the All Wales Medicines Strategy Group for a specific arrangement to make Orkambi available to patients in Wales for either an initial pilot exercise or on an ongoing basis, an indication of the timescales for doing this, or for a justification from the company if it does not intend to do so; and
- await the action taken by the Westminster Health and Social Services Select Committee in relation to a possible inquiry into the availability of Orkambi.

### **3.4 P-05-831 End the unfairness and discrimination in the financial support for victims of the contaminated blood scandals who were infected in Wales**

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services and agreed to write back to the Cabinet Secretary to repeat the request for an indication of the likely timescales for determining and communicating scheme benefits for the Welsh Infected Blood Support Scheme (WIBSS), and to ask that he provides the Committee with a breakdown of the financial support for beneficiaries once the scheme benefits have been determined.

### **3.5 P-05-826 Pembrokeshire says NO!! To the closure of Withybush A&E!**

The Committee considered correspondence from Hywel Dda University Health Board and agreed to write back to the Health Board to:

- request an update on its plans in relation to service changes at Withybush hospital, including timescales and future public engagement with local communities;
- seek reassurance that the Health Board will ensure there is continuity of services during the development of a new hospital and that services will not be removed from Withybush Hospital prior to a new hospital being opened.

### **3.6 P-05-773 Don't Fill Landfill!**

The Committee considered the history of the petition and agreed to close the petition at this point given the time that has elapsed since the last contact with the petitioner, and the previous offer made by Cardiff Council to progress this matter locally.

### **3.7 P-05-779 Compulsory scanning of domestic pets for microchips by councils**

The Committee considered correspondence from Carmarthenshire County Council together with further comments from the petitioner and agreed to close the petition in light of the satisfaction of the petitioners and the progress made in encouraging local authorities in Wales to adopt a policy of scanning for microchips.

### **3.8 P-05-803 Our natural world is being poisoned by single use plastics...it's time to introduce a tax!**

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and agreed to:

- share details of the petition with the Finance Committee;
- keep a watching brief on the development of proposals for taxes in this area, including the UK Government's forthcoming Resources and Waste Strategy; and

- return to this and other petitions under consideration relating to single use plastics once the Committee has further information about actions being taken on this subject.

### **3.9 P-05-837 Green Energy for the Wellbeing of Future Generations in Wales**

The Committee considered correspondence from the petitioners and agreed to:

- provide the petitioners' further comments to the Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs and ask her to respond to the points raised and possible actions the Welsh Government could take; and
- ask the Cabinet Secretary, in light of these comments and the recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, to consider scheduling a Government debate on the development of, and support for, green energy.

### **3.10 P-05-823 Reduce the speed limit on the A487 in Penparcau**

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport together with comments from the petitioner. The Committee agreed to close the petition given the commitment made by the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport that petitions received, and the views of local residents, would be taken into account during the Speed Limit Review process. In doing so, the Chair agreed to write to the petitioner to explain the reasons for this and to clarify that the Petitions Committee cannot itself directly make the change requested.

### **3.11 P-05-833 Improve rail services for Chepstow**

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport together with further comments from the petitioner. The Committee agreed to write to the Cabinet Secretary to ask for a more detailed explanation about the availability of rolling stock, and whether Transport for Wales and the Welsh Government are utilising all possible approaches to securing additional rolling stock to improve services across Wales.

## **4 The Welsh Government's Response to a Committee Report**

### **4.1 P-05-690 Resurfacing of the A40 Raglan–Abergavenny Road**

The Committee considered the Welsh Government's response to its report and agreed to close the petition.

## **5 Paper to Note**

### **5.1 P-05-796 Calling on the Welsh Government to Ban The Use of Wild Animals in Circuses in Wales**

The Committee noted the paper.

## **6 Evidence Session – P-05-801 Save the trees and ground in Roath Mill and Roath Brook Gardens before it's too late**

The Committee heard evidence from John Hogg, Tim England, Gavin Jones and Gareth O'Shea from Natural Resources Wales.

NRW undertook to provide the Committee with information on flood forecasting relating to Roath Brook.

## **7 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public for items 8 and 9**

The motion was agreed.

## **8 Discussion of Previous Evidence Session – P-05-801 Save the trees and ground in Roath Mill and Roath Brook Gardens before it's too late**

The Committee discussed the evidence heard and agreed to seek an update from the petitioners and Natural Resources Wales following the proposed meeting between the parties involved.

## **9 Petitions with over 5,000 Signatures**

The paper was noted and the Committee discussed publishing an annual report on the petitions process in the future.