

Concise Minutes – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: Tuesday, 19 November
2019

Meeting time: 09.19 – 10.29

This meeting can be viewed

on [Senedd TV](#) at:

<http://senedd.tv/en/5679>

Attendance

Category	Names
Assembly Members:	Janet Finch–Saunders AM (Chair) Michelle Brown AM Leanne Wood AM
Witnesses:	
Committee Staff:	Graeme Francis (Clerk) Ross Davies (Deputy Clerk) Samiwel Davies (Legal Adviser)

1 Introduction, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

Apologies were received from Neil McEvoy AM.

2 New petitions

2.1 P–05–909 Promoting the use of Makaton sign language in all Welsh schools

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write back to the Minister for Education to ask:

- what opportunities there are for the Welsh Government to promote the benefits of providing opportunities for pupils to learn Makaton, or other forms of sign



language, to schools in Wales, either through the new curriculum or other means; and

- what other opportunities to learn Makaton such as adult education classes, are supported by the Government.

2.2 P-05-911 Protect Wales' Ancient Yew Trees

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

- seek further information from the petitioner about the specific steps that she would like to see the Welsh Government take to provide additional protection to ancient yew trees; and
- write back to the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs to ask her to outline the recommendations previously made by the Task and Finish Group on ancient, veteran and heritage trees and how these have since been taken forward by the Welsh Government.

2.3 P-05-912 Supporting Sudden and Unexpected Death in Children and Young Adults

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to await the findings of the review into bereavement services in Wales, and the petitioner's response to those, before considering further action on the petition.

Additionally, due to the fact that the petition received more than 5000 signatures, the Committee agreed to seek the Business Committee's approval for a debate to be held in Plenary following the publication of the review of bereavement services.

2.4 P-05-913 Creation of Lôn Las Môn Multi-Use Path

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

- write back to the Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport to ask:
 - for details of how the Welsh Government responded to the previous Network Rail Industry consultation concerning this line;
 - for the current status of the new station proposal for Llangefni; and
 - whether the Welsh Government would consider funding the reopening of this line.

- write to Anglesey Council to seek its views on the potential future uses for the Anglesey Central Railway and whether it would consider providing funding to support any of these being progressed.

2.5 P-05-914 Equal Access to Health Care for the Disabled

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write back to the Minister for Health and Social Services to:

- provide the additional information submitted by the petitioner;
- ask for a response to the proposal that the Government should ensure that every GP surgery has a wide adjustable treatment bed and hoist available, through funding or other means;
- ask for any examples of best practice that the Minister could share with health boards; and
- ask what consideration has been given to formalising the requirements in legislation, beyond the guidance currently available.

2.6 P-05-915 Call for better enforcement of puppy farms in Wales

Given the similarity of the issues, raised the Committee agreed to group the petition with [P-05-856 Ban the sale of puppies by pet shops and all commercial 3rd party dealers in Wales](#) and consider them together in future, including once a response is received to the Committee's recent letter to the Minister for Environment requesting a timescale for the completion of the 'urgent and immediate' review of the dog breeding regulations.

2.7 P-05-916 Adequate funding to protect the welfare of farm animals in Welsh slaughterhouses

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

- write to the Minister to ask for confirmation of the levels of funding that the Welsh Government has provided to the Food Standards Agency for 2019/20, and for each of the past three years, for the purposes of overseeing welfare controls in slaughterhouses in Wales; and

- amend the report on petition P-04-433 CCTV in Slaughterhouses to ensure that it also covers this petition and the new information received, and to consider a further draft of the report at a future meeting.

3 Updates to previous petitions

3.1 P-05-805 Fair Deal For Supply Teachers

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to write to the Minister for Education, prior to producing a report on this issue, to ask:

- for an update on the implementation of the new managed service framework specification for agency workers;
- for a response to the points raised by supply agencies and the petitioner about the national minimum pay rate not being followed in some cases or upheld by legislation; and
- about the next steps following the recent evaluation of the School Based Cluster Supply Model Project.

