

## Petitions Committee

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Meeting Venue:  
**Committee Room 1 – Senedd**

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Meeting date:  
**13 March 2012**

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Meeting time:  
**09:00**

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Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales



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### Agenda

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- 1. Introduction, apologies and substitutions 09:00**
- 2. Discussion of oral evidence given by the Minister for Local Government & Communities on 7 February 2012 09:00–09:10**  
(Pages 1 – 9)
  - 2.1 P-04-331 Filming and Recording of Council Meetings
  - 2.2 P-04-332 Local Authority Spending Details over £500 (Pages 10 – 11)
- 3. P-03-238 Pollution of the Burry Inlet – discussion of Committee site visit 09:10–09:20** (Pages 12 – 14)
- 4. P-04-329 Control of noise nuisance from wind turbines – discussion of site visits and evidence given on 28 February 09:20–09:30** (Pages 15 – 26)
- 5. New petitions 09:30–09:40**
  - 5.1 P-04-370 Petition for the improvement of Psychic and Intuitive services in Wales (Page 27)
  - 5.2 P-04-372 More Ladies Toilets at Entertainment Venues (Pages 28 – 30)
  - 5.3 P-04-373 School Exclusion Zones for Mobile Hot Food Vans (Page 31)
  - 5.4 P-04-374 All dogs to be kept on leads at all times in public places (Page 32)

- 5.5 P-04-375 Stop Opt-Out Organ Donation (Page 33)
- 5.6 P-04-376 Reorganise Education in Powys (Pages 34 – 40)
- 5.7 P-04-377 Continuation of Concessionary Fares on Community Transport (Pages 41 – 61)

## **6. Updates to previous petitions 09:40–09:55**

### **Education & Skills**

- 6.1 P-04-350 Retain the services of Sporttrain in Rhondda and Cardiff (Pages 62 – 70)

### **Health & Social Services**

- 6.2 P-03-318 Cross Border Maternity Services (Pages 71 – 73)
- 6.3 P-04-337 Tenovus: Free sunscreen (Pages 74 – 80)
- 6.4 P-04-342 MS Nurses (Pages 81 – 99)
- 6.5 P-03-236 The Charter for Grandchildren (Pages 100 – 107)

### **Environment & Sustainability**

- 6.6 P-04-339 Enforcement of Animal Welfare Standards in the Puppy Farming Industry in South West Wales (Pages 108 – 109)

## **7. P-04-335 The Establishment of a Welsh Cricket Team – round table discussion 09:55–10:30 (Pages 110 – 126)**

Matthew Bumford, petitioner  
Mohammad Asghar AM  
Dr Huw Jones, Sport Wales  
Alan Hamer, Glamorgan Cricket  
Peter Hybart, Director of Cricket, Cricket Wales

## **8. Motion to move into private session under Standing Order No. 17.42(ii) to discuss P-04-358 Re-instate Home Support for Children with ASD 10:30–11:00 (Pages 127 – 130)**

PET(4)-05-12 p1a

## **P-04-331 Filming and Recording of Council Meetings**

### **Petition wording**

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to place a statutory requirement on all local authorities in Wales to record, broadcast or livestream all Council meetings which are open to the public, via their existing websites to ensure openness and transparency. This requirement should allow members of the public, as responsible observers, to record or film such meetings without the need for prior permission and to re-use the material freely to provide a direct and wider line of communication to the electorate.

**Petition raised by:** Jacqui Thompson

**Petition first considered by Committee:** September 2011

**Number of signatures:** 223

**Please follow the link to access full consultation response:**

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Ild=1741>

PET(4)-05-12 p1b

**P-04-332 Local Authority Spending Details over £500**

**Petition wording**

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to place a statutory requirement on all local authorities in Wales to publish details of all spending over £500 in the interest of openness and transparency. The details should be published online and in a format accessible to the public with the freedom to re-use the data.

**Petition raised by:** Jacqui Thompson

**Petition first considered by Committee:** September 2011

**Number of signatures:** 77

**Supporting information:** Many English Councils now publish this information on their websites. The information is already available on various internal council databases so would merely need to be collated centrally and in a form suitable for access and in compliance with the Data Protection Act.. Initial costs would be offset by a reduction in the volume of Freedom of Information requests received by Local Authorities concerning spending details.

