

Agenda – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: 25 June 2019

Meeting time: 08.50

For further information contact:

Graeme Francis – Committee Clerk

Kath Thomas – Deputy Clerk

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(Private pre-meeting)

(8:50 – 9:00)

1 Introduction, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(9:00)

(Pages 1 – 25)

2 Evidence Session: Planning

(Pages 26 – 37)

- Julie James AM – Minister for Housing and Local Government
- Neil Hemington – Head of Planning, Welsh Government
- Stephen Phipps – Local Government Projects Officer, Welsh Government

2.1 P-05-786 Save our Countryside – Revise TAN 1

(Pages 38 – 40)

2.2 P-05-881 Fix our planning system

(Pages 41 – 42)

2.3 P-05-843 More Third party rights in planning appeals

(Page 43)

2.4 P-05-845 End Conflict of Interest in Local Authority Constitution

(Page 44)

3 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the following business:

Item 4



4 Discussion of previous evidence session

(9:45 – 10:00)

5 New petitions

(10:00)

- 5.1 P-05-884 Amendment to Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 to include UK institutions with operations overseas

(Pages 45 – 60)

- 5.2 P-05-886 Stop the Red Route (A55/A494 corridor)

(Pages 61 – 76)

- 5.3 P-05-888 Make GCSE Welsh Language compulsory in all schools in Wales

(Pages 77 – 84)

6 Updates to previous petitions

Housing and Local Government

- 6.1 P-05-717 Establish Statutory Public Rights of Access to Land and Water for Recreational and Other Purposes

(Pages 85 – 93)

Economy and transport

The following two items will be considered together

- 6.2 P-05-775 Put an end to the Cross Border and Sub-contracting Taxi Licensing loophole.

(Pages 94 – 95)

- 6.3 P-05-835 Allow Free Movement of Taxi Drivers to Carry Out Private Hire Work Anywhere in Wales

(Pages 96 – 98)

- 6.4 P-05-827 Roads surrounding Trago Mills/ Cyfartha Retail Park

(Page 99)

Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs

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

(Pages 100 – 102)

Finance

- 6.6 P-05-855 Small Business Rates Relief Review

(Page 103)

Education

- 6.7 P-05-802 Protecting Class Sizes in Design and Technology Classrooms and Workshops

(Pages 104 – 107)

The following two items will be considered together

- 6.8 P-05-860 Make curriculum for life lessons compulsory

(Pages 108 – 110)

- 6.9 P-05-861 Make political education a compulsory element of the new national curriculum

(Pages 111 – 114)

Document is Restricted

Agenda Item 2

By virtue of paragraph(s) vi of Standing Order 17.42

Document is Restricted

Agenda Item 2.1

P-05-786 Save our Countryside – Revise TAN 1

This petition was submitted by Cllr Mike Priestley and was first considered by the Committee in November 2017, having collected 706 signatures.

Text of petition

Changes in 2015 to Technical Advice Note 1 (TAN1) have resulted in unachievable annual housing targets. This has taken planning decisions away from the local democratic planning process and undermined Adopted Local Development Plans (LDPs) across Wales.

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to reinstate within TAN1 the use of "past building rates methodology" alongside the "residual methodology". This will ensure that Councils are able to undertake intelligent and credible housing land supply needs assessments. Past housing delivery performance reflects economic conditions and local building industry capacity and resilience.

To ensure credible and deliverable land supply, and to balance the need for housing with the need to protect our environment and heritage, it is essential that economic conditions and local building industry capacity are factored into annual calculations of 5 Year Land Supply for Housing.

Changes to TAN1 have forced Local Councils to allow housing developments in excess of what is considered to be local demand. These developments are often large scale and have a detrimental effect on the green belt and the heritage of our County as urban and rural areas over expand. This in turn puts added demands on already stretched services such as GPs, Hospitals, Social Services and Schools.

The withdrawal in 2015 of the past building rates methodology is causing increasing numbers of Local Authorities to declare a 5 Year Land Supply shortfall. This, in turn, is forcing Local Councils, against their will and better judgement, to approve speculative development applications on locally sensitive Greenfield land, land unallocated within their LDPs and, where local approval to these speculative applications is not granted, local democratic decisions are being overturned on appeal, specifically due to the lack of a 5 Year Land Supply for Housing.

Additional information

In 2014 Conwy Council had a 7+ Year Land Supply when its LDP was examined and approved by the Planning Inspector. Less than 12 months later the changes to TAN 1 reduced Conwy's Land Supply to less than 5 years. This has reduced with successive annual land supply calculations. In 2017, Conwy's land supply now stands at 3.1 years as a direct result of the changes to TAN1, and the Council is receiving speculative development applications for land unallocated within the LDP despite allocated land being available. If the past building rates methodology was still permitted, Conwy would today have an 8.5 year supply.

WG's guidance document TAN1 tells Local Councils how to work out their supply of housing land. All Councils should have enough land to meet the need for 5 years of house building. In the previous TAN1 there were two methods of working out how much land was needed:

1. The residual method based on the total housing need from an adopted Plan
2. The past build rates method, using the house building rates from the last 5 years to project forward for the next 5 years.

The Wellbeing and Future Generations Act requires us to be balance our decisions and actions in terms of impact today and impact in the future. Surely, we should apply this thinking to land planning and land use? Current Welsh Government policy is forcing prime Greenfield land to be concreted over and forever become brownfield land. The imposition and restriction to the use of the "residual methodology" was fiercely contested at the consultation stage and beyond, but Local Councils' voices were ignored. Local Councils need to be able to:

- protect heritage and environment and sensitive Greenfield land use and exercise local discretion, judgement and control of where development is needed and where it is allowed.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Aberconwy
- North Wales

Agenda Item 2.2

P-05-881 Fix our planning system

This petition was submitted by Ruth Parker having collected a total of 250 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly of Wales to urge the Welsh Government to fix our planning system; new developments need to be sustainable.

Planning Policy Wales paragraph 4.2.15 states that 'planning authorities must ensure that land is genuinely available or will become available to provide a five year supply of land for housing...' For land to be regarded as genuinely available it must be a site included in a Joint Housing Land Availability Study.

The five year housing supply is putting undue pressure on local authorities at the cost of building unsuitable developments. The JHLAS is flawed: it does not take into account empty houses or the amount of second homes in the area. As a result of the shortage of land, councils feel the need to allow planning permission even if they are aware of infrastructure issues. If councils reject planning permission, the Welsh Planning Inspectorate overrules their decisions at appeal.

Developers are aware of the loopholes in the system and can flaunt a community's vulnerability through large speculative developments outside the Local Development Plan. As these developments are outside the LDP, the sustainability of the area in terms of well-being of the economy, health, transport, and environment are not scrutinised in detail. Even if residents highlight local and national studies/ statistics of an area, their voices are not being heard at appeal level. The Welsh Government need to define 'robust' evidence.

The Well-Being of Future Generations Act 2015 was brought in place to prevent unsustainable development in order to ensure that our future generations would have a chance of a reasonable future. Communities feel that policy and practice does not reflect this.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Aberconwy
- North Wales

Agenda Item 2.3

P-05-843 More Third party rights in planning appeals

This petition was submitted by Emma Eynon, having collected 59 signatures.

Text of Petition

We, the undersigned, call on the Welsh Government to introduce legislation which will grant more rights for third parties to appeal on planning decisions. Currently, even those who are directly affected by planning approvals are considered as third parties to applications and have little or no rights to appeal or even to input into planning conditions. The judicial review process is aimed at developers and the time limit of six weeks to submit such an application is not suitable for community action groups. Third parties should have the same rights as a developer to appeal in planning decisions and should not have to send all communications through the elected ward member.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Neath
- South Wales West

Agenda Item 2.4

P-05-845 End Conflict of Interest in Local Authority Constitution

This petition was submitted by Emma Eynon, having collected 56 signatures.

Text of Petition

We, the undersigned, call on the Welsh Government to enforce better code of conduct policies for employees in local authorities. Currently, planning authority officers are able to run private planning consultancy companies at the same time as maintaining their public roles. There is no available resource to invest in policing these private firms, where declared in the necessary forms, to ensure the prevention of fraud and corruption. In the example of planning officers, running private consultancies 'on the side' could potentially facilitate corruption, of which there are many types, generally relating to the abuse of office. This practice needs to be stopped immediately and the constitutions amended to no longer allow this conduct. We demand greater accountability and transparency from our local authorities and standards of conduct in such public roles need to be set higher than the private sector, where this is highly unacceptable.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Neath
- South Wales West

Agenda Item 5.1

P-05-884 Amendment to Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 to include UK institutions with operations overseas

This petition was submitted by Alanna Jones having collected having collected 158 signatures online and 141 on paper, a total of 299 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to amend the current wording of the Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 ("the Regulations"). We call on the National Assembly to make the amendments to the Regulations to address the current limitation of Regulation 6, Condition 5 which prevents Welsh students accessing student finance to study at UK higher education institutions where the location of study is at their overseas campus which we consider could be achieved in one of either two ways, by either:

widening the criteria in Condition 5 to include courses which are provided by UK higher education institutions at either their UK or overseas campuses; or amending Condition 5 to include courses which are provided by higher education institutions offering designated courses and to include the University of London Institute in Paris on the list of institutions offering designated courses, using your discretion under Regulation 8.

Proposed Amendment:

Option 1

"Condition 5

At least half of the teaching and supervision which comprise the course is provided in the United Kingdom or at any campus of a United Kingdom higher education institution located outside of the United Kingdom".

Option 2

"Condition 5

At least half of the teaching and supervision which comprise the course is provided in the United Kingdom. This condition shall apply, unless the course has been deemed to be treated as a designated course pursuant to Regulation 8(1) or 8(2)."

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to adopt the proposed amendments so that Welsh students applying for courses at institutions such as the University of London Institute in Paris, can be considered as "eligible students" for the purposes of receiving student support. The University of London Institute in Paris offers higher education courses in modern languages, where the teaching and supervision is carried out primarily in Paris. Nonetheless, students are taught by employees of the University of London and its collaborative partner, Queen Mary, University of London.

Unless an amendment is made to the current wording of the Regulations, Welsh students will continue to suffer an unjust disadvantage when applying for courses at specific UK institutions. We call on the National Assembly for Wales to make this change as there is no equivalent limitation across other parts of the UK. If no action is taken, the Regulations may continue to act as a deterrent for students hoping to apply for courses at the University of London, Institute in Paris.

Additional Information

Between September 2018 and February 2019 we received inconsistent messages relating to the University of London Institute in Paris' position and both current and prospective students received contradictory information on their eligibility. The University of London Institute in Paris took the following steps to address this:

Contacted the Students Loan Company

Contacted Student Finance for Wales

Contacted the 'Designation' department of the Welsh Government.

Copies of the relevant correspondence are available on request.

When the position was eventually clarified in February, Welsh applicants were informed by the University of London Institute in Paris of their ineligibility for student finance for these programmes which caused significant distress, so

we call on the National Assembly for Wales to please consider our concerns as a matter of priority.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Carmarthen East and Dinefwr
- Mid and West Wales

Student finance when studying at a UK higher education institute's overseas campus

Research Briefing:

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 25 Mehefin 2019

Petitions Committee | 25 June 2019

Petition number: [P-05-884](#) (158 signatures)

Petition title: Amendment to Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 to include UK institutions with operation overseas.

Text of petition:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to amend the current wording of the Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 ("the Regulations"). We call on the National Assembly to make the amendments to the Regulations to address the current limitation of Regulation 6, Condition 5 which prevents Welsh students accessing student finance to study at UK higher education institutions where the location of study is at their overseas campus which we consider could be achieved in one of either two ways, by either:

- widening the criteria in Condition 5 to include courses which are provided by UK higher education institutions at either their UK or overseas campuses; or
- amending Condition 5 to include courses which are provided by higher education institutions offering designated courses and to include the University of London Institute in Paris on the list of institutions offering designated courses, using your discretion under Regulation 8.

Proposed Amendment:

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Unless an amendment is made to the current wording of the Regulations, Welsh students will continue to suffer an unjust disadvantage when applying for courses at specific UK institutions. We call on the National Assembly for Wales to make this change as there is no equivalent limitation across other parts of the UK. If no action is taken, the Regulations may continue to act as a deterrent for students hoping to apply for courses at the University of London, Institute in Paris.

