

# Concise Minutes – Petitions Committee

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Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: Tuesday, 4 February 2020

Meeting time: 09.15 – 10.38

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

<http://senedd.tv/en/5909>

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## 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-05-930 Petition for Ferryside Surgery

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed, in light of the fact that the surgery has now closed and that no further information had been received from the petitioners, that it had little option but to close the petition.



Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales

## **2.2 P-05-933 Ban Goldfish from being given away at funfairs. #OperationGoldfish**

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs to:

- ask her to consider referring this issue to the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Group for advice;
- seek clarification over the potential to address this issue through the forthcoming Regulations to introduce a licensing scheme for Animal Exhibits; and
- request an update when the Welsh Government has received a response from the Showmen's Guild regarding self-regulation of this practice, including a copy of the response.

## **2.3 P-05-934 Public Transport in Blaenau Gwent**

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

write to Blaenau Gwent Council to seek their views on the petition and public transport provision, the challenges faced and their plans for improving services, as well as any opportunities arising from the future Buses (Wales) Bill; and

write to Transport for Wales to seek their views on the issues raised.

## **2.4 P-05-935 Ban Pavement Parking – Pavement Promise**

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

write back to the Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport to seek clarification on the membership of the Taskforce Group, and ask how people with lived experience and organisations who support them will be involved in this work. The Committee also agreed to share the petitioners' suggestions with the Deputy Minister; and

write to other organisations with an interest in this issue, such as RNIB Cymru, Living Streets, Sustrans and Disability Wales to seek their views.

## **2.5 P-05-936 Offer Bowel Cancer Screening After the Age of 74**

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

write back to the Minister for Health and Social Services to:

- ask for a copy of the letter from the Wales Screening Committee to the UK National Screening Committee (UKNSC) seeking clarification on the rational

for ending screening at the age of 74, and the UKNSC's response when received;

- ask whether the costs of extending screening post 74, either on a population basis or in the form of self-referral, have been assessed by the Welsh Government to date; and
- ask for further explanation of the statement in the Minister's letter that "all screening programmes have the potential for harm"; and

write to the Older People's Commissioner and Bowel Cancer UK to seek their views on the petition.

## **2.6 P-05-937 STOP BOILING CRUSTACEANS ALIVE (lobsters, crabs, crayfish, prawns etc)**

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

Request a legal brief on potential changes to the Animal Welfare Act 2006; and  
await the views of the petitioners on the response provided by the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs.

## **3 Updates to previous petitions**

### **3.1 P-04-522 Asbestos in Schools**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to:

await the publication of the high level information about asbestos management in schools, with a view to ending its consideration of the petition once this has been done; and

await the views of the petitioners on the response provided by the Minister.

### **3.2 P-04-576 Allow Children in Wales to Have a Family Holiday During Term Time**

The Committee considered the petition alongside [P-04-606 Ensure schools exercise their statutory powers under regulation 7 of The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2010 without interference or bias](#) and agreed to close both petitions in light of the fact that the Welsh Government is reviewing school-attendance guidance with a view to issuing a public consultation in future ,and the fact that the Government

has previously written to local authorities to reiterate the importance of head teachers being able to apply discretion to requests for absences in term-time.

### **3.3 P-04-606 Ensure schools exercise their statutory powers under regulation 7 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 without interference or bias.**

The Committee considered the petition alongside [P-04-576 Allow Children in Wales to Have a Family Holiday During Term Time](#) and agreed to close both petitions in light of the fact that the Welsh Government is reviewing school-attendance guidance with a view to issuing a public consultation in future, and the fact that the Government has previously written to local authorities to reiterate the importance of head teachers being able to apply discretion to requests for absences in term-time.

### **3.4 P-05-807 Review and change the guidance for attendance awards in Welsh schools**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to close the petition in light of the fact that the Welsh Government is currently reviewing school-attendance guidance with a view to issuing a public consultation in future, and the commitment given by the Minister for Education that introducing scope to record absences as being related to a chronic health condition is being considered as part of that work.

### **3.5 P-05-880 Wales is Rapidly Losing its Musical Reputation and Heritage**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to write to the Chair of the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee to provide the information received to date and ask whether that Committee would consider it as part of any further work it intends to conduct in this area.

### **3.6 P-05-922 Withdraw the proposed home education guidance**

The Committee considered the petition alongside [P-05-923 Are you listening to us? Home Education Rights and Respect!](#) and agreed to:

- write to the Children's Commissioner for Wales to seek her view on the issues raised and how, in her view, the appropriate balance can be struck between the competing interests on this matter;

- seek further written evidence from bodies which represent home schooling in Wales; and
- following this, invite the Minister for Education to provide evidence to a future committee meeting.

### **3.7 P-05-923 Are you listening to us? Home Education Rights and Respect!**

The Committee considered the petition alongside [P-05-922 Withdraw the proposed home education guidance](#) and agreed to:

- write to the Children’s Commissioner for Wales to seek her view on the issues raised and how, in her view, the appropriate balance can be struck between the competing interests on this matter;
- seek further written evidence from bodies which represent home schooling in Wales; and
- following this, invite the Minister for Education to provide evidence to a future Committee meeting.