**Please follow the link to access full consultation response:**

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Ild=1742>

## Extract from Transcript of Petitions Committee Meeting 7 February 2012

### Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau—Sesiwn Dystiolaeth Lafar The Minister for Local Government and Communities—Oral Evidence Session

[1] **William Powell:** Good morning, Minister. We are very grateful to you for sparing the time to join us this morning to consider the two petitions before us. I ask you to introduce your team, and then we will start the evidence session.

[2] **The Minister for Local Government and Communities (Carl Sargeant):** Good morning, Chair and committee. It is good to be back, although it is not that long since I was here last. I will ask my team to give their full names and titles, if that is helpful.

[3] **Ms Carter:** I am Debra Carter, head of local government finance and public service performance.

[4] **Mr Cuthbert:** I am Frank Cuthbert from the Welsh Government scrutiny, democracy and participation team.

[5] **William Powell:** A warm welcome to you all. We are here to consider two petitions this morning—P-O4-331 on the filming and recording of council meetings, and P-04-332 on local authority spending details over £500. On the filming and recording of council meetings, we previously issued a consultation and received a number of responses. We would like to go straight to questions, and Bethan has indicated that she would like to ask the first question.

[6] **Bethan Jenkins:** Beth yw barn **Bethan Jenkins:** What is the Welsh Llywodraeth Cymru ar ei gwneud yn Government's view on introducing a angenrheidiol yn statudol i gyhoeddi statutory obligation to publish details of manylion gwariant dros £500 neu £1,000, er expenditure over £500 or £1,000, for enghraifft? example?

[7] **Carl Sargeant:** I thank the Member for her question. I have made it very clear in Plenary that my view is that local authorities should determine this approach themselves; it is for them to decide locally whether they should do that. I have no current intention to make that statutory.

[8] **Bethan Jenkins:** Diolch am yr **Bethan Jenkins:** Thank you for that esboniad hwnnw. Pe bai llywodraeth leol yn explanation. If local government decided to penderfynu gwneud hyn, a fyddai hynny'n do this, would it make their actions more gwneud eu gweithredoedd yn fwy agored a open and transparent, allowing the public to thryloyw, gan ganiatáu i'r cyhoedd allu see exactly where scarce council money is gweld yn iawn lle mae arian prin cynghorau being spent? yn cael ei wario?

[9] **Carl Sargeant:** That is an interesting debate. I am all for transparent councils and transparent government—that is absolutely the right thing to do—but there is a real question of balance here, given the onerous task of publishing all expenditure above £500. I am aware that some councils are already doing that, but the jury is out, if you like, on its effectiveness. Whether it has reduced the number of freedom of information requests is still unknown. Is the task of doing this financially and physically onerous, compared with the information that the general public might want to access through the FOI system that is already in place? It is a

question of balance between publishing everything or not publishing everything and the cost involved in doing that.

[10] **William Powell:** Minister, you have anticipated part of my next question. Has the Welsh Government had any contact with Monmouthshire County Council and Newport City Council regarding the implementation of their publication scheme?

[11] **Carl Sargeant:** My team constantly monitors what is happening in local government across the board. As I said earlier, it is early days yet as to whether the effectiveness of publication has had a direct impact on publication versus freedom of information requests. I will seek more detail on that, and when I have it, I will be more than happy to share it with committee. However, as I said, it is a matter for the local authority to explain to local people why it spends as it does, and whether it believes that it is right to publish details of spending over £500, as some councils are doing. At the moment, I have not seen the benefits of doing that.

[12] **William Powell:** In addition, has there been any contact as yet between the Welsh Government and Eric Pickles, or any of his officials in England, given the recent developments with regard to the recommendation that authorities on the English side of the border should publish in this fashion?

[13] **Carl Sargeant:** I have regular correspondence with Mr Pickles. Of course, there is a different policy agenda at the other end of the M4, but I respect the right of another Government to make a judgment about making direction or providing authorities with statutory guidance. I would hope that that would be replicated in that Government's attitude towards this one.

[14] **Russell George:** You have addressed the question that I was going to ask, but have you done any work on the increase in the number of FOI requests that councils have received since freedom of information legislation was introduced?

[15] **Carl Sargeant:** No. Again, I have asked my team to start looking at these questions. What is the main thrust of FOI requests? Is it financial, or policy related, or about the decision-making process? I do not have any data to share with you on that at the moment. As I said, some councils have started publishing financial details, but it is too early to tell whether there will be a drop in FOI requests because of the transparency of publication. It is something that I would be keen to understand better, when those data are available. It may prove to be a cost benefit, if the information is useful, but if you look at it in another way, there must be quite a few transactions over £500, and some of the more important things that people would wish to home in on could get lost in the data. You would have to go through all those data to find a specific element that an FOI request might turn up now. You might want to know the exact amount of money spent on the number 5 bus service, or whatever.