Additional Information **[provided by the petitioner]**:

Between September 2018 and February 2019 we received inconsistent messages relating to the University of London Institute in Paris' position and both current and prospective students received contradictory information on their eligibility. The University of London Institute in Paris took the following steps to address this:

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Copies of the relevant correspondence are available on request.

When the position was eventually clarified in February, Welsh applicants were informed by the University of London Institute in Paris of their ineligibility for student finance for these programmes which caused significant distress, so we call on the National Assembly for Wales to please consider our concerns as a matter of priority.

1. Summary

The petitioner calls on the National Assembly for Wales to:

- amend the student financial support regulations to allow Wales domiciled students to receive the same financial support to study at an overseas campus of a UK institution as they would to study a course entirely in the UK.

There are two possible forms of overseas study for UK students:

- the first is where a UK student studies all or some of their course at a UK institution that has a campus overseas; and
- the second is where a UK student studies some or all of their course at a non-UK institution that is also overseas.

It is the first example that is the subject of this petition.

The petition re-counts the situation of a student wishing to undertake a three year undergraduate course of study at the University of London's campus in Paris, the [University of London Institute of Paris \(ULIP\)](#).

As this course is delivered entirely in France it would not normally attract student support unless the power within the Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 to make an exception is used to exceptionally "designate" the course.

It is for institutions to apply for this exceptional designation status.

The above is true for both Wales and England.

It has not been possible to gain formal confirmation from Student Finance England at the time of writing, but via informal correspondence:

- it is **believed** that the courses in question at ULIP have been exceptionally designated by the Minister in England, meaning the courses attract student support for England domiciled students.
- It is **believed** that they have **not** been exceptionally designated by Welsh Ministers, and this may remain an option open to the institution – usually it is for the institution to apply for the exceptional designation of their own courses.

It is believed that the above is the reason why Wales domiciled students are not entitled to student support to study at ULIP, whilst England domiciled students are.

The Minister deems the issues raised by the petitioner as 'worthy' and she advises that officials will be reviewing the matter further although she is not minded to amend the regulations as called for by the petition.

2. Student finance regulations in Wales

The [Education \(Student Support\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2018](#) (the Regulations) set the criteria for student financial support at UK institutions for those ordinarily resident in Wales.

The Regulations came into force on 12 March 2018. To be eligible for student finance, both the student and their chosen course must meet certain criteria determined by the Welsh Government.

One condition is that a course of study must be one ‘designated’ by Welsh Government to attract student support. Courses can achieve ‘designated’ status in one of two ways – either by:

1. qualifying under the regulations; or
2. via Welsh Ministers assigning the status to a particular course that doesn’t otherwise fall to qualify under the regulations.

2.1 Designated status by meeting all the conditions in the regulations

In the regulations, designated courses must satisfy certain conditions. [Condition 5](#), to which the petition relates, requires that:

“At least half of the teaching and supervision which comprise the course is provided in the United Kingdom.”

On the face of it, the courses at ULIP would not meet this condition, as they are delivered entirely in France. Condition 5 was introduced by the 2018 regulations. As discussed above, and further below, the wording in the regulations relevant to England is very similar and has the same effect.

2.2 Designated status by Welsh Ministers making an exception

If a course does not meet the conditions for designation set out in the Regulations, the Minister may still grant it designated status via powers contained in [Regulation 8](#):

“(1) The Welsh Ministers may specify that a course is to be treated as a designated course despite the fact that, but for the specification, it would not otherwise be a designated course.

(2) The Welsh Ministers may suspend or revoke the specification of a course made under para (1).”

3. Student Finance Regulations in England

The petition makes reference to the regulations relevant to England.

In England, the [Education \(Student Support\) Regulations 2011](#) were later amended by the [Education \(Student Support\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2014](#) to include the same condition as was introduced in Wales in 2018:

“a course is substantially provided in the United Kingdom where at least half of the teaching and supervision which comprise the course is provided in the United Kingdom;”.

Despite this condition however, students from England are still able to access student funding, whilst Welsh students are currently unable to do so. This situation is reflected in the guidance on [ULIP’s website](#) which explains that:

“Students accepted onto this course are eligible to apply for tuition fee and maintenance loans from Student Finance England or other government bodies. Students who are applying for funding through Student Finance Wales are not eligible for tuition fee and maintenance loans”.

4. Welsh Government policy on funding study overseas

On 14 May the Minister for Education, Kirsty Williams, responded to the Petitions Committee following the Committee’s letter of 3 May.

The response reiterates that Welsh Government:

- is committed to ensuring support is available for students to study overseas;
- provides a number of opportunities for overseas study to students, including full participation in the Erasmus+ scheme;
- launched a new pilot scheme which offers opportunities for Welsh students to participate in activities abroad relating to their studies, such as study, volunteering and internships.

On the Welsh student support system, the Minister explains that:

“At least half of the teaching and supervision which comprise the course must be provided in the UK. By implication, up to half can be overseas. To enable this, fee and maintenance support continues to be paid and additional support in the form of travel grants may be available. **This is successful and effective for the overwhelming majority of students** [Research Service emphasis].”

With regards to the specific matters raised in the petition, the Minister advises she is ‘not minded to amend the general regulatory requirements regarding the location of provision at this time.’ She outlines two main constraints to supporting full degree study overseas:

- “Various models for support were considered during the Diamond Review of Higher Education and Student Finance in Wales and difficult decisions were necessary regarding priorities. **With the limited budget available in a time of continued austerity, our finance supports those most in need.** Extending this to those who study the entirety of their degree overseas is not possible.”
- “The regulatory framework for higher education has developed over a number of years [...]. **Exercising the regulatory functions necessary for this framework to be effective when provision moves abroad is likely to be difficult,** and increases risk to both groups.” [Research Service Emphasis]

The response also notes that increasing the amount of fee income remitted overseas would not support the Welsh Government’s aims for investment in higher education in Wales. [Research commissioned by Welsh Government](#) found a low level of demand for study of full degrees overseas.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-884
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/06047/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Assembly Member for Aberconwy
Chair - Petitions committee
National Assembly for Wales
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14 May 2019

Dear Chair

P-05-884 Amendment to Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 to include UK institutions with operations overseas

Thank you for your letter of 3 May regarding a petition made to the National Assembly for Wales.

I should first make it clear that the Welsh Government has long ensured that support is available for students to study overseas. Students may undertake placements abroad and participate fully in the Erasmus+ scheme. This ensures they are able to experience the language immersion and other activities which are crucial to achieving certain degrees, as well as facilitating positive cultural, intellectual and institutional exchange. Your petitioner may be aware that I announced a new pilot scheme to offer a mix of opportunities for Welsh

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

students to participate in activities abroad related to their studies. These include study, volunteering and internships, ranging from two or three weeks to eight weeks.

The statutory student support system in Wales is designed to provide support to eligible students who undertake a designated higher education course in the UK. At least half of the teaching and supervision which comprise the course must be provided in the UK. By implication, up to half can be overseas. To enable this, fee and maintenance support continues to be paid and additional support in the form of travel grants may be available.

This is successful and effective for the overwhelming majority of students. It has ensured that thousands of Welsh students have successfully pursued those degrees where a period of study overseas is either essential or highly desirable for academic success, most notably in modern foreign languages. This continues to be the case. From a purely academic point of view, it is not obvious why a long period of study abroad is necessary. I note that the University of London Institute in Paris is the only UK institution to organise provision in this way.

There are two major constraints to supporting full degree study overseas:

1. As I noted to the Committee in response to petition P-05-848, the package of support available from the 2018/19 academic year is based on recommendations resulting from the Diamond Review of Higher Education and Student Finance in Wales. Various models for support were considered during the review and difficult decisions were necessary regarding priorities. With the limited budget available in a time of continued austerity, our finance supports those most in need. Extending this to those who study the entirety of their degree overseas is not possible.

2. The regulatory framework for higher education has developed over a number of years and is designed to provide protections for, on the one hand, students, and, on the other, the public purse. Exercising the regulatory functions necessary for this framework to be effective when provision moves abroad is likely to be difficult, and increases risk to both groups.

There is also the fact that increasing the amount of fee income remitted overseas would not support our aims for investment in higher education in Wales.

I am supportive of overseas study and the Welsh Government commissioned research in order to determine how best to increase the number of students studying overseas (Overseas Study Pilot: Scoping Study, Government Social Research, 2018). The pilot I mentioned above is the result of that study. That report noted a low level of latent demand for study of full degrees overseas.

For these reasons, I am not minded to amend the general regulatory requirements regarding the location of provision at this time.

However, the issues the petitioner raises are worthy of consideration and I shall ask my officials to review them further.

I trust the above is helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kirsty Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K' and a long, sweeping tail.

Kirsty Williams AC/AM

Y Gweinidog Addysg

Minister for Education

P-05-884 Amendment to Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 to include UK institutions with operations overseas, Correspondence – Petitioner to Chair, 17.06.19

Dear Chair,

I am writing to you in response to Kirsty Williams AC/AM's letter dated 14 May 2019.

First, I would like to express my disappointment with Ms Williams's response and lack of understanding of the issues raised in my petition. I believe it is imperative that the goal of this petition regarding the Welsh Government's Student Support is fully understood by yourselves as Ms Williams has missed a vital detail. By presenting this petition, I am not asking the Petitions Committee to extend financial support to Welsh Students who wish to study the entirety of their degrees overseas in foreign institutes, but merely students who wish to study at British universities who offer degrees studied in an overseas British Campus. This was made quite clear in the title of the petition:

'Amendment to Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 to include UK institutions with operations overseas'

As Ms Williams states, the University of London Institute in Paris is the only UK institution to currently offer a degree taught entirely overseas. Therefore, the petition is asking you as the Petitions Committee to consider amending the Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 to ensure that Welsh students can study where they want and to ensure that the higher education system, and especially the university system does not become elitist once again. As it stands with the new regulations, Welsh students who wish to study at ULIP can only do so if they or their family have the means to pay the annual fee of £9250, plus enough funds for necessities such as rent, transport and grocery shopping, which would normally be covered by a maintenance loan. Due to the change in regulations, all students based in Wales who were intending to begin their Undergraduate degree in ULIP in September 2019 have had to find an alternative university as they could not finance their studies without the financial support of the student finance system.

I understand the apprehension surrounding the idea of funding students to study outside of the UK. However, ULIP is a British institution which is part of the University of London group which includes the London School of Economics and Political Science, the Royal Academy of Music, King's College London and Queen Mary University of London. In fact, as students of ULIP, our tuition fees are paid to Queen Mary University of London. I have enclosed a copy of my Tuition Fee Invoice for the academic year 2018/19 which confirms the above.

Ms Williams refers to the Diamond Review of Higher Education and Student Finance in Wales in her correspondence. I had previously read this review when I had issues with my own student finance. I understand that the new regulations are only based on this review, however I would like to draw your attention to specific aspects of the document.

Throughout the review, studying abroad is mentioned and as early on as the Foreword, it states:

“We have thought deeply about whether Welsh students should be funded to study out of Wales and have concluded that it is both in the students’ and, indeed, Wales’ interests to enable students to study across national boundaries including Europe and, potentially, further afield.” (The Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance Arrangements in Wales: Final Report, 2016, p.6)

I have included below excerpts from the Diamond Review which support my petition. I have also included page numbers so that you can easily find the whole excerpts in the Review if you wish to do so. For your information, these page numbers correspond to the online version of the Final Report on the Welsh Government’s website.