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

The Committee agreed to await the views of the petitioner on the latest developments, including the recent report produced by the Welsh Youth Parliament, before considering whether it can take any further action on the petition.

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

The Committee agreed to continue to await a further response from the petitioner to the information received by the Committee, including the report of the Welsh Youth Parliament, before considering whether it can take further action on the petition.

3.4 P-05-880 Wales is Rapidly Losing its Musical Reputation and Heritage

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to:

- write again to the Music Education Council and the Welsh Local Government Association to seek responses and, in the case of the latter, information about the distribution of previous funding provided to local authorities;

- write back to the Minister for Education to seek further information about what has caused the delays in commissioning and receiving the feasibility study report; and
- inquire with the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee about any intentions it has to follow up their previous inquiry on this subject.

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

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to provide the information received from the University of London Institute in Paris to the Minister for Education and ask for her to provide a further view in relation to the appropriateness of designating courses at the institution, in light of the clarifications provided.

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

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to close the petition in light of the agreement reached to make Orkambi available to patients in Wales, and to offer their thanks and congratulations to the petitioner and the CF Trust on the successful outcome to their campaigning.

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

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to seek a response from the Minister to the statement made by the petitioner about payment levels, and for information about how decisions about payment levels are reached.

The Committee also requested further information about current scheme benefits in Wales and England from the Research Service.

3.8 P-05-859 Provide Child Houses in Wales for victims of child sexual abuse

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to:

- write to the Mayor of London to seek information about the Lighthouse Project, any findings which can be shared from the first year of its operation and for

details of the evaluation of the project, including likely timescales for the completion of this; and

- write to the Minister for Health and Social Services to ask whether the Welsh Government would consider any interim findings arising out of the Lighthouse Project pilot, in order to expediate consideration of its applicability to Wales.

3.9 P-05-896 Prevent the closure of Ward 35 at Prince Charles Hospital

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to write to the Minister for Health and Social Services and Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board to ask for an overall assessment of the number of elderly and dementia care beds lost from hospitals in Wales and Cwm Taf respectively over recent years.

3.10 P-05-902 Paternal Mental Health (New Fathers Mental Health)

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to await the publication of the Together for Mental Health Delivery Plan 2019–2022 later this year and seek the petitioner's views in relation to its contents at that time.

3.11 P-05-815 Control Rapidly Expanding Intensive Poultry Industry in Wales

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to:

- write again to the Minister for Environment to seek a response to the previous points raised in relation to the 'polluter pays' principle, and to ask further questions proposed by the petitioners in relation to ammonia and phosphate pollution and the permitting regime; and
- write to the Minister for Housing and Local Government to raise the petitioners' concerns that the timescales for the work of the Town and Country Planning Intensive Agriculture Working Group have slipped and ask for an updated timeline for the Group's work, including an indication of when they will report their findings.

3.12 P-05-837 Green Energy for the Wellbeing of Future Generations in Wales

The Committee considered further correspondence from the petitioners and Members noted their disappointment that no response to previous correspondence had been received from the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change.

However, in light of the fact that decisions over the development of Wylfa Newydd are subject to a planning inquiry and will ultimately be taken by the UK Government, the Committee agreed to close the petition on the basis that there is little further scrutiny that it could usefully contribute to this process.

3.13 P-05-878 Shut the Door on Wasted Energy

In light of the responses received from major supermarkets, and the limitations on the Welsh Government's powers to mandate action in this area, the Committee agreed to close the petition on the basis that it is unable to take further meaningful action in relation to the petition.

3.14 P-05-899 Buses for people not profit

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to close the petition in light of the planned introduction of the Buses (Wales) Bill and the scrutiny which will be applied to it by the Assembly and another committee during the legislative process.

The Committee also agreed to write to the petitioner to provide them with information about how they can engage with the legislative scrutiny process in order to contribute to the development of the Bill.

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 Review of the National Assembly for Wales Petitions System

Committee Members received an update on the development of a new online petitioning system for the National Assembly for Wales.