[16] There are two ways of looking at this. Is publication of transactions over £500 cost-beneficial and transparent, making this a better system than FOI, through which data can be obtained now? The jury is out on that, and I am not convinced. It is, therefore, to be determined locally whether there is value for money. If there is proved to be value for money, that is something that I would have to think about in the future in considering how we share that best practice across local authorities.

[17] **Russell George:** Analysing those data is crucial in taking this forward, so I agree with you, Minister.

[18] **William Powell:** Joyce, you indicated that you want to ask a question.

[19] **Joyce Watson:** Minister, taking this from the other side, concern has been expressed that small and medium-sized enterprises could avoid undertaking local authority work if publishing spend information meant that competitors had a greater opportunity to obtain knowledge of payments made. Have you looked at or thought about that aspect?

[20] **Carl Sargeant:** I expect that there are pros and cons to that. The ease of obtaining figures on local authority spending on a certain service might be beneficial for businesses in some ways. However, I do not intend to interfere with the business protocols of local authorities. This is about a market-driven force, in terms of delivery of services, and none of these data are unobtainable. If it is onerous to publish all of these figures, then we must measure the value for money aspect of this. Businesses can already obtain these figures through the FOI system. I do not yet know whether there are any benefits from publicising this upfront.

[21] **William Powell:** We now move to consider P-04-331, which is perhaps the higher profile of the two petitions submitted by Jacqui Thompson and her supporters. This petition is on the filming and recording of council meetings, which is an issue that has been raised independently in Plenary over recent months. A number of us have some background on this issue, given our local government experience. Joyce, I believe that you want to kick off on this petition.

[22] **Joyce Watson:** Minister, you said in your letter to this committee that you would encourage local authorities to allow members of the public to film their proceedings. What specific steps are you taking to encourage councils to do that?

[23] **Carl Sargeant:** I am doing that by not standing in their way if they wish to do that. My encouragement has been made public to councils in order for them to adopt a policy that, again, goes back to our last discussion about openness and transparency. I am comfortable with councils filming their meetings—I have made that statement in the past—but it is for them to make that decision.

[24] **Joyce Watson:** In the evidence that we have received, Pembrokeshire County Council thought that not making verbatim recordings of proceedings might place councils in a disadvantageous position in relation to legal proceedings, should an edited version of a council debate be used to support a claim or complaint. Do you have any views on that?

[25] **Carl Sargeant:** The fact that some things are taken out of context goes with the world of politics and the broader media environment. You must look at the whole story, or the whole statement that has been made; people will often be familiar with just taking part of a sentence, which a Minister or a political opponent may or may not have said. Interestingly, Pembrokeshire has just announced that it is to show its council meetings on the internet, so, while it had a concern, it may have reviewed that concern and now feels more comfortable in taking forward the proposal to broadcast meetings on the internet, which I support.

[26] **Joyce Watson:** That is good.

[27] **William Powell:** Minister, thank you for flagging that up; I also become aware of that in the last 24 hours. The fact that Pembrokeshire has taken that step has been quite well-received by many interested commentators. What work has your department undertaken with Welsh councils, and possibly the Welsh Local Government Association, in exploring the benefits of the broadcasting of council meetings, particularly with regard to the assessment of the cost benefit?

[28] **Carl Sargeant:** I am not in charge of broadcasting, nor are local authorities. However, as I said, I am sympathetic to a structured process for local authorities to be able to

stream their meetings. Their meetings should be transparent and open to the public, as I said earlier, but councils should also be aware that filming is being taking place. Covert filming is not appropriate; it should be about everyone being transparent and knowing exactly what is happening at the appropriate time.

[29] Notwithstanding what I have just said, you will be aware that, in terms of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 that we introduced, we are exploring with authorities the opportunity for remote attendance. I expect that remote attendance would probably only be achieved by a video link of some sort.

10.45 a.m.

[30] Therefore, to enable a council to do that, there will have to be some sort of video system. I am not a techie, Chair, but I believe that, if a video system was streamed into the council and out of the council, it would not be that difficult to upload that to a YouTube-type website. I am sure that the other Members must have a view on how that is done; it is certainly not for me as a non-technical person to offer a response on that.