- The Review Panel recommends that the holistic funding system described above should be available for study in Wales, across the UK, and across Europe (subject in the latter case to any implications of the result of the recent referendum on membership of the European Union). (p.8)
- The funding system should not impact negatively on institutional autonomy and academic freedom. (p.17)
- The Review Panel have thought deeply about whether Welsh students should be funded to study outside of Wales and concluded that it is in both the students and Wales’ interests to enable students to study across national boundaries, including in Europe and, potentially, further afield. It is recommended that student support should be available to Welsh domiciled students that choose to study anywhere in the UK or in other European Union member states, depending on the form of the UK’s on-going relationship with the EU following the conclusion of exit negotiations. (p.57)
- The Welsh Government should also explore the possibility of running a pilot scheme to establish whether it is possible to extend the student support package beyond the UK and EU for Welsh domiciled students that choose to study further afield for the whole of their degree programme⁵⁸. This proposed pilot would be applicable to Welsh domiciled students wishing to study at not for-profit higher education providers beyond the EU and those

institutions with a recognised track record of quality provision (as agreed by HEFCW). (pp.52-53)

- Student support should be portable and available to Welsh domiciled students that choose to study anywhere in the UK or in other European Union States (subject to the UK remaining in the EU) (p.53)
- The Welsh Government to explore possibility of running a pilot scheme to establish whether it is possible or desirable to extend the student support package beyond the UK and EU – for Welsh domiciled students that choose to study further afield for the whole of their degree programme. (The proposed pilot would be study at not-for-profit organisations with a recognised track record of quality provision). (p.53)
- In conclusion, the proposed package of recommendations outlined above comprises interlocking elements and should be seen in its entirety; it therefore requires implementation as a whole. (p.69)

From the information above, I believe that it is evident that the Diamond Review supports providing finance for Welsh students to study overseas, therefore I do not understand why the Welsh Government and above all, the Minister for Education are so against providing Welsh students with the funding they need to study at the University of London Institute in Paris. I am of the opinion that my university is actually providing two important aspects which are mentioned in the Final Report, supporting British institutes and studying abroad. Firstly, it is a British institute therefore it is a part of the British higher education system. As a student of the University of London Institute in Paris, I pay the same amount for fees (£9250) as a student studying in the University of Bristol, for example. Secondly, the university's building (which it shares with the British Council) is as the name implies, in Paris, hence students have the opportunity of studying and living abroad whilst gaining a British degree from the University of London. It is important to note here that the University of London Institute in Paris specialises in French Studies, therefore the majority of students will study French as a major or minor subject in their degree. Ms Williams made an interesting comment about studying abroad. She claimed that "from a purely academic point of view, it is not obvious why a long period of study abroad is necessary." I would hope that I do not need to list the benefits of studying the French language, French History, French Literature, history of French art and French linguistics in France!

I would also like to make a few comments on the other constraint mentioned by Ms Williams, the protection of the public purse. I am in total agreement that we must protect the Welsh economy and tax payers' money; however it would theoretically benefit the public purse if Welsh students decided to study French at the University

of London Institute in Paris as opposed to a university in Britain. The French studies degree at the University of London Institute in Paris is only three years long whereas a French degree in Britain is normally four years as there is a year abroad. Obviously, this is not needed if you study at the University of London Institute in Paris as you are already abroad! This means that only three years of studies would need to be funded instead of four.

From my personal experience, I receive around £18,000 per year and I will have received this amount for three years at the end of my degree which will total to £54,000. If I had decided to study at the other universities I applied for (Strathclyde, Dundee, Aberdeen and Swansea) my tuition fee loan and maintenance loan would have totalled £72,000 if I'd studied at Swansea University and £90,000 if I'd studied in Scotland (French degrees last five years in Scottish universities). Obviously these figures are approximate, but I hope they highlight the financial advantages of giving Welsh students the opportunity to study at the University of London Institute in Paris.

Additionally, if the Minister of Education is so concerned about the public purse and investment in higher education in Wales, why can Welsh students receive loans and funding to study at British institutions outside of Wales? (Except if they wish to study at the University of London Institute in Paris, a British institution with one main difference to any other British university – its location.)

I hope the above information is helpful in explaining some more about my petition and the University of London Institute in Paris.

I look forward to meeting the Committee on June 18 when I hand the petition over. If you have any questions, I would be more than happy to answer them.

Yours Sincerely,

Alanna Jones

Agenda Item 5.2

P-05-886 Stop the Red Route (A55/A494 corridor)

This petition was submitted by Linda Scott having collected a total of 1,275 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly of Wales to urge the Welsh Government to withdraw its support for the "Red Route" (A55/A494/A548 Deeside Corridor Improvement) on the grounds that:

1) The construction of the new road through ancient woodland, and across agricultural land, contradicts Planning Policy Wales and the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

2) The recently published plans for a new A494 Dee Bridge, widening of the A494 and other improvements will deliver the Deeside traffic improvements without the need for the 'Red Route'.

3) The costs used to justify the choice of the "Red Route" failed to account for necessary upgrade of the Flintshire Bridge. It also does not include the addition of crawler lane at a major congestion point on the A55, the hill out of Northop towards Holywell. Congestion at these points will be made worse by the construction of the Red Route. The underestimate of the costs used imply that the proposed road cannot be considered value for money. Furthermore, the costs do not include the proposed A494 improvements (outlined in 2).

4) The choice of the Red Route was based on unrepresentative traffic surveys.

5) In considering the Red Route the Welsh Government failed to adequately consult residents of the Flint and Northop areas despite the major potential impact on their communities. Despite costing over a quarter of a billion pounds, the new road would be likely to lead to more traffic congestion in these communities.

6) The International Panel on Climate Change has called for urgent action to reduce CO2 emissions, saying we have only 12 years left to save the world's climate. We need to be investing our limited resources in sustainable transport like rail.

Additional Information

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Delyn
- North Wales

Petition: Stop the Red Route (A55/ A494 corridor)

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 25 Mehefin 2019

Petitions Committee | 25 June 2019

Research Briefing:

Petition Number: P-05-886

Petition title: Stop the Red Route (A55/ A494 corridor)

Text of petition:

We call on the National Assembly of Wales to urge the Welsh Government to withdraw its support for the 'Red Route' (A55/ A494/A548 Deeside Corridor Improvement) on the grounds that:

- 1) The construction of the new road through ancient woodland, and across agricultural land, contradicts Planning Policy Wales and the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- 2) The recently published plans for a new A494 Dee Bridge, widening of the A494 and other improvements will deliver the Deeside traffic improvements without the need for the 'Red Route'.
- 3) The costs used to justify the choice of the 'Red Route' failed to account for necessary upgrade of the Flintshire Bridge. It also does not include the addition of a crawler lane at a major congestion point on the A55, the hill out of Northop towards Holywell. Congestion at these points will be made worse by the construction of the Red Route. The underestimate of the costs used imply that the proposed road cannot be considered value for money. Furthermore, the costs do not include the proposed A494 improvements (outlined in 2).
- 4) The choice of the 'Red Route' was based on unrepresentative traffic surveys.
- 5) In considering the 'Red Route' the Welsh Government failed to adequately consult residents of the Flint and Northop areas despite the major potential impact on their

communities. Despite costing over a quarter of a billion pounds, the new road would be likely to lead to more traffic congestion in these communities.

6) The International Panel on Climate Change has called for urgent action to reduce CO2 emissions, saying we have only 12 years left to save the world's climate. We need to be investing our limited resources in sustainable transport like rail.

Background

The Welsh Government is the highway authority for the Welsh trunk road and motorway network in Wales and is responsible for maintenance and improvement of the network, including the A55, A494 and A548.

The Welsh Government's [A55/A494/A548 Deeside corridor scheme](#) aims to "improve journey times between the River Dee and Northop Interchange".

A55/A494/A548 Deeside corridor scheme

In March 2017, the Welsh Government launched a [consultation on improvements to the A55/A494/A548 Deeside corridor](#). The consultation sought views on two different options for this section of the road network:

- A blue option to include widening the A55/A494 route and the removal, modification and improvement of junctions; and
- A red option to include increasing capacity on the existing A548 and a new road between the A55 and A548.

In addition to this public consultation the Welsh Government also assessed each option in accordance with the [Welsh Transport Planning Appraisal Guidance \(WelTAG\)](#).

In September 2017, the then Cabinet Secretary (now Minister) for Economy and Transport, Ken Skates, [announced in Plenary](#) that following the consultation and WelTAG appraisal the preferred route to be adopted would be [the red option](#).

The red option

As outlined, the red option includes building a new road. The scheme consists of:

- A new 13km two-lane dual carriageway, linking the A55–A5119 Northop Junction (Junction 33) with the A494 and A550 north of Deeside Parkway Junction; and
- Increasing the capacity along the existing A548, including modifications and improvements to junctions and providing a new section of road between the A548 and the A55.

As [reported in the media](#), the red route was the preferred option of Flintshire Council's Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, however local residents have raised concerns over the route.

River Dee bridge scheme

The petitioner refers to plans for the [A494 River Dee bridge](#). This is a separate highway scheme, with the Welsh Government considering options to replace the existing bridge.

A WelTAG appraisal of different options for this scheme has been undertaken and a preferred option identified. The Welsh Government consulted on this option between November 2018 and February 2019. Consultation responses are currently being considered.

The North East Wales Metro

In announcing his preferred red route option for the A55/A494/A548 Deeside corridor scheme, the then Cabinet Secretary referred to the scheme in the context of a range of additional transport initiatives for the area. This included funding for the creation of active travel routes which will contribute to the Welsh Government's vision for a North East Wales Metro.

In March 2017, the Welsh Government published [North East Wales Metro: Moving North Wales Forward](#). The brochure set out an outline vision for the project and listed existing projects in development including rail and integrated transport schemes. This included reference to a number of highway schemes, including both the A55/A494/A548 Deeside corridor scheme and the A494 River Dee bridge scheme.

Welsh Government action

In his letter to the Chair of the Petitions Committee, dated 6 June 2019, the Minister for Economy and Transport, Ken Skates, addresses a number of the points raised by the petitioner.

The Minister highlights that:

Whilst the red option crosses...Ancient Woodland, the crossing location has been selected at a point where the steep-sided valley can be spanned by a viaduct with minimum effect on the watercourse and vegetation...Mitigation would include substantial, targeted areas of new woodland planting to replace or improve screening in the long-term.

The Minister also highlights the traffic surveys and modelling that was used to determine the impact of both the red and blue options, in addition to the public consultation undertaken in regards the scheme. Other initiatives that the Minister suggests will contribute to the Welsh Government's vision for the North East Wales Metro, in addition to this particular highway scheme, are also outlined.

The petitioner raises concerns regarding climate change. In April 2019 the Welsh Government [declared a climate emergency](#). The First Minister, Mark Drakeford, also highlighted the adverse

impacts on the environment when [announcing his decision in June 2019](#) that he had decided not to proceed with the proposed [M4 corridor around Newport scheme](#).

National Assembly for Wales action

In [response to the then Cabinet Secretary's 2017 announcement](#) that the red option would be adopted as the preferred route, Mark Isherwood AM referred to the River Dee Bridge Scheme and asked:

In the consultation you describe that as a separate scheme, but can you confirm, as I know to be the case, that the red route is dependent on that, and confirm how the two will work concurrently to ensure that the whole can deliver as intended?

The then Cabinet Secretary responded that the:

...work will take place whilst, in parallel, it will not be dependent on us pursuing the red route. That work must take place regardless of the Deeside corridor project.

Also in response to the announcement, Michelle Brown AM stated that:

It seems to me that the blue route was the better option. I appreciate that it would have caused a lot of disturbance in the Deeside area while it was under construction, but what concerns me about the red route is that, effectively, you're just moving the bottleneck further west.

Hannah Blythyn AM asked the then Cabinet Secretary how the goals set out in the *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015* will be used to assess the environmental impact of the red route. The then Cabinet Secretary responded:

I am confident that, through our new Welsh transport appraisal guidance scheme, we'll be able to ensure that the Well-being of Future Generations Act is adhered to. I think, so far, the process that we've followed has indeed recognised the ways of working that are promoted by the Act.

In December 2018, Darren Millar AM [tabled a written question](#) asking what action the Welsh Government is taking to address congestion on the A494. In his response, the then Cabinet Secretary provided an update on the A55/A494/A548 Deeside corridor scheme stating that the Welsh Government is:

...currently in the process of procuring an employer's agent. This will be followed by the procurement of a contractor and designer who will develop the preferred route in more detail before progressing through the statutory procedures and onto construction.

On 12 June 2019 during Plenary, Russell George AM referred to the First Minister's decision not to proceed with the proposed M4 corridor around Newport scheme partly on environmental grounds. [He asked the Minister for Economy and Transport](#) whether the:

decision throw[s] into doubt other transport schemes in Wales, such as the Deeside corridor scheme...Does this decision by the First Minister represent a fundamental change to Welsh Government transport policy on environmental grounds?

The Minister responded:

The Member, I think, rightly identifies a number of schemes that many might fear will be lost as a consequence of this being seen as having set a precedent. That is not the case. All of those programmes will go ahead...work on the A494/A55, will be proceeding this summer with further modelling and Welsh transport appraisal guidance work and further consultations and meetings with local stakeholders.



Ein cyf/Our ref KS/06350/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair - Petitions committee

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

06 June 2019

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 3 May regarding petition P-05-886 Stop the Red Route (A55/A494 corridor).

