

# Concise Minutes – Petitions Committee

---

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: Tuesday, 21 January 2020

Meeting time: 09.03 – 10.25

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

<http://senedd.tv/en/5908>

---

## Attendance

Category	Names
Assembly Members:	Janet Finch-Saunders AM (Chair) Michelle Brown AM Neil McEvoy AM Jack Sargeant AM Leanne Wood AM
Witnesses:	
Committee Staff:	Graeme Francis (Clerk) Mared Llwyd (Second Clerk) Ross Davies (Deputy Clerk) Samiwel Davies (Legal Adviser)

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

## 2 New petitions

### 2.1 P-05-924 Ensure that every school in Wales has Wellbeing Ambassadors

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to invite the Dŵr y Felin School Wellbeing Ambassadors to give further evidence on their role, either by meeting with the Committee or providing this on film.



Cynulliad National  
Cenedlaethol Assembly for  
Cymru Wales

## **2.2 P-05-929 Encouraging the use of “Cymru” and “Cymry” when referring to ourselves in Welsh and English**

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to share the further information provided by the petitioner with the Minister for International Relations and Welsh Language and seek her response to the additional points raised.

## **2.3 P-05-931 Sun cream in schools**

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

## **2.4 P-05-932 Education On Food Allergies In Schools & Mandatory EPI PEN Training**

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to the Minister for Education to seek clarification on the monitoring of the implementation of the guidance and ask them to ensure the petitioner and other people with lived experience are consulted when reviewing the approach to allergies and immunology from a health perspective. The Committee also agreed to propose that the Minister’s officials meet with the petitioner to discuss the current support for children with allergies in schools.

# **3 Updates to previous petitions**

## **3.1 P-05-724 Rights to Primary Health Care in Welsh**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to close the petition on the basis that there appears to be little more that the petition can achieve in light of the recent implementation of the Regulations and the assurances provided by the Minister that the purpose of the review will be to seek ways to strengthen them.

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

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

He is a former service user of the petitioners and he has previously employed the lead petitioner.

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to write back to Cafcass Cymru to seek their response to the proposals for monitoring the implementation of the *Children's Resistance or Refusal to Spend Time with a Parent* guidance, including the suggested indicators, made by the petitioners.

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

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to close the petition in light of the information provided by Cwm Tâf Morgannwg University Health Board about measures being progressed locally, and the previous assurances that there is no barrier in national policy to children with learning disabilities accessing mental health crisis support. The Committee thanked the petitioner for using the petitions process and wished to encourage her, and her family, to engage with their constituency and regional Assembly Members as required in the future.

### **3.4 P-05-870 Let's Get Every Young Heart Screened (Age 10-35)**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to request suggestions for any further sources of information or evidence, in light of the decision of the UK National Screening Committee not to recommend systematic population screening for cardiac conditions associated with SCD in the young following a recent review of evidence.

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

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to note the information provided about how the implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act is being evaluated. The Committee also agreed to close the petition in light of the fact that the Welsh Government has rejected the establishment of a Learning Disability Commissioner post at this time, and the petitioners' previous acceptance of this.

### **3.6 P-05-750 For single use items: introduce a Deposit Return System for drink containers and make fast food containers and utensils compostable**

The Committee considered further information and agreed to write to the Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government to request an update on the Welsh Government's input into work to develop a Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers in England and Wales, following the previous consultation in 2019 and to

ask what more the Welsh Government can do to support the introduction of Deposit Return Scheme in Wales.

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

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to write to the Minister for Finance to request an update on the input of the Welsh Government into UK Government work to implement taxation on plastic packaging, and specific taxation options currently being considered for Wales.

### **3.8 P-05-829 Ban Single Use Plastic Items in Wales**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to close the petition in light of the actions currently being taken by the Welsh Government to progress a ban or restrictions on single use plastic items, and acknowledging the timescales involved in bringing such a ban forward.

### **3.9 P-05-822 Ban plastic straws (when drinking milk) in our schools**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to close the petition in light of information received by the Committee about the actions being taken to reduce or eliminate the use of plastic straws and the Welsh Government's intention to introduce a ban or restrictions on single use plastic items in the future, and the circumstances in relation to restricting their use in schools through local arrangements and procurement contracts.