[31] **William Powell:** What assessment would you make of the potential environmental gains that could be made by minimising travel by staff and members of the general public? You may be aware of recent large-scale meetings that have happened in Powys on particular issues that are contentious there, where there has been webcasting, which seems to have been well received and extended the proceedings of the council to a much wider group of people than otherwise would have had access to them.

[32] **Carl Sargeant:** There are two elements there. The first is the openness of an authority to transfer the knowledge of a meeting beyond a building, so that people in the north or the south of Powys, wherever the meeting may have been, could access it, subject to the internet or whichever medium was used to share that information, which is important.

[33] Secondly, and part of that is where the local government Measure came in, is opening the world of politics and governance to a broader intake of people. Generally, only people who live in the locality of the council offices or meeting rooms could attend meetings, because of work or other commitments, such as family commitments. Through remote attendance, we tried to give other people the opportunity to be engaged in this process. We know, and I have given evidence to other committees about this, that the profile of the average councillor is over the age of 65, white and male. That is true in most councils. We are hoping that, by remote attendance, we might be able to open up that activity to mums at home, who may be looking after their children during the day, or fathers who are looking after their children during the day. Rather than making the journey to a council office somewhere that is way away, they could access meetings by remote attendance. It all fits in quite nicely. The element of remote attendance might lend itself to the publication of meetings on the internet. The digital age has come in, and we should embrace it and use it as best as possible. However, I do not intend to instruct local authorities to do that.

[34] **William Powell:** One final area that is worth our being aware of is the possibility of streamlining council business and increasing productivity. For example, I and other colleagues will have been present at planning meetings of principal local authorities and national parks, which I know are beyond your immediate remit, where officers will have been sitting around for hours waiting for their agenda item to come up, whereas this could lead more seamlessly to people coming when the relevant point has been reached and, therefore, sparing a lot of duplication of process.

[35] **Bethan Jenkins:** O ran opsiynau **Bethan Jenkins:** On other options, if you say eraill, os ydych yn dweud nad ydych yn that you are unwilling to require councils to



barod i'w gwneud yn ofynnol i gynghorau ddarlledu cyfarfodydd yn fyw, a fyddech yn ystyried, er nad ydych yn arbenigwr yn y maes, ei wneud drwy ffyrdd eraill, er enghraifft gwe-gamera neu drawsgrifiad llawn o'r hyn sy'n digwydd? A wnech edrych ar ddulliau technolegol eraill o gynnal y gwasanaeth penodol hwn?

broadcast meetings live, would you consider, although you are not an expert in the field, doing that through other methods, such as by web cam or a full transcript of proceedings? Will you look at other technical means of providing this specific service?

[36] **Carl Sargeant:** As I said, I am not opposed to authorities doing this. I think that Torfaen County Borough Council is very high-tech in terms of digital media; I am not sure whether it streams its meetings, but I know that it is very good in terms of its use of information and communications technology. It is a policy decision for councils whether they do this or not. I would support a council in streaming its meetings; it is good for openness and transparency for the broader public. However, as I said earlier, I am perhaps not the one to suggest the process by which that would happen. I am, nonetheless, quite sure that there are systems in place that can do that. We have seen this in Pembrokeshire this week, in the way that it is adopting this system at a relatively small cost in relation to the outcome that it may achieve.

[37] **Russell George:** I should say that the Chair and I are both members of Powys County Council and we are both under 60, are we not, Chair? [*Laughter.*] We are white males, however. I just wanted to point out that Powys County Council had a very good meeting a fortnight ago, which over 1,000 people attended—it was also broadcast on the web. It was very well received in the community. I was interested in your views on councillors attending meetings remotely. How would that work with voting, as that would have to take place remotely as well? There are issues with that, I suppose.

[38] The one issue that I wanted to ask you about is this: in providing evidence, one council talked about the cost of Welsh and English translation and the need for palantypists for meetings that are broadcast. Do you believe that such issues should be used by councils as a reason for not broadcasting meetings?

[39] **Carl Sargeant:** If you wish me to expand on that, I cannot see how uploading a meeting to YouTube or whatever should make any difference to the operation and function of a council that is happening with or without a camera. So, if an authority believes that it is compliant in its function of holding a meeting, I do not see that putting a camera in front of it is a bigger issue.

[40] **Russell George:** You have expressed your view that this is a matter for each individual local authority. Opening it up a bit further, however, this technology is relatively inexpensive, especially when it comes perhaps to just streaming audio. What are your views on town and community councils doing this, so long as costs were low? Do you have views on that as well?