Whilst the Red Option crosses the Lead Brook Valley and its Ancient Woodland, the crossing location has been selected at a point where the steep-sided valley can be spanned by a viaduct with minimum effect on the watercourse and vegetation. Various types of structure will be considered to maintain continuity between the severed woodland and allow continued movement of wildlife beneath the road deck. Mitigation would include substantial, targeted areas of new woodland planting to replace or improve screening in the long-term.

The A494 River Dee Improvement is required to address the life expired existing River Dee Bridge. This improvement will assist in addressing the existing 'chicane' arrangements on the A494 in the westbound direction, but it will not address the overall traffic congestion problems within the Flintshire Corridor area.

We are not anticipating needing to upgrade the Flintshire Bridge and as part of the next stage of development we will be investigating the need for any additional lanes on the A55 from Northop towards Holywell. This investigation will also include an economics assessment to ensure any requirements for additional lanes do provide value for money.

In terms of traffic surveys, roadside interview surveys were undertaken in late September and early October 2015, in accordance with national transport appraisal guidance. All the roadside interview surveys were planned to be conducted for a 12 hour period (between 07:00 – 19:00). The survey dates were: Tuesday 29 September 2015; Wednesday 30 September 2015; Thursday 1 October 2015; and Tuesday 6 October 2015. Additional automatic traffic counts were also collected during October and November 2015 at 14 locations and video surveys were undertaken at 5 locations where data was collected for 7 days at each location.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Manual classified (vehicle type) counts were also undertaken at 32 locations in October 2015 where data covered the twelve hour period between 07:00 and 19:00 for one neutral weekday at each location.

These traffic surveys were used to develop a traffic model of the Flintshire Corridor area which was validated to ensure the model represented the actual traffic flows on the existing roads.

Three time periods have been modelled, as recommended by national transport appraisal guidance. Specifically, the traffic model represents an average Monday to Thursday 'typical' weekday in 2015 in line with national traffic modelling guidance. The modelled time periods are morning peak hour (between 08:00 and 09:00); Inter-peak hour (average of 10:00 to 16:00); and evening peak hour (between 17:00 and 18:00).

The results of the traffic were therefore representative and were used to develop a transport model of the Flintshire area. Traffic forecasting was then undertaken using the transport model to determine the impact of both the Red and Blue options. The traffic surveys were therefore representative, carried out in accordance with national standards, and used correctly to determine the economic benefits of both the Red and Blue options.

A twelve week public consultation was undertaken between 13 March and 5 June 2017. Two public exhibitions were held week commencing 20 March for two days at two local venues. Ewloe and Connah's Quay were selected for the consultation exhibitions as they were seen as the most convenient and accessible venues for the majority of those affected by both route options. They were advertised widely through various channels including local papers, radio stations, posters displayed locally and on our website. The public consultation exhibitions were also advertised through 5000 letter drops to properties within 500m of the routes. Following feedback, a further exhibition was held on 10 May at the Wrexham Glyndwr University Northop Campus. Letters advertising the exhibition have been distributed to those affected by the scheme in the Northop area. 1,842 people attended the exhibitions and 2,436 questionnaires were returned with a further 100 comments being received by email, letter and telephone. The consultation was therefore widespread and considered to be effective.

My vision for transport in North Wales and the North East Wales Metro was published in March 2017. The focus is on creating integrated transport hubs at key employment sites across north Wales and the wider Mersey Dee area. It is about better connectivity within, to and from and between the hubs. In North Wales these hubs are centred in the Bangor/Menai, Colwyn Bay/Llandudno/Conwy, Abergele/Rhyl/St Asaph, Wrexham, and Deeside areas.

Transport for Wales has been commissioned to develop schemes for an integrated Shotton station and a new Deeside Parkway station working in partnership with Network Rail and Flintshire County Council. I also awarded c£2.8 million of funding in 2017-18 to Flintshire County Council for integrated transport schemes in the Deeside area that will contribute to the delivery of the North East Wales Metro. The funding was for schemes to improve access to and within Deeside Industrial Park by supporting the acquisition of a site for a proposed park and ride service, enhancing the Deeside shuttle service, providing active travel and bus facilities within the Park and improving the bus link from Zone 2 to Zone 3. I awarded further funding of just under £1.5 million in 2018-19 for further bus and active travel facilities in the Deeside Industrial Park.

Funding of over £4.3m for 2019-20 was announced on 16 May for further active travel and bus priority measures in Deeside. These schemes will improve access to and within Deeside Industrial Park and the wider Enterprise Zone, linking communities with jobs and services. The schemes offer a low carbon travel option enabling people to leave their own vehicle at home which will be of benefit to our environment.

Yours ever,

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

Ken Skates AC/AM

Gweinidog yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for Economy and Transport

**P-05-886 - Stop the Red Route (A55/A494 corridor), Correspondence –
Petitioner to Chair 19.06.19**

**Petition calling on the National Assembly of Wales to urge the Welsh
Government to withdraw its support for the “Red Route” (A55/ A494/ A548
Deeside Corridor Improvement)**

We welcome the Assembly Government’s leadership in recognising the serious threat climate change poses globally through their recent declaration of a Climate Emergency. We also agree with the recent **Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales** document that the ambitious targets necessary for the reduction of emissions requires a fundamental shift in behaviour including *“a modal shift from car dependency to sustainable forms of transport”*.

We further welcome the first First Minister’s decision to scrap the M4 relief road. We note that in reaching his decision he did not question the planning inspector support for the scheme based on value for money and environmental and health grounds (ie. fit to existing WelTAG Guidelines). But that he that he attached *“greater weight than the Inspector did to the adverse impacts that the project would have on the environment”* and that was sufficient to shift the balance to opposing the scheme. As such the Government have effectively set a greatly increased regard against ‘environmental damage’ in assessing development proposals.

The construction of the Red Route will cause extensive environmental damage including the destruction of ancient wet woodland and the destruction and disturbance of many unique natural habitats. This is evidenced by the support our petition has received from many environmental groups including the Woodland Trust and the North Wales Wildlife Trust.

We are told that the Red Route will be to reduce traffic on Aston Hill by **9%** based on today’s traffic figures (or **24%** based on the projections presented for 2037). At a cost of at least £255.4 million (20% of the cost of the M4 Relief Road) we would ask the Assembly Government to reconsider their support for the Red Route and in doing so apply the new *“greater weighting to the adverse impacts that the project would have on the environment”* as applied in the M4 relief road consideration.

The choice of the Red Route as the preferred option was based on the results of a WAG consultation and a previous study (*Reasons for selecting the preferred route*. P14 document WG33176). The consultation was presented as a binary choice between the RED and BLUE routes. We argue that:

- 1) The outcome of the consultation was geographically biased towards those who opposed the Blue route. This point is supported by our petition which was signed by more than 3 x (6 x) times as many people as responded to the consultation and opposed the Red Route. ie. the consultation greatly underestimates the opposition to the Red route and so point 6.2 (*Reasons for selecting ...*) is not valid. **See Section 1 below for detailed evidence.**
- 2) The Red Route costings used in the consultation (Red Route: £255.4m as opposed to Blue Route: £283.0m) were not complete and in consequence the Benefit Cost Ratio presented in the consultation is not correct. Consequently, point 6.3 (*Reasons for selecting ...*) is not valid. **See section 2 below for detailed evidence.**
- 3) The traffic modelling on which the traffic projections used in reaching the decision are not sufficient to show value for money, invalidating point 6.3. **See section 3 for detailed evidence.**

As such the reasons stated for selecting the Red Route as the preferred option (as stated in WG33176) are not valid and so we urge the Welsh Government to withdraw its support for the Red Route.

1) Biased Consultation Outcome

This petition of some 1,500 signatures (1275 online, 150 on paper) opposes the RED route. The petition has been largely supported by residents of Flint, Flint Mountain and Northop indicating strong opposition to the RED route amongst these (non-Deeside) communities. We argue that the original consultation did not provide members of these communities with the same opportunity to respond as it did to Deeside residents (who are more likely to oppose the Blue Route). Our evidence that the consultation outcome was not representative of the views of all the communities impacted by the proposed road schemes is set out below:

- The consultation period was 13th March to the 5th June 2017. Two exhibitions were organised to explain the choice being given were organised in Ewloe (21st-22nd March 2017) and Coleg Cambria (23rd-24th March 2017) both of which have Deeside addresses. We are not aware that these events were particularly advertised to non-Deeside residents.
- The leading question of the consultation was: "*Are you resident in the Deeside area?*" to which **63.3%** of respondents answered yes (WG33176).

- The consultation results highlight a largest cluster of support for the RED Route around the Ewloe/ Deeside area (WG33176, Q13) and area impacted by the Blue route.
- However a substantial number (16,002 based on the 2011 census) of non-Deeside residents are adversely impacted by the RED Route: the residents of Northop, Flint Mountain and Flint (**NB:** Flint Town Council and Northop community council both oppose the Red Route. The traffic modelling presented clearly shows increases in traffic impacting these communities, not to mention a multi-story traffic interchange between Northop and Flint Mountain).
- It was not until the consultation was underway that the omission of Flint and Northop residents was realised (*as acknowledged in the Minister's letter of the 6th June 2019*). A further consultation exhibition to explain the alternative road schemes was organised at **Glyndwr University Northop Campus** but only ran for 1 day, on the 10th May 2017 - only 3 weeks from the end of the (12 week) consultation period. This greatly reduced the opportunity of Northop residents to respond when compared to those on Deeside who had the full 12 weeks. Flint residents had no local consultation despite the likely impacts on their community and strong opposition from Flint's Town Council.
 - **NB:** WG33176 incorrectly states that the Glyndwr Northop Campus event took place on 10th March (before the start of the consultation). It actually took place on the 10th May as confirmed by the Minister.
- The impact of any advertising of the Glyndwr/ Northop event in Flint and Northop was clearly limited given the poor turnout (95 people) compared to the earlier events on Deeside (which attracted nearly 1000 residents) (figures based on Para 5.1 WG33176).
- The impact of the greatly reduced consultation on the response rate from Flint and Northop residents is clearly evident in the limited figures presented in WG33176 (Q13 numbers of responses: Ewloe: 754; Flint & Northop: 152).
 - **NB:** *We note that the figures quoted for attendance at the public consultation vary by a factor of two between paragraphs 3.4 and 5.1 of document WG33176.*

2) Presentation of Value for Money

In the consultation the construction costs were presented as: Red Route £255.4 million and Blue Route £283.0 million. However we argue that the Red Route costs are significantly underestimated due to a number of omissions:

- There are safety issues with the current A494 identified in the Stage 2 study (WG33176 para 2.2 and objective 4). These include *“the alignment of the A494/A55 junction at Ewloe and highway layout on the A494, including several junctions”*. The correction of these issues is included in the costing of the Blue Route but not the Red Route.
- However, as the construction of the Red Route will only reduce traffic flow by an average of 9% on the A494 (when comparing to today’s figures) the correction of the A494 safety issues will still need to be carried out, in parallel with the construction of the Red Route. As such these costs need to be added to the cost of the Red Route.
- The additional costs associated with the upgrade of the Flintshire Bridge have not been included. We understand that a £500,000 survey of works required to upgrade the bridge to accommodate the Red Route have already been carried out. We note from the Minister’s letter of the 6th June 2019: *“We are not anticipating needing to upgrade the Flintshire Bridge ...”*. This is not what we have heard from Flintshire County Council. Perhaps he could reassure us by providing us with a letter in which he clearly states that there will be no costs for works the Flintshire Bridge, to Flintshire Council Taxpayers or to the Assembly Government, associated with the construction of the Red Route?
- As the Minister states in his letter, the A494 Dee Bridge renewal scheme (an uncosted part of the Blue Route) is shortly to go ahead irrespective of proposed route selected. (Although the Minister does not appear to believe the widening of the A494 will not solve Deeside traffic congestion problems)? It would make sense to wait and see, and to assess the impact these works have before committing to spending a further quarter of a billion pounds on either the Blue or the Red Options?).
- The addition of these significant extra costs to the total Red Route cost would make this route the more expensive and also impact the benefit-cost ratio given.

