

# Concise Minutes – Petitions Committee

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Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: Tuesday, 9 July 2019

Meeting time: 09.00 – 10.25

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

<http://senedd.tv/en/5478>

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## Attendance

Category	Names
Assembly Members:	Janet Finch-Saunders AM (Chair) Michelle Brown AM Mike Hedges AM Neil McEvoy AM Leanne Wood AM
Witnesses:	
Committee Staff:	Kathryn Thomas (Clerk) Ross Davies (Deputy Clerk) Samiwel Davies (Legal Adviser)

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

Apologies were received from Jack Sargeant. Mike Hedges attended in his place.

As part of the Committee's discussion under agenda item 2.2, Members agreed to review those petitions reported on and debated in Plenary, with a view to assessing the progress made against the Committee's recommendations.



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Wales

## **2 New petitions**

### **2.1 P-05-882 Transforming the response for older people experiencing domestic abuse – a call for action**

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

- write back to the Deputy Minister and Chief Whip to:
  - provide the detailed comments provided by the petitioners;
  - seek a further response to the issues raised, in particular the concerns that older people's experiences are often not covered by domestic abuse services or material; and
  - ask the Deputy Minister what provisions are in place for older men experiencing such abuse; and
- write to the Older People's Commissioner for Wales to seek her response to the issues raised in the petition and ask her to share further information about the work she intends to carry out to prevent the abuse of older people.

### **2.2 P-05-885 Accessible and Inclusive Public Transport for Citizens with Learning Disabilities in Wales**

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write back to the Minister for Economy and Transport to share the additional comments received from the petitioners, and seek a response to the points about ensuring services are accessible for people with learning disabilities and direct engagement with those affected.

### **2.3 P-05-887 Stop regional AMs elected to represent specific parties from defecting**

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to await the views of the petitioner on the response provided by the Llywydd and to encourage the petitioner to engage with their elected representatives to take forward legislative amendments to the Senedd and Elections (Wales) Bill.

## **2.4 P-05-889 Labelling of Religiously Slaughtered Meat**

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to await developments around the UK's departure from the EU before considering what further action it could take.

## **2.5 P-05-890 Second Home Tax**

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to await the outcomes of the Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee's inquiry into empty properties in Wales.

## **2.6 P-05-891 National Reading and Numeracy Tests for children from as young as age 6 need to be discontinued with immediate effect**

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

## **2.7 P-05-892 Appoint a Learning Disability Commissioner for Wales**

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agree to write back to the Minister for Health and Social Services to share the additional information provided by the petitioners and to ask for information about how people with learning disabilities are supported to express concerns about services or support, and to engage in self-advocacy.

# **3 Updates to previous petitions**

## **3.1 P-05-738 Public Petition for the Dinas Powys By-Pass**

The Committee considered correspondence from the Vale of Glamorgan Council and the petitioner, and agreed to :

- write back to Vale of Glamorgan Council to request:
  - an update on the situation with regards to funding to complete the WelTAG Stage 2 study into transport options in Dinas Powys; and
  - further background on the reasons for the decision not to progress with further work on the 'blue route' option.

- write to the Minister for Economy and Transport to ask what role the Welsh Government intends to have in the development of proposals to address transport issues in Dinas Powys.

### **3.2 P-05-748 School Buses for School Children**

The Committee considered further correspondence from the Minister for Economy and Transport and from the petitioner and agreed to close the petition, given that there appears to be little further action that it is able to take in relation to this issue. In doing so, the Committee wished to express its sincere sympathies to the petitioner and to share details of the petition with the Children, Young People and Education Committee.

### **3.3 P-05-743 End the Exotic Pet Trade in Wales**

The Committee considered further correspondence from the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs and from the petitioner, and agreed to write back to the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs to:

- ask for an update on the timescales for developing a code of practice for primates kept as pets; and
- express the Committee's support for the calls to introduce a full ban on the keeping of primates as pets.

### **3.4 P-05-869 Declare a Climate Emergency and fit all policies with zero-carbon targets**

The Committee considered further correspondence from the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs and from the petitioner and agreed to:

- write back to the Minister to ask for a response to the petitioners' call for a Citizens Assembly and for further information, including a timescale, about the review of actions in Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales; and
- share details of the petition with the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee and ask them to raise the issues with the Minister in a future evidence session.

### **3.5 P-05-876 Protection of Red & Amber listed species in Wales**

The Committee considered correspondence from Natural Resources Wales and agreed to:

- await further views or information from the petitioner before deciding whether to take any further action on the petition; and
- seek further information on the number of licences issued by Natural Resources Wales which would allow the killing of species categorised as Red and Amber on the RSPB's lists.

### **3.6 P-05-754 Lack of support for children with disabilities at crisis**

The Committee agreed to await the views of the petitioner on the response received from the Minister for Health and Social Services before considering whether to take further action on the petition. The Committee also agreed to ask the petitioner whether her planned meeting with Cwm Taf University Health Board has taken place.