[41] **Carl Sargeant:** Some of the larger town and community councils might have the financial capacity and the knowledge base to deliver that. There is much innovative thinking going on in town, parish and community councils, and if they wished to adopt that process, I would certainly not stand in the way of it. I would encourage them to do that. There is a cost involved, but it is a matter for local authorities and the local town and community councils to decide whether they think it appropriate or not.

[42] **Bethan Jenkins:** I acknowledge that you say it is for the councils to decide, but is there any way that you could provide some sort of guidance? We have heard of instances in which people have been reprimanded or judged for filming during council meetings without

permission. Is there anything that you could do? You have given us your view that you would be happy for things to be put online and so on, but could you express it to local authorities, so that those local authorities that are not so high-tech or up with the latest technology might have a different opinion?

[43] **Carl Sargeant:** I am certainly more than happy to talk with the WLGA and One Voice Wales, in terms of town and community councils, to express my view on the matter. It would be for the umbrella organisations to share that information with local authorities or town and community councils.

[44] I have made it quite clear. There has been quite a high profile case relating to this issue, and I understand why the petition has been raised. I am often accused by Members of micromanaging local authorities, but I have made it clear that, where this is a decision by a local authority or a local agency, I am loath to interfere in the process. However, if you are suggesting that sharing my views more widely may help to clarify the situation, I would certainly not be opposed to that.

[45] **Russell George:** This question follows on slightly from Bethan's. Clearly, there is an obligation on local authorities to open up their meetings to the public so that the media and reporters can go in and report, but there are issues with reporters going in with cameras and being asked to leave. That is perhaps where the Welsh Government could come in and have a view, take an opinion or provide guidance.

[46] **Carl Sargeant:** I believe that a process is already in place for private meetings in local authorities, and that is well established. Forgive me if I have misinterpreted this, but I think that the issue is about the general approach to filming council meetings more broadly. My view has been very clear: if filming or recording of a council meeting is to take place, either by a third party or by a council official, everybody should be made aware of that. The issue for me is about being open and transparent, so that all parties fully understand what the ground rules are in this regard. I think that that is fair and reasonable. I would not like to see covert camera or recording operations in local democracy.

[47] It also comes back to the point that you made about the potential for being selective with the elements that are published, such as single lines or a paragraph that a member may or may not have said. It is about taking a reasonable approach in taking this forward. I would, nevertheless, encourage local authorities and the various agencies involved in local democracy to give serious consideration to the opportunities open to them in terms of the transparency of their organisations in the broader public light.

[48] **William Powell:** Minister, thank you for your openness in dealing with these questions. You seem very much to be at the epicentre of this drive for transparency in local government. I would ask you to share some of your experiences with Cabinet colleagues, because, increasingly, there seems to be pressure on other services and areas of government, such as health boards and so on. I have previously raised with you the possibility of webcasting police authority meetings, which is another area that does not always seem to be as open to scrutiny and public awareness as others. So, if you could share this with Cabinet colleagues, it would be really helpful.

[49] We are very grateful to you for coming with your team to address our issues today. Given the shortage of time, and because we want to consider your responses properly, I propose that we consider the petition in the light of your responses at our next meeting, which will be on 13 March. Thank you—diolch yn fawr.



Carl Sargeant AC / AM  
Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau  
Minister for Local Government and Communities



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref  
Ein cyf/Our ref

Mr William Powell AM  
Chair Petitions Committee  
National Assembly  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2012

Dear Bill

At the Petitions Committee on 7 February I agreed to share with you details of the impact and benefits experienced by those local authorities that are already publishing details of their expenditure over £500.

It has been left to each local authority to decide how it deploys its resources to provide the best value for money for its citizens and to be accountable to its local electorate for the decisions it makes. To demonstrate their values of openness and promote accountability, there are 3 authorities in Wales that currently publish details of expenditure over £500: they are Monmouthshire, Newport and the Vale of Glamorgan. I have sought views from these authorities which have been summarised below.

In each case the authorities have highlighted the considerable amount of work involved in setting up the process, particularly for extracting, checking and validating the data from their general ledger systems. The process for exclusions and redactions has also been cited as a complex area that requires ongoing resources. In one authority however this has increased the focus on coding transactions correctly and improved the quality of data held.

There were some suggestions that further resources would be required to deal with additional queries from suppliers and others arising from the publication of this data. However there is no evidence from these responses to suggest that this has been the case. By the same token from the information provided, there is no evidence to suggest that the number of