3) Inappropriate traffic modelling assumptions invalidate WelTAG Guidelines for value for money

We thank the Minister (6/6/2019) for confirming the information we have received regarding the traffic projections, ie. that forecasts for the two routes are based on day time, week day traffic surveys, outside of holiday times, using standard assumptions as recommended by national traffic appraisal guidance. The accuracy of

the traffic modelling is therefore dependent on the applicability of these 'standard' assumptions when applied to modelling A55/ A494 traffic flow.

However we argue traffic flow on the A55/ A494 does not conform to standard flow patterns as these roads provide the main access to popular tourist destinations (North Wales coast and Snowdonia) and also forms part of the Euro-route E22 linking the Ports of Hull and Holyhead.

The personal experience of the petitioners is that, aside from accidents, the heaviest traffic tends to occur at weekends and during holiday periods. We note from the Minister's letter that the traffic flow model has not been validated for these busy periods and so the model predictions cannot be trusted for the busiest times.

The main reason for the holdups is that there is a long hill west out of Northop towards Holywell (see figure 1). We note from the Minister's letter he concedes that this is an issue, but that there is no firm commitment to a 3rd (crawler) lane on this hill to help alleviate this problem. A persistent problem linked to the hold-ups on the section of the A55 between the Ewloe Interchange and Holywell are major traffic hold-ups in Flint (as shown in figure 1).

We are surprised to note that the traffic forecasts and journey times provided in the consultation do not appear to consider the impact of the hill westbound, despite its proximity to the proposed Northop Interchange (see figure 1 below).

Given the A55/ A494 form part of the Euro-route E22 with some 500 lorries passing each way (to/ from Holyhead) daily, 99% of which are linked to trade with the EU (Freight in Wales Statistics 2014) we find it very surprising, given the cost of the Red Route, that no consideration has been given to the impact of BREXIT on traffic flow.

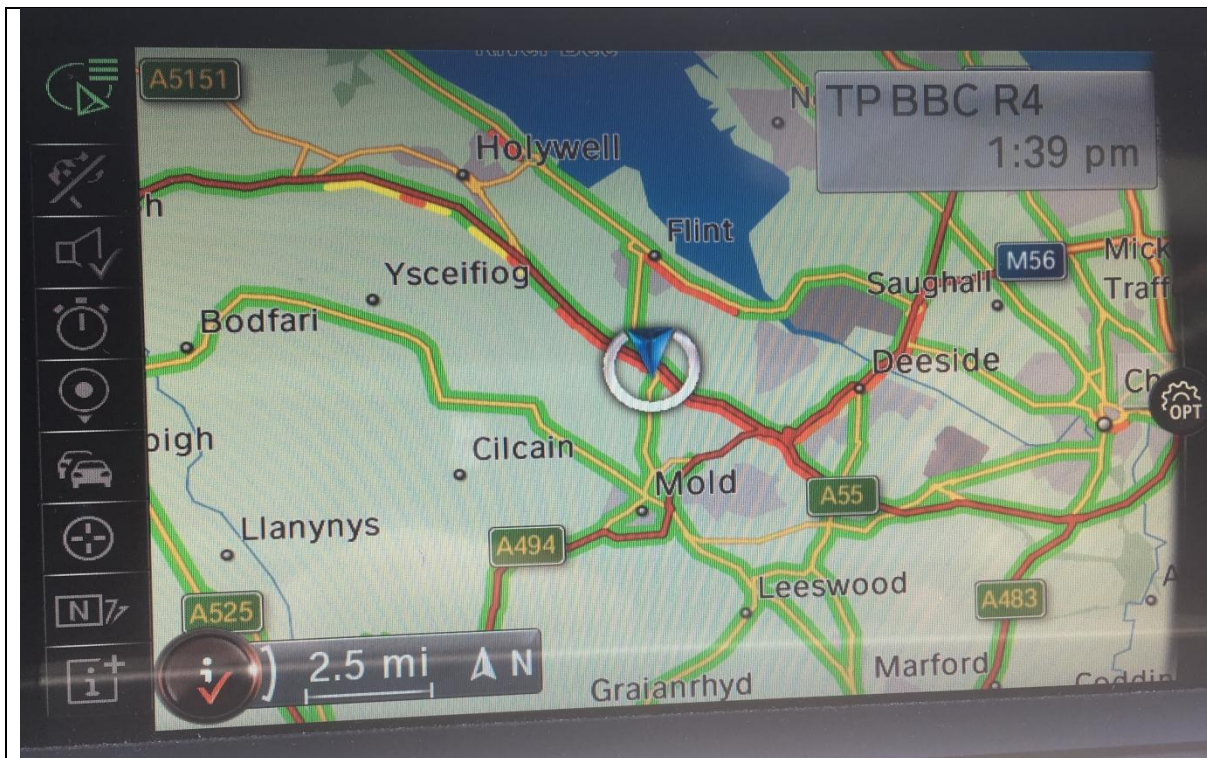


Figure 1: Traffic flow in north east Wales on Saturday 20th April. The sections of road coloured red indicate major traffic hold-ups. The silver circle with the arrow indicates the point at which the proposed Red Route will feed west bound traffic onto the A55. Note that the west bound traffic is held up some 3 miles beyond proposed Northop Interchange. Also note the 3 mile tailback into Flint.

In conclusion we argue that the public consultation outcome, costs used in the consultation and the traffic projections used in the consultation, on which the Assembly Government's decision was based, are flawed and as such the Assembly Government should withdraw their support for the Red Route.

Agenda Item 5.3

P-05-888 Make GCSE Welsh Language compulsory in all schools in Wales

This petition was submitted by Gwion Rhisiart having collected a total of 175 signatures.

Text of Petition

Currently, Welsh Language is compulsory as either first or second language in all state schools in Wales. However, this does not apply to private schools, who do not have to follow the national curriculum. In many cases, pupils leave private schools not being able to speak a word of Welsh. If we are to progress with our language, and want to reach the government's target of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050, we must give every child in Wales the chance to learn. We call on the Welsh Government to: –Make Welsh Second Language GCSE compulsory in all schools in Wales by law for the new curriculum in 2022.

Additional Information

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Cardiff Central
- South Wales Central

Make GCSE Welsh Language compulsory in all schools

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 26 Mehefin 2019

Petitions Committee | 9 June 2019

Research Briefing:

Petition number: P-05-888

Petition title: Make GCSE Welsh Language compulsory in all schools in Wales

Text of petition: Currently, Welsh Language is compulsory as either first or second language in all state schools in Wales. However, this does not apply to private schools, who do not have to follow the national curriculum. In many cases, pupils leave private schools not being able to speak a word of Welsh. If we are to progress with our language, and want to reach the government's target of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050, we must give every child in Wales the chance to learn. We call on the Welsh Government to: –Make Welsh Second Language GCSE compulsory in all schools in Wales by law for the new curriculum in 2022.

Background

National curriculum

The National Curriculum in Wales is founded in the [Education Act 2002](#). This states that the National Curriculum only applies to **maintained** schools. Section 97 defines a 'maintained school' as:

- (a) any community, foundation or voluntary school maintained by a local education authority in Wales, or
- (b) except where otherwise stated, any community or foundation special school which is maintained by a local education authority in Wales and is not established in a hospital;

Welsh in the National Curriculum

Sections 105 and 106 of the 2002 Act make Welsh compulsory in the National Curriculum in both Welsh and English-medium schools until the end of Key Stage 4. As stated above, the National Curriculum is only applicable to maintained schools.

At Key Stage 4, schools register pupils for either first language or second language Welsh GCSE, or for **no qualification at all**. Although Welsh is a compulsory subject in the national curriculum, it is **not compulsory to enter learners to sit a GCSE or other qualification**. Although

the study of Welsh or Welsh second language is compulsory, **making a decision on a particular qualification is a matter for schools and is done at a local level.** However, the [Welsh Second Language subject Order](#) (PDF 2.21MB) (July 2015) states that there should be appropriate assessment and accreditation available to all learners.

Independent schools

All independent schools in Wales must be registered with the Welsh Government. [The Independent School Standards \(Wales\) Regulations 2003](#) made under the Education Act 2002 set out standards that all independent schools must satisfy as a condition of registration and also of remaining registered. These regulations include the quality of education provided by the school.

Paragraph 1(2) of the Schedule provides a number of **areas** (rather than subjects) that independent schools must include within their curriculum. [Welsh Government guidance](#) [PDF 469KB] states that the regulations are not intended to be prescriptive about the way a school organises its curriculum but schools should give pupils experience in the areas that are set out in the Minister for Education's letter to the Committee. One of these is 'linguistics'. Plans and schemes of work must illustrate how each area is to be woven into the school curriculum. In relation to 'linguistics' the guidance states:

this area is concerned with developing pupils' communication skills and increasing their command of language through listening, speaking, reading and writing. In all schools there must be lessons in written and spoken English or Welsh. Many schools will also teach other languages.

Welsh Government action

Welsh second language Review Group

[On 17 July 2012, the then Minister for Education and Skills, Leighton Andrews](#), announced that he would establish a Group to review Welsh second language, stating that standards and attainment in Welsh second language education were lower than in other subjects. The Group, chaired by Professor Sioned Davies, was asked to consider what changes should be made to the teaching and assessment of Welsh second language at Key Stages 3 and 4 to enable more learners to use the language in future employment and in the community.

The Review Group's report [One language for all: Review of Welsh second language at Key Stages 3 and 4](#) [PDF 191KB] (September 2013) made a number of recommendations, including that Welsh second language should continue to be a statutory subject within the National Curriculum and continue to be a compulsory subject for all pupils in Wales until the end of Key Stage 4. They also recommended that the Welsh Government should:

revise the Welsh programme of study, over a three to five year period, and use the National Literacy Framework for Welsh as a basis for a revised curriculum to include:

- one continuum of learning for Welsh with clear expectations for pupils learning Welsh in English–medium, bilingual and Welsh–medium settings; and
- guidance, support materials and training.

As a consequence the Welsh second language element of the Welsh programme of study would be removed along with the term Welsh second language.

The new curriculum for Wales

The report’s recommendations in relation to the curriculum were taken into consideration by Professor Graham Donaldson in his review of the national curriculum, [Successful Futures](#) [PDF 2MB] (February 2015). Professor Donaldson also recommended that the Welsh language should remain compulsory up to the age of 16 and also that there should be a renewed focus in schools on learning Welsh primarily as a means of communication, particularly oral communication and understanding.

On 28 January 2019, the Welsh Government published [Our National Mission: A Transformational Curriculum Proposals for a new legislative framework](#) [PDF 2MB]. The consultation sought views on proposals to legislate for the implementation of the new curriculum arrangements and not the detailed content of the new curriculum. The consultation closed on 25 March 2019. The consultation states that the intention is to include a provision for Welsh to be a compulsory element of the new curriculum for Wales for all learners of compulsory school age (3–16 years old). It states:

3.98 The requirements for Welsh, English and International Languages will be set out in the Languages, Literacy and Communications (LLC) AoLE for all learners. The proposed content of the LLC AoLE (including components currently referred to as What Matters Statements; Knowledge, Skills and Experiences; and Achievement Outcomes) will be set out in statutory guidance and will be based on one continuum for learning languages.

3.99 Within the new LLC AoLE, all learners will follow the same curriculum for learning Welsh along a continuum, thus removing the term Welsh first and second language and repealing the associated programmes of study. The LLC AoLE has been designed to recognise the varying pace of learning in English and Welsh medium schools.

The new Curriculum for Wales will only be a statutory requirement in maintained schools.

Cymraeg 2050

[Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers](#) [PDF 3MB] (2017) is the Welsh Government’s strategy for the promotion and facilitation of the use of the Welsh language. The strategy includes a number of targets in relation to education including:

- Increasing the proportion of learners who leave school able to speak Welsh;
- Increasing the proportion of learners in Welsh–medium education.

Increasing the number of teachers teaching Welsh or teaching through the medium of Welsh. Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref: P-05-888
Ein cyf/Our ref: KW/06210/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Assembly Member for Aberconwy
Chair - Petitions committee
National Assembly for Wales
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29 May 2019

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter dated 22 May on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding a petition concerning making Welsh Second Language compulsory in all schools in Wales including independent schools with the roll out of the new curriculum.

As the petition notes, Welsh is currently compulsory in all maintained schools in Wales following either the First Language or Second Language programmes of study as appropriate.

In the new curriculum there will be no distinction between first and second language as all learners will be taught Welsh within the Languages, Literacy and Communication Area of Learning and Experience. In this Area of Learning and Experience all learners will follow the same curriculum but expectations will reflect the different pace and depth of learning Welsh for those learners whose education is primarily through the medium of Welsh and those who learn mostly through the medium of English.