The Committee also wished to congratulate Senedd Ysgol y Wern on their use of the petitioning process and thank the school and pupils for their engagement throughout the Committee's consideration of this issue.

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

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to:

- continue to keep a watching brief on the issue and seek a further update following the consideration of options by the Natural Resources Wales board, anticipated early in 2020; and
- await the receipt of views from the petitioners about the current situation.

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

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to write back to the Minister for Environment to share the petitioners' concerns and ask her to respond to the questions posed by the petitioners in their latest correspondence, and also share the correspondence with Natural Resources Wales and seek their responses to the issues relevant to them.

### **3.12 P-05-825 Protect children's lungs from harmful pollution whilst at school**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to await the outcome of the current consultation on the draft Clean Air Plan for Wales and any changes or amendments that the Welsh Government intends to take forward as a result, before considering the petition again.

### **3.13 P-05-911 Protect Wales' Ancient Yew Trees**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to write to Cadw to ask for details about any protections afforded to ancient trees such as yews in Wales, or any schemes which could be used for this purpose.

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

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to await the outcomes of Qualifications Wales' consultation, *Qualifications for the Future*, and to consider the petition again at that point.

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

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to produce a report of its consideration of the petition.

### **3.16 P-05-828 Presumption in favour of rural schools**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to close the petition in light of the fact that the Minister for Education has previously demonstrated a willingness to intervene in situations where there are concerns that local authorities have not followed the School Organisation Code, and because there appears to be little prospect of the Welsh Government introducing an appeals process against school closures at this time. The Committee wished to thank the petitioners for their engagement and wish them well for the future.

### **3.17 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 write back to the Minister for Education to seek a further response on the issue of designating the specific courses at the University of London Institute in Paris as eligible for funding, as an alternative to making more widespread changes to the Regulations.

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

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to wait a short time for further views from the petitioner, with a view to closing the petition on the basis that there appears to be little more that the petition could achieve in light of the information received from the Welsh Government and the Welsh Independent Schools Council.

### **3.19 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 further correspondence and agreed to close the petition on the basis that the Minister for Education has provided her rationale for providing standardised assessments to measure children's ability in literacy and numeracy starting from Year 2, and in light of the fact new online personal assessments are currently being rolled out.

### **3.20 P-05-909 Promoting the use of Makaton sign language in all Welsh schools**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to write again to the Minister for Education, noting the position that schools will be able to determine which

'international languages' are most appropriate in their specific circumstances under the new curriculum, and ask what opportunities there would be for the Welsh Government (or others) to encourage or support more informal provision of Makaton in classrooms, such as through a daily sign.

### **3.21 P-05-818 Introducing a Register of Lobbyists in Wales**

The Committee agreed to await the views of the petitions with a view to close the petition in light of the intention of the Standards Committee to carry out further work on this issue and to set out a proposal for the sixth Assembly.

### **3.22 P-05-853 No to any Closure of Junction 41**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to await the publication of results from further monitoring of the 50mph speed limit between junctions 41 and 42, and the development of Precautionary Retained Measures and stakeholder engagement, in March 2020.

### **3.23 P-05-863 Call on the Welsh Government to provide free sanitary products to all women in low income households**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to:

- await the views of the petitioners on the information provided, and
- keep a watching brief on any further developments on this subject-matter.

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

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

- request that her officials engage directly with the petitioners on the points they raise in relation to the detail of professional training and guidance, and how services can better reflect the needs of older people experiencing domestic abuse; and
- ask what proportion of funding is allocated for outreach services, which can be accessed by older people, and whether these services are available in all parts of Wales.

### **3.25 P-05-871 Make baby and toddler changing available in both male/female toilets**

The Committee agreed to await a response to recent correspondence it has written in relation to increasing the provision of changing places toilets, before considering further how planning policies can strive to improve the availability of a range of toilet facilities.

The Committee also agreed to write to the Assembly Commission in relation to a suggestion that there is gendered signage in the Senedd.

### **3.26 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 and agreed to request a legal brief on the question as to whether primary legislation is required to achieve the changes sought by the petitioners; and following this, write again to the Welsh Government to make relevant proposals for how to address this issue.

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

The motion was approved.

## **5 Consideration of draft response to the Chair of the Committee on Assembly Electoral Reform**

The Committee agreed the draft content of a letter in response to a request for information from the Chair of the Committee on Assembly Electoral Reform.