### **3.8 P-04-408: Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder Service**

The Committee considered the petition alongside [P-04-505 Eating Disorder Unit in Wales](#) and agreed to close both petitions given that a detailed independent review of eating disorder services has been carried out and the Welsh Government is scrutinising health boards’ responses to the review’s recommendations, as well as providing additional resources itself. The Committee also agreed to congratulate the petitioner on their work to achieve improvements in eating disorder services in Wales

### **3.9 P-04-505 Eating Disorder Unit in Wales**

The Committee considered the petition alongside [P-04-408: Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder Service](#) and agreed to close both petitions given that a detailed independent review of eating disorder services has been carried out and the Welsh Government is scrutinising health boards’ responses to the review’s recommendations, as well as providing additional resources itself.

### **3.10 P-05-804 We need Welsh Government funding for play!!**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to:

write to the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services to ask for the petition and the correspondence received from Play Wales and the Children’s Commissioner to be

formally considered as part of the Ministerial Play Review announced by the Welsh Government; and

write again to the WLGA to seek a response to the issues raised by the petition and ask how they respond to the expectations of local authorities outlined by the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

### **3.11 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 write back to the Minister for Health and Social Services to seek an update on discussions with other UK administrations about achieving parity of scheme benefits, and press for this issue to be resolved as a matter of urgency.

### **3.12 P-05-849 All men in Wales should have access through the NHS to the best possible diagnostic tests for prostate cancer**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to await a further update from the Minister for Health and Social Services about the progress made in implementing mpMRI scanning in Wales.

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

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to keep a watching brief on the petition with a view to referring the petition to the Committee responsible for considering petitions in the Sixth Assembly, once the full evaluation of the Lighthouse Project pilot of the Child House model is published in 202.

### **3.14 P-05-896 Prevent the closure of Ward 35 at Prince Charles Hospital**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to close the petition in view of the fact that Ward 35 closed in summer 2019 and the objectives of the petition can no longer be achieved, and the lack of contact with the petitioner.

### **3.15 P-05-905 Call for an Independent judicial Inquiry into the reorganisation of services within Cwm Taf Health Board**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to:

write to Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board to seek their response to the issues raised and to seek further information about the current status of the changes implemented under the South Wales Programme; and

invite the Minister for Health and Social Services and Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board to attend a future Committee meeting, once the Committee begins to consider the petition on changes to A&E at Royal Glamorgan Hospital.

### **3.16 P-05-912 Supporting Sudden and Unexpected Death in Children and Young Adults**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to seek time for the petition to be debated in Plenary.

### **3.17 P-05-898 Ban the use of A boards in Wales**

The Committee considered further information and agreed to write a detailed letter to the Minister for Housing and Local Government to outline the evidence received and ask whether the Welsh Government will give consideration to producing additional guidance or recommendations on the use of A Boards.

### **3.18 P-05-894 Fairer business rates for Welsh businesses**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to close the petition in light of the petitioners' satisfaction with the measures introduced through the High Street Relief Scheme.

### **3.19 P-05-897 Stop Developers netting hedgerows and trees**

The Committee agreed to close the petition on the basis that it is difficult to see how it could take the issue forward without further contact and information from the petitioner.

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

The Committee considered the petition alongside [P-05-835 Allow Free Movement of Taxi Drivers to Carry Out Private Hire Work Anywhere in Wales](#) and agreed to close the petitions given that the Minister for Economy and Transport has now ruled out pursuing legislative change in this area during the remainder of this Assembly, and the

Welsh Government is pursuing several measures and policy changes with the WLGA in the meantime.

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

The Committee considered the petition alongside [P-05-775 Put an end to the Cross Border and Sub-contracting Taxi Licensing loophole](#) and agreed to close the petitions given that the Minister for Economy and Transport has now ruled out pursuing legislative change in this area during the remainder of this Assembly, and the Welsh Government is pursuing several measures and policy changes with the WLGA in the meantime.

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

Members declared relevant interests under Standing Order 17.24A:

- Jack Sargeant has previously declared his support for the scheme.
- Michelle Brown has previously declared her opposition to the scheme.

The Committee considered further evidence and agreed to write to the Minister for Economy and Transport to raise a number of further issues in relation to the scheme.

### **3.23 P-05-778 Protect the Razor Clams on Llanfairfechan Beach**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to write back to the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs to welcome the progress being made and ask her to give consideration to introducing new legislation or regulations for governing razor clam harvesting, along the lines proposed by the petitioner, following the completion of the current studies.

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

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to close the petition in light of the changes made to Natural Resources Wales's General Licences, including the removal of red and amber listed species, and the wider Wild Bird Licensing Review being carried out in 2020.



### **3.25 P-05-873 Free Welsh Lessons for the People of Wales**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to close the petition in light of the fact that adult learners of Welsh are able to access lessons at a standard course fee, with discounts available to learners on low incomes and financial assistance in place to help reduce other barriers.

### **3.26 P-05-883 National Welsh History Week**

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to keep a watching brief on the issue and return to the petition when they begin consideration of a similar petition [We call on the Welsh Government to create a common body of knowledge about Welsh history that all pupils will learn](#), in the coming months.

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

The Committee agreed 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, and the lack of recent contact with the petitioners.