However, expectations for Welsh in English-medium Schools will be reviewed and increased over time to reflect learners' changing experience of learning Welsh as the new Curriculum is rolled out and as we work towards the goal of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

In terms of independent schools, the petitioner acknowledges that independent schools in Wales are not required to follow the National Curriculum and therefore are not required to teach Welsh, either first or second language. This will remain the case when the new curriculum is rolled out.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Independent schools are independent in their governance; as such the Welsh Government does not have the powers to insist the teaching of Welsh Language is compulsory in every independent school.

Although the schools are not required to follow the National Curriculum, independent schools must give pupils experience in the following seven areas of learning, and their plans and schemes of work must illustrate how each area is to be woven into the school curriculum:

- Linguistics
- Mathematics
- Science
- Technology
- Humanities and social science
- Physical exercise
- Aesthetic and creative

As part of linguistics independent schools can choose to deliver lessons in Welsh if they wish. However, this is an individual choice for those schools.

I trust this clarifies the position as regards independent schools.

Yours sincerely

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

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education

**P-05-888 - Make GCSE Welsh Language compulsory in all schools in Wales,
Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 19.06.19**

It is fundamentally important that we ensure that Welsh language education is given properly in all schools. The Welsh Second Language course is extremely flawed in the ways that it is not intense enough, it only prepares you for an exam as opposed to being able to hold a conversation, and untrained teachers are teaching it. Geography or Maths teachers who just happen to speak Welsh are teaching it, however this is simply not good enough. We need properly trained Welsh teachers. Lastly, many schools are not offering Welsh at A Level and GCSE standards are plummeting. If we are to reach 1 million speakers by 2050, we must ensure that schools deliver Welsh language courses at good quality and with proper training.

Diolch,

Gwion Rhisiart WYPM

Agenda Item 6.1

P-05-717 Establish Statutory Public Rights of Access to Land and Water for Recreational and Other Purposes.

This petition was submitted by Waters of Wales – WoW, having collected 3,045 paper signatures and 433 paper signatures – Total = 3,478

Text of the Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to implement a Bill to establish statutory public rights of access to land and water for recreational and other purposes. The bill should enshrine access rights and responsibilities for the public in the same way that the 2003 Land Reform (Scotland) Act encourages co-operative use of the outdoors for healthy, low impact recreation. This Bill must enshrine public rights of navigation for inland water, and permit access to and along water. It must remove the lack of legal clarity and restrictions which act as a barrier to sport and recreation and the promotion of Wales as a welcoming place for healthy recreation, tourism and adventurous activity at all levels of participation and enjoyment.

Additional information

The Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 (i) was intended to deliver much-needed public access to the countryside. Before CRoW was enacted, however, it had already been stripped of many of its intended public benefits. For example, it sought to exclude the public from inland water. CRoW was complicated, expensive, and fails to deliver the access to land and water needed by the wider public. The CRoW mapping exercise alone cost nearly £8m, to address the needs of the small percentage of the public who want to access upland areas. Welsh Government took ownership of this issue in 2009 (ii), yet at the end of 2015, recreational access to land fails to meet the needs of the wider public, and the issue of access to water has not progressed. To the contrary, costly initiatives endorsed and supported by Welsh Government have led in some cases to reduced access to inland water. Two successive Welsh Governments have acknowledged the need for change, but instead chose a process which serves only to maintain the status quo. Welsh Government's 3-year process costing at least £2.4m has, by their own admission, not delivered. Rather, it has demonstrably reduced access opportunities, for example to inland

water. Scotland implemented a permanent solution through land reform legislation (iv) for the legislative cost of £200,000, with a final cost of approx. £3m including the cost of television campaigning and public education (v).

(i) Countryside and Rights of Way Act(2000)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents/enacted>

(ii) Report of the Petitions Committee's Short Inquiry into Access along Inland Water, March 2009 (iii)

https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/62377602/Welsh_Government_Letter_RefTOJG0126513_16Oct2013.pdf (iv) Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2003/2/contents/enacted>

(v) LAND REFORM (SCOTLAND) BILL–EXPLANATORY NOTES (AND OTHER ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS)

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S1_Bills/Land%20Reform%20%28Scotland%29%20Bill/b44s



Ein cyf/Our ref HB/05322/19

National Assembly for Wales Petitions Committee

SeneddPetitions@assembly.wales

12 June 2019

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter dated 24 May regarding the Petition P-05-717: *Establish Statutory Public Rights of Access to Land and Water for Recreational and Other Purposes*. You have requested views on the comments made by the petitioners (Waters of Wales) and detail about the Government's intended approach to resolving issues around access to inland waters.

I recognise that both angling and paddle sport recreations deliver important tourism, socio-economic, health and wellbeing benefits for Wales. Access to inland water has long been a contentious issue with both user communities passionately believing that they are in the right, both legally and morally. These highly polarised views have hindered efforts to reduce the conflict between users to date. I believe that access to water now needs to be considered as part of a wider approach, not in isolation. We need to broaden the debate and ask what Wales wants from its inland waters, and the role that access rights have in delivering this.

To try to resolve this stalemate, I have asked the National Access Forum to give particular priority to laying the ground work for greater dialogue on inland waters issues that is needed. I am also seeking specialist advice from Natural Resources Wales, who are the Government's advisers on access matters which will include possible non-legislative approaches. However, I recognise that options may be limited given that we have tried to promote VAAs (Voluntary Access Agreements) before, with little take-up.

I strongly feel that the long term answer needs to come from stakeholders and have encouraged them, through my Written Statement, to find a practical joint solution. I hope that by focussing on what we share, rather than our differences, may help to find solutions and reach some form of consensus.

Should I not be satisfied of reasonable progress within 18 months, I plan to consider future legislation on access to water. However, at this stage I do not have a set view of what any such legislation would look like.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Waters of Wales raised a number of questions in their letter dated 25 April.

1. Why is the strategy not based on a presumption in favour of access?

Welsh land has the potential to deliver significant benefits for all the people of Wales. In developing a strategy, I am mindful that we must seek to maintain the right balance between different stakeholders.

2. Why is lifting restrictions on access to man-made bodies of water not even to be considered?

Following careful consideration of all the consultation responses, I believe that there are particular safety concerns with allowing water based recreation on man-made bodies of water.

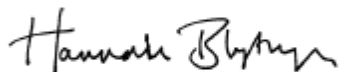
3. How will the representativeness and independence of the 'Access Reform Group' be established and protected?

The Access Reform Group will be comprised of experts in the field and will as part of its remit, be speaking to a number of important stakeholders. Members of the Group will be challenged to work together constructively to achieve progress. They will be expected to sign up to a Terms of Reference, which will require members to take on board others' perspectives and find ways to overcome differences. Following a period of investigation of approximately 18 months, the group will report back to me. Details regarding membership of the Access Reform Group are still being finalised.

4. Why are verbal commitments, reportedly made in meetings around the country, not formally included in the report, to enable measurement of progress against them?

I am unclear what verbal commitments have reportedly been made.

Yours sincerely,



Hannah Blythyn AC/AM

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol

Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government



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Mynediad agored cynnaladwy i BAWB!

admin@watersofwales.org

Wednesday, June 19, 2019

Dear Petitions Committee Members

Thank you for the opportunity to reply to the Minister's written statement dated 12 June 2019.

We are surprised and disappointed that the Minister persists in presenting the issue in terms of a polarised conflict between two distinct user-groups. 'Waters of Wales – Dyfroedd Cymru' exists to represent the interests of the diverse public for whom considerable health and wellbeing benefits can be obtained through sustainable recreation in, on or beside water.

The needs of the wider public cannot be met by continuing to treat this aspect of the public interest as a polarised issue between two user-groups. Nor can the interests of the wider public be addressed by two single-interest parties seeking resolution by voluntary 'negotiation' where one has the automatic right to present the terms and of veto, another tries to 'negotiate' from a position of inequality, and the wider public is not even given a seat at the table.

Waters of Wales – Dyfroedd Cymru's petition reflects the diverse needs of the public, as does the Land Reform (Scotland) Act which we, and a former Welsh Assembly Petitions Committee Inquiry, advocate as a model for Wales.

We welcome the Minister's comment: *"I believe that access to water now needs to be considered as part of a wider approach, not in isolation. We need to broaden the debate and ask what Wales wants from its inland waters, and the role that access rights have in delivering this."* which is in accord with our values, but is strangely at variance with the Minister's stated intentions. The 'stalemate' to which the Minister refers, is of Welsh Government's own making; the result of repeating the same actions, which by its own admission, have consistently failed in the past.

In direct response to the Minister's comments on our letter dated 25 April:

Q. *"Why is the strategy not based on a presumption in favour of access?"*

A. *"Welsh land has the potential to deliver significant benefits for all the people of Wales. In developing a strategy, I am mindful that we must seek to maintain the right balance between different stakeholders."*

Every other devolved administration has acted to clarify the public right. Most recently, Scotland did so at the first opportunity on attaining the necessary powers. Achieving and maintaining the right balance between stakeholders has been shown to work by starting

Waters of Wales (WoW) is a community of independent campaigners for legislation enshrining public rights of fair, shared, sustainable open access to inland water in Wales.

Mae DC (Dyfroedd Cymru) yn gymuned o ymgyrchwyr annibynnol ar gyfer deddfwriaeth sy'n corffori hawliau cyhoeddus i fynediad agored cynnaladwy i ddyffrffyrdd mewndirol yng Nghymru.



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with a presumption in favour of access then, IF problems arise, addressing exceptions to open access an evidence-basis using the least restrictive option.

Q. *“Why is lifting restrictions on access to man-made bodies of water not even to be considered?”*

A. *“Following careful consideration of all the consultation responses, I believe that there are particular safety concerns with allowing water-based recreation on man-made bodies of water.”*

Every activity and environment has its own particular safety concerns. Banning an activity does not prevent tragic occurrences, rather it prevents measures to improve safety and public awareness of risk.

Scotland addresses the issue by their ‘Outdoor Access Code’, underpinned by the principle of ‘volenti non fit injuria’ and a programme of public educationⁱ. USEFUL, TRUTHFUL, signage where needed is more effective than a blanket ban, and numerous examples of good practice exist in Scotland, England AND Wales.ⁱⁱ ⁱⁱⁱ.

Q. *“How will the representativeness and independence of the ‘Access Reform Group’ be established and protected?”*

A. *“The Access Reform Group will be comprised of experts in the field and will as part of its remit, be speaking to a number of important stakeholders. Members of the Group will be challenged to work together constructively to achieve progress. They will be expected to sign up to a Terms of Reference, which will require members to take on board others’ perspectives and find ways to overcome differences. Following a period of investigation of approximately 18 months, the group will report back to me. Details regarding membership of the Access Reform Group are still being finalised.”*

Our response to this Q/A is covered in appendix 1.

In conclusion, our reply to the Ministers’ previous statement to this committee outlined the 4-year cycle which this issue has repeated since 2007. The Minister’s most recent letter demonstrates how the cycle will be repeated (see appendix 1 attached).

Mindful that cost of the previous government-sponsored attempt to increase public access to water, which resulted in no net gain, cost the taxpayer about the same as the legislative cost of the Land Reform (Scotland) bill, and in view of the circular nature of the process to date, we would like to ask two more questions:

- Can Welsh Government demonstrate how the expenditure of public money on ‘voluntary’ arrangements between discrete parties has benefited the wider public?
- Given that the proposed 18-month process and review will take us, once again, up to an election, is it reasonable for the present government to expect to achieve an outcome from their proposed approach?

Yours sincerely

Pam Bell

For Waters of Wales – Dyfroedd Cymru

Waters of Wales (WoW) is a community of independent campaigners for legislation enshrining public rights of fair, shared, sustainable open access to inland water in Wales.

Mae DC (Dyfroedd Cymru) yn gymuned o ymgyrchwyr annibynnol ar gyfer deddfwriaeth sy'n corffori hawliau cyhoeddus i fynediad agored cynnaladwy i dyffwrdd mewndirol yng Nghymru.



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admin@watersofwales.org

Appendix 1.

Patterns in the cycle of this process.