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

The Committee considered correspondence from Vertex Pharmaceuticals and agreed to:

- await a further update from Vertex Pharmaceuticals and confirmation that its evidence has been formally submitted for appraisal; and
- write to the All Wales Medicines Strategy Group to seek information about the request by Vertex to submit evidence for appraisal on Orkambi as well as Symkevi as well as details of its discussion with the company in relation to appraisal of its cystic fibrosis treatments.

### **3.8 P-05-842 Give young people a voice when commissioning local services in Wales**

The Committee considered further correspondence from the Minister for Health and Social Services and agreed to seek the views of the petitioner on the response received from the Minister and particularly whether they are content with the commitment to identify a young person to act as a representative on the Group, before considering whether to take further action on the petition.

### **3.9 P-05-854 Make learning disability training mandatory for hospital staff**

The Committee considered a Written Statement from the Minister for Health and Social Services and agreed to request time for the petition to be debated in Plenary in the autumn term, given that it received more than 5000 signatures.

### **3.10 P-05-859 Provide Child Houses in Wales for victims of child sexual abuse**

The Committee considered correspondence from the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services and agreed to:

- note the actions currently being taken in response to concerns over SARC (Sexual Abuse Referral Centres) provision and the commitment to review the outcomes of the pilot project in London; and
- seek the views of the petitioner on the *National Action Plan on Preventing and Responding to Child Sexual Abuse*, once it's been published

### **3.11 P-05-866 Sepsis Public Awareness Campaign – Wales**

The Committee considered correspondence from the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee and agreed to close the petition given that Committee's plans to conduct an inquiry into sepsis in the autumn term. In doing so, Members wished to thank the petitioners for bringing the petition forward.

### **3.12 P-05-783 Ensuring Equality of Curriculum for Welsh Medium Schools e.g. GCSE Psychology**

The Committee considered further correspondence from the Minister for Education and from Qualifications Wales, and agreed to:

- write to Qualifications Wales to set out the Committee's view that everybody should be able to study all available qualifications in both official languages in Wales;
- write to the petitioner to encourage them to directly engage with the Qualifications Wales' consultation on the future shape of 14-16 qualifications before considering the petition again; and
- await the proposals resulting from the Qualifications Wales' consultation before considering the petition again.

### **3.13 P-05-805 Fair Deal For Supply Teachers**

The Committee considered correspondence from a range of stakeholders and agreed to:

- Seek the views of supply agencies the issues raised by the petition; and once received
- use all of the evidence gathered to date to produce a report, including recommendations, on the Committee's consideration of the petition.

### **3.14 P-05-832 To Amend the School Admissions Code Relating to Summer-Born Children**

The Committee considered further correspondence from the Minister for Education and from the petitioner, and agreed to await the publication of the public consultation on a revised Schools Admissions Code in autumn 2019 before considering whether any further action is required on the petition.

### **3.15 P-05-875 The Capping of Council Tax Rises in Wales**

The Committee considered correspondence from the WLGA and from the petitioner and agreed to close the petition, given that council tax increases are a matter for local determination.

### **3.16 P-05-815 Control Rapidly Expanding Intensive Poultry Industry in Wales**

The Committee considered correspondence from the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs and from the petitioner, and agreed to:

- provide the additional information from the petitioners to:
    - the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs and ask for her response to the proposal to apply the 'polluter pays' principle to the costs of regulation, monitoring and breaches; and
    - the Minister for Housing and Local Government in relation to the petitioners' comments on the terms of reference for the Town & Country Planning Intensive Agriculture Working Group and await the outcomes of its work
- The Committee also agreed to ask the Minister what consideration she has given to the cumulative impact of planning decision and whether she will consider amending the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 to take this into account.

### **3.17 P–05–865 Guarantee fully plant–based options on every public sector menu to protect the rights of vegans and for our health, the environment and animals**

The Committee considered further correspondence from the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs, and a joint response from the Ministers for Health and Social Services and Education and agreed to :

- gather further information in relation to schools and hospitals from local authorities and health boards; and
- write to the Minister for Health and Social Services to:
  - ask for information over the timescale and process for refreshing the All-Wales Nutrition and Catering Standard;
  - share the view of the Committee that large scale public sector catering providers should be required to provide a vegan and vegetarian option on their menus and other public sector caterers should be required to provide a reason for opting out; and
  - ask what consideration had been given to legislation in this area.

### **3.18 P–05–873 Free Welsh Lessons for the People of Wales**

Mike Hedges declared the following relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A:  
His daughter is currently studying Welsh in university.

The Committee considered further correspondence from the Minister for International Relations and the Welsh Language and agreed to write back to the Minister to ask for further details on her plans now and in the future relating to the numbers of:

- people who will be trained to teach Welsh; and
- free and affordable places for Welsh learners.

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

The motion was agreed



## **5 Consideration of Draft Report**

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

The Committee agreed the draft report subject to the inclusion of some additional recommendations.