1 – The Minister acknowledges that legislation is the answer, but tries to bring pressure to bear on the negotiation process as a way of avoiding legislation:

In 2007 the (then) Chair of ACA and CEO of WyeUsk Foundation wrote:

“Passing such a bill has already happened in Scotland and ‘in the pipeline’ there is a Welsh act that could allow it to be passed on our rivers. You may also be aware of the strong lobbying by WCA for this to happen. For our part we lobbied to continue with agreed access as the way forward and the Assembly gave us a 100% grant to re-establish the canoeing arrangements on the Wye and Usk, against a clear signal that the alternative would likely be open and free access all year. I should stress that no other funding is being used for this purpose.”

In June 2019 the Minister wrote:

“... However, I recognise that options may be limited given that we have tried to promote VAAs (Voluntary Access Agreements) before, with little take-up. I strongly feel that the long-term answer needs to come from stakeholders and have encouraged them, through my Written Statement, to find a practical joint solution... Should I not be satisfied of reasonable progress within 18 months, I plan to consider future legislation on access to water...”

2 – The issue is pushed down the line by repeated consultation until there is no time for government to act:

In 2015-16, the consultation findings were repeatedly delayed until they were finally “Left on the table to inform the next government.”

The Minister has now written: “Should I not be satisfied of reasonable progress within 18 months, I plan to consider future legislation on access to water.”

This will take us close to another election. Will the results of the review once again be “left on the table to inform the next government” as happened in 2016?

Waters of Wales (WoW) is a community of independent campaigners for legislation enshrining public rights of fair, shared, sustainable open access to inland water in Wales.

Mae DC (Dyfroedd Cymru) yn gymuned o ymgyrchwyr annibynnol ar gyfer deddfwriaeth sy'n corffori hawliau cyhoeddus i fynediad agored cynnaladwy i ddyffrffyrdd mewndirol yng Nghymru.



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References

ⁱ Scottish Water 2016: Encouraging Responsible Use of Scottish Water Assets. www.scottishwater.co.uk/-/media/ScottishWater/Document-Hub/Key-Publications/Freedom-of-Information/190718PublicAccessToLandAndWaterDec16.pdf

ⁱⁱ RoSPA 2018: Managing Safety at Inland Waters.
<https://1drv.ms/b/s!AvvhfAJqO9K8gqQLPajn5txE3rzACA>

ⁱⁱⁱ https://www.outdoorswimmingsociety.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Guide-To-Inland-Bathing-Areas-2018_small.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2xhEJWJOAfLht3_4XequmKI9GhZfjNTdpCID176wJFvRIO-GWn9kXq3YA

Waters of Wales (WoW) is a community of independent campaigners for legislation enshrining public rights of fair, shared, sustainable open access to inland water in Wales.

Mae DC (Dyfroedd Cymru) yn gymuned o ymgyrchwyr annibynnol ar gyfer deddfwriaeth sy'n corffori hawliau cyhoeddus i fynediad agored cynnaladwy i dyfroedd mewndirol yng Nghymru.

Agenda Item 6.2

P-05-775 Put an End to the Cross Border and Sub-contracting Taxi Licensing Loophole.

This petition was submitted by Taxi Drivers of Cardiff, having collected 390 signatures online.

Petition text:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government, in the context of its consultation into the reforms of the taxi licensing laws, to put a stop to the 'cross border' and 'sub-contracting' loophole in the law which means hundreds of out of town taxis and private hire vehicles descend on Cardiff to work Private Hire.

Additional information:

There are enough Cardiff licensed vehicles to cover the City without the need for these cars from as far afield as London, Merseyside, the Midlands etc. As well as from neighbouring authorities like Newport, the Vale and RCT etc.

There have even been vehicles not working on any platform, illegally plying for hire, hiding behind the fact so many 'alien' cabs are in the City.

Many of these vehicles have NO markings on them, making a mockery of the standards set by Cardiff County Council for vehicles licensed by themselves, including highly visible livery and local street knowledge. Alas it will be only matter of time before a vulnerable person jumps into a non licensed car with catastrophic results.

We urge the Welsh Government to ensure that the only Taxis and Private Hire vehicles allowed to work in Cardiff are those licensed by Cardiff County Council. This is to ensure public safety and to ensure that Cardiff isn't saturated with even more cars than what is needed which if allowed to continue will see even more congestion and pollution in our Capital. It will also give existing drivers licensed by Cardiff a chance to earn something approaching a living wage.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Cardiff South and Penarth
- South Wales Central

Agenda Item 6.3

P-05-835 Allow Free Movement of Taxi Drivers to Carry Out Private Hire Work Anywhere in Wales

This petition was submitted by Taxis Without Borders, having collected 136 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to allow Taxi Drivers carry out private hire work freely anywhere in Wales, regardless of which council the driver is licensed by.

We bring this petition in response to the actions of a group of taxi drivers based in one City. We call on the National Assembly to take into account the wishes and desires of taxi drivers and operators across Wales, as opposed to a small group of drivers from one city.

If you book a taxi either by phoning someone, or using an app that company is legally allowed to send a car to you, regardless of where you are, or where the company is based. If you were in Barry and phoned a Cardiff company for a taxi to go to Caerphilly, they could, and would send a car to come and pick you up in Barry, and take you to Caerphilly.

If you were in Swansea, and wanted to go to Llanelli and were unable to get a taxi, you could phone a company in Bridgend, and they could send a car to pick you up, if they had one available.

This gives taxi users a greater choice of which companies that can and can't use. More choice, and more options meaning more competition drives companies to offer a better service to retain each person's custom.

From a drivers point of view, if they are licenced in Cardiff, and they were taking someone to Cardiff Airport, and a Cardiff based operator has a booking from someone to be picked up at Cardiff Airport going to Merthyr, the Cardiff driver is allowed to do that job.

Additional Information

If a Vale of Glamorgan driver is taking someone from Cardiff Airport to Pontypridd, and there is someone who has pre-booked their company to

take them from Pontypridd to Cardiff Airport, but there is a few hours wait, that driver can ask a Vale of Glamorgan operator to find them work. This could be by the operator phoning Pontypridd based firms to see if there is any work the driver can do around the area whilst waiting for the return booking. This gives drivers a greater earning potential, as it increases the size of area they can work in, and opens up possible income streams. It is also more environmentally friendly and reduces congestion as the driver that went to Pontypridd, isn't forced to go back to The Vale of Glamorgan empty, and the operator is not forced to send a second car to Pontypridd empty.

If a Newport based operator looked to expand their company, they could speak to Hotels in Caerphilly, and become that hotels preferred supplier to pick up guests from Airports. The operator can expand their company, and the hotel can provide a better service to potential customers, increasing their bookings, whilst still having a greater choice of companies to use to provide this service.

If a publican ran a pub in Merthyr Tydfil, and wanted to provide a pick up and drop off service to its customers, it would need an operators licence and would need to use licenced private hire drivers and vehicle, all from Merthyr. If then the same publican wanted to open a second pub in Llanbradach, and wanted to offer the same service, they could provide a pick up and drop off service from the same operators licence. This enables them to expand their business.

All this and more is possible thanks to Cross Bordering.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Cardiff North
- South Wales Central



Ein cyf/Our ref KS/06539/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair Petitions committee

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

5 June 2019

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 1 February regarding petition P-05-775 on taxi licensing and P-05-835 on free movement of taxi drivers.

Firstly, I would you like to thank the Taxi Drivers of Cardiff for their contribution to the consultation and I have forwarded to my officials to review.

As you are aware, we have been engaging with representative groups throughout the consultation period. We have had discussions with taxi and private hire vehicle drivers and representatives of the industry during our engagement events, which took place in February and March across Wales. We have noted concerns raised in relation to both cross border working and the numbers of licences being issued.

The formal consultation period for the White Paper has now closed. We are currently carrying out a full review of the consultation responses and will publish a report in due course. We will be taking all of the comments and consultation responses into consideration and this feedback will help inform our next steps for taxi and private hire vehicle policy in Wales. We recognise the vital transport service that taxis and private hire vehicles provide, connecting people to places when alternative public transport services are not available or viable.

Yours ever,
Ken

Ken Skates AC/AM
Gweinidog yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for Economy and Transport

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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Agenda Item 6.4

P-05-827 Roads surrounding Trago Mills/ Cyfartha Retail Park

This petition was submitted by Rowan Powell having collected 141 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to look at the issue of the build up of traffic on the A470 around the vicinity of Trago Mills and Cyfartha Retail Park and put in place a new traffic system to alleviate the amount of traffic seen at peak times, which can then resolve the constant ongoing issues residents are facing.

Trago Mills opened its doors around two weeks ago to the public, Ever since Trago Mills has opened, there have been constant issues of traffic build up within the local vicinity of Trago Mills and Cyfartha Retail Park, not only is this happening on the weekends but it's also happening mid week.

When this issue was originally brought to the attention of the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport some time ago before Trago Mills opened, he stated personally in a letter that the A470 would be able to take the pressures of the traffic in and out of the area but sadly this isn't the case, The build up of traffic on the main roundabout of the A470 isn't able to withhold the traffic load going directly into Cyfartha Retail Park and Trago Mills, not only is this an inconvenience to the residents that already live close to the area it is also affecting local businesses within the area and its having a knock on effect to the economy due to visitors avoiding the area.

Please could you look at the matter in question again as direct action is needed to resolve this problem.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney
- South Wales East

Agenda Item 6.5

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

This petition was submitted by Tereza Tothova, having collected 149 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to consider creating and providing water fountains in the centre of cities and towns. The main purpose of this action would be to eliminate plastic waste. The number of single-use plastic bottles has dramatically risen in recent years and due to the slow recycling process, it is causing pollution of the environment, especially harming sea life.

Many people try to have a healthy lifestyle that includes drinking at least 2 litres of water every day. Therefore, reusable water bottles have become very popular and useful for keeping a human body hydrated all day. Installing water fountains in the city centres or other parts of cities and towns (Shopping centres, sports centres, colleges, cultural centres etc) would help with access to drinking water throughout the day. These water fountains would also create access to drinking water for homeless people.

To support the local economy in Wales, the water fountains could be sourced by Welsh mineral water companies.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Cardiff West
- South Wales Central

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-847
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/06103/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM/AC
Chair of the Petitions Committee

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

6 June 2019

Dear Janet

Thank you for your further letter of 6th May in relation to the petition regarding the creation of water fountains in the centre of cities and towns to eliminate plastic waste.

I would like to provide additional detail in relation to Refill in order to reassure the petitioner's concerns regarding this policy. A Refill Station can either be a water fountain or a tap, with each station being owned by a local business or organisation and can include public buildings. There are now over 1000 Refill Stations in Wales and over 100 in Cardiff alone.

In addition to the Refill app, areas such as St. David's Shopping Centre in Cardiff, publicise refilling water bottles in a number of ways; on their website, on advertising boards within the centre, and individual participating stations also display window stickers. All registered Refill stations are obliged to offer free refills. The Refill stations in St. David's shopping centre registered on the app are; Pret a Manager and Costa Coffee. Cosy Club and Starbucks are also registered on the Refill app and are located on the street connected to St. David's. The Refill movement is widespread across the UK and is building an international presence. For example, there are now over 20,000 Refill stations in the UK with Germany and Greece also joining the scheme to further grow Refill.

In terms of the level of investment needed, water fountains can be expensive to install. An individual fountain may cost as little as £1000 to purchase and install, or it could cost over £10,000. If a fountain is being installed, it is often difficult to estimate the cost beforehand as the underground infrastructure is where the bulk of the installation cost lies.

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Pack Page 101

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However, the Welsh Government has indicated to water companies our desire to see fountains considered in the design of new developments and public buildings in Wales as this potentially removes the unpredictable cost element of fountain installation. The Wales Refill co-ordinator will also be speaking at the Institute of Civil Engineers annual event in the summer about the importance of planning for practical Refill Stations (in this case accessible fountains) to ensure planners are considering water fountains in the design of their infrastructure.

Local Authorities in Wales are responsible for an extensive range of public services which include provisions of public use amenities and facilities. They may choose to install fountains as part of their provision of public services. The Welsh Government already grants Local Authorities a portion of Capital funding every year which they could use to install water fountains.

I would also like to take this opportunity to summarise some of the other work the Welsh Government is undertaking to reduce plastic consumption in Wales. The Welsh Government has been working for over a decade to increase recycling within Wales, we introduced statutory recycling targets for local authorities in 2011 and have become the second best recycling Nation in Europe and third in the World. We introduced a ban on plastic microbeads in products in 2018 to contribute to the reduction of microplastics in the marine environment. Recently, we consulted on proposals to address the problems associated with packaging waste, including plastic bottles. One was held jointly with the UK Government and the Northern Ireland Executive on the merits of introducing a Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Also, we are working with industry to develop new infrastructure to increase the reprocessing of plastic waste in Wales. As part of this, the use of our £6.5m Circular Economy Capital Investment Fund for 2019/20 is focussed strongly on the recycling of plastics, although other waste materials will be considered.

Regards
Lesley

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM

Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs

Agenda Item 6.6

P-05-855 Small Business Rates Relief Review

This petition was submitted by Endaf Cooke & Gavin Owen having collected having collected 1,132 signatures – 822 on paper and 310 on-line.

Text of Petition

We call on the Welsh Government to revise the small business rates relief system so that businesses with a rateable value of £10,000 or under should receive a 100% discount. Furthermore, any small businesses with a rateable value of between £10,000.01 and £20,000 receive a discount/relief on a tapered scale system of between 0 – 100%.

Additional Information

Currently the small business rates relief in Wales, only offer 100% discount to any business with a rateable value of under £6000. Where as in England, small businesses with a rateable value of under £12,000 receive a 100% discount.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Arfon
- North Wales

Agenda Item 6.7

P-05-802 Protecting Class Sizes in Design and Technology Classrooms and Workshops

This petition was submitted by Aled Dafis and was first considered by the Committee in March 2018, having collected 338 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure that all schools in Wales fully adopt BS4163:2014 as a requirement as opposed to a recommendation, in order to protect the health and safety of both students, teachers and technicians.

Following networking meetings for Design and Technology teachers within the ERW region, it has become apparent that the financial pressures on schools give rise to a situation where Design and Technology teachers are increasingly being asked to teach classes larger than 20 pupils as recommended in BS4163:2014 "Health and safety for design and technology in educational establishments – Code of Practice". Increased class sizes invariably lead to higher risk of pupils getting injured in workshop environments.

Additional Information

The BS4163:2014 Code of Practice clearly states as follows:

"9 Management of the teaching environment

9.1

General

The number of learners in any one work area should be carefully considered to ensure safe working and effective supervision.

In England and Wales, there should be a maximum of 20 learners with one competent, qualified teacher in any one work area.

In Scotland and Northern Ireland, there should be a maximum of 20 pupils for all classes in practical subjects"

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Ceredigion
- Mid and West Wales

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-802
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/06230/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Assembly Member for Aberconwy
Chair - Petitions committee
National Assembly for Wales
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5 June 2019

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter of 24 May following up on the protection of class sizes in Design & Technology Classrooms and Workshops (Petition P-05-802).

The Dysg newsletters are the trusted mechanism through which my department issues advice to schools. They are sent to all schools and are read by headteachers, teachers, governing bodies, local authorities, consortia and anyone else interested in education matters that subscribe. I am confident that this is the best way to deliver consistent messaging on important topics.

I considered the value of preparing another, very specific, guidance document in response to this petition. My view is that issuing separate guidance would not reach the same audience or have the same impact as reminding schools and local authorities of their obligations through the Dysg newsletter. Comprehensive advice is also available through the Health and Safety Executive's website and this is signposted in the Governors' Guide to the Law.

Yours sincerely

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

P-05-802 Protecting Class Sizes in Design and Technology Classrooms and Workshops, Correspondence – Petitioner to Chair

Dear Ms Finch-Saunders

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to Ms Williams' letter dated 5th of June regarding the petition to protect class sizes in Design and Technology. (Petition P-05-802)

It is with regret that I read the minister's letter outlining her decision not to provide separate, specific guidance on the matter of health and safety in what I believe to be the area of secondary education that poses the highest potential risk to young people during their journey through school.

Whilst I accept that the minister has distributed the message regarding the requirement to risk assess all activities, I maintain the opinion shared in my previous correspondence that specific guidance sent directly to schools would be a much stronger message to school leaders and governors, and would further secure students health, safety and well-being in the long term.

Many Thanks,

Aled Dafis

Agenda Item 6.8

P-05-860 Make Curriculum for Life Lessons Compulsory

This petition was submitted by Emily Jones having collected 121 signatures online and 165 on paper, a total of 286 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to ensure that curriculum for life lessons are compulsory for secondary schools across Wales and that the content is reviewed annually by a board of elected young people.

Additional Information

A curriculum for life would include topics such as; finance, sex and relationships, politics and basic living skills. Article 28 of the UNCRC states children have the right to an education. However, the current curriculum is failing to provide us with the life skills we need.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Pontypridd
- South Wales Central

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-860
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/06231/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Assembly Member for Aberconwy
Chair - Petitions committee
National Assembly for Wales
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5 June 2019

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter of 24 May, following on from earlier correspondence regarding the Petitions Committee's consideration of petition (P-05-861) making political education a compulsory element of the new curriculum.

I will respond separately to each of the specific questions you have raised:

i. For an interim solution to be put in place, either through the current PSE curriculum or the Welsh Baccalaureate, which ensures that additional emphasis is placed upon political education for current pupils who may have the opportunity to vote after the age of 16 from 2021;

Welsh Government and the Assembly Commission are legislating to ensure that young people who are 16 and 17 will be able to vote in the Assembly election in 2021 and local government elections in 2022. We believe young people should have the right to vote for

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

the first time when they are likely to be still living at home in a stable environment. We anticipate this will establish a lifelong habit of participating in democratic decisions. The Welsh Government will introduce educational material for those who are newly enfranchised along with communication strategies to raise awareness. The intention is to ensure politically neutral material and teacher support is available for schools by September 2020, well before 16 and 17 year olds will vote for the first time. As part the communication work around this issue I will be writing to schools to make them aware of these resources and highlight the opportunities to cover political education within PSE and the Welsh Baccalaureate.

This will be accompanied by a registration information campaign which will be followed by encouragement to get out and vote nearer to the elections in question. The Welsh Government will work closely with stakeholders throughout this process including the Assembly Commission and with local authorities. A co-ordinated approach will be important as there are already many local authorities carrying out democratic awareness raising activities with young people and the Assembly's Education Service provides free tailored education programmes for schools and colleges and an education outreach service. The aim is to involve young people in the work of the Assembly and encourage them to get involved in the democratic process.

The Welsh Government is also commissioning research to inform strategies for engaging with newly enfranchised groups about their democratic rights and to promote voter participation and engagement. A number of key stakeholders and partners will have a role to play in the delivery of resources and awareness raising to newly enfranchised groups. Welsh Government officials will work closely with key partners, including the Assembly Commission, to ensure consistency of messages and to avoid duplication.

ii. For consideration to be given to other ways young people can access information in relation to political participation outside of the school curriculum, for example through youth work settings:

Youth work already has a key role to play in the political development of young people. In fact, young people's political development is explicit in both 'Youth Work in Wales: Principles and Purposes' and the 'Youth Work National Occupational Standards'. These require youth workers to, for example, know and understand the democratic process, roles of tiers of government, and the nature and aims of political parties, in order to effectively encourage and support young people to become informed and engaged citizens. Further, youth work supports young people to understand their rights, while also facilitating access to relevant advice, information, support and guidance. Youth work, therefore, is well placed to support young people to access information in relation to political participation outside of the school curriculum.

Later this month we will publish our new Youth Work Strategy for Wales. Co-developed with young people and the youth work sector, it will articulate an ambitious programme of work that will strengthen the youth work offer to all young people in Wales, and develop evidence to improve our approaches in the future. In support of these aims we have made more than £10m in funding available in 2019/20.

In 2018, the National Assembly for Wales established the Welsh Youth Parliament which gives Wales' young people between 11 and 18 a completely new way to make themselves heard at a national level. It empowers them to raise awareness of, and debate the issues important to young people in Wales. By participating in issue based politics, young people get to experience first-hand how politics works and the direct effect it can have on their lives. Throughout 2018, young people in Wales were able to register to vote in the first ever Welsh Youth Parliament elections, with nearly 24,000 registering. In November 2018, there

was a three week election period where those registered voted online for who they wanted to represent them.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kirsty Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K' and a long, sweeping underline.

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education

**P-05-860 Make Curriculum for Life Lessons Compulsory, Correspondence –
Petitioner to Committee, 19.06.19**

Thank you for considering the Gwent Regional Youth Forum's Petition 'Make Curriculum for Life Lessons Compulsory'. Gwent Regional Youth forum is made up of a minimum of 25 young people elected from the five local authorities within Gwent. In order to respond to the letter received from Kirsty Williams AM on 4th March 2018, a group of eight Youth Forum members have met to formulate a response.

Firstly the correspondence states the petition had a total of 286 signatures, however the petition was originally written in response to the issue being raised as part of the national Make Your Mark ballot results on 2017 where 1317 (Make Your Mark Results Report 2017, UK Youth Parliament) young people aged 11-18 across Gwent identified this issue as a priority. Gwent Regional youth forum wrote this petition to highlight this large response to Welsh Government.

We do not feel that the response is very understandable to young people, due to this being a petition submitted by young people this should have been responded to in a young person friendly language. We also feel that not all areas of our ideas have been address directly.

In the response, it is suggested that the curriculum for life is going to be flexible. How do we know this is going to be delivered and interpreted in the way we intended, as suggested in the film and petition provided. We believe there should be a curriculum framework that should be created with young people and professionals and followed throughout.

We have concerns as young people that delivery of political education without a curriculum framework could lead to biased views being imposed on students from the teacher's delivery. Also, this would be able to protect teachers so they are able to keep within guidelines of the framework. Are resources and examples going to be provided in order to teach empathy, resilience, values and beliefs. If all schools are able to interpret the curriculum delivery how are they going to be able to ensure that students are equipped for exams. How is quality of learning going to be assessed if it is not the same across the board? How is this additional information going to be added into the current education system without effecting current topics? It should be looked into on how curriculum for life activities can be interpreted into current compulsory lessons. The concern around the biased of teaching is not only related to political issues but to all areas outlined for the need of a curriculum for life.

We suggest that the content of the curriculum is reviewed, to ensure the material is up to date and relevant. This should be reviewed annually by a board of elected

young people. The elected young people would be on a local authority level, being consulted on the curriculum and what they feel they should be taught in relation to local issues.

Lastly mentioned in the response, is the 'recently published resources on HWB' regarding developing learner's interests in political issues. When discussed within the Regional Youth Forum meeting, 8 young people, each from different schools from year 9 to a university level, shared that they have not seen the video link provided, and have also not been provided with 'support to develop learners interest in political issues'. One student reported she discussed votes at 16 with her teacher as she wanted to know her teacher's views on her the topic however this was not prompted by the resources provided on the hwb. We feel that this shows when schools are left to interpret the curriculum delivery, students are not getting the education they are entitled to under the UNCRC.

In the research provided, within the PSE framework (2008) it states 'prepare learners for the challenges, choices and responsibilities of work and adult life.' This is not being done now, so how can we ensure that this will not be the same situation for the Life Skills within the curriculum

We are aware the Curriculum for life has been voted for as one of the Welsh Youth Parliament priorities. We request that this petition is taken to the Welsh Youth Parliament committee for further discussion.

Thank you for taking the time to read our comments on the response letter and for taking these points into consideration.

Kind regards

Emily Jones

(On behalf of Gwent Regional Youth Forum)

Agenda Item 6.9

P-05-861 Make political education a compulsory element of the new national curriculum

This petition was submitted by Kaiesha Ceryn Page having collected 117 signatures.

Text of Petition

Education should provide young people with the skills and tools that will ensure that they become valued and engaged citizens of the country.

Despite the vast advances that have been made by social media and fast-paced news cycles, young people often view politics as a taboo subject, seen as something that is not for the likes of them.

We believe that young people should leave education with a comprehensive understanding of political institutions within the United Kingdom. The Electoral Reform Society report recommended that four key aspects should be taught in school – the parties, democracy, the role of institutions and campaigning.

At present, the Welsh Government has a unique opportunity to lead the way on this matter as it is currently developing its first national curriculum. As one of its four key concepts, the new curriculum aims to produce citizens that are "ethical and informed". It therefore stands to reason that political education should be an essential part of this.

The development of this curriculum provides a unique opportunity for the Welsh Government to revolutionise how it educates its young people, providing citizens that will become the leaders of the future.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Rhondda
- South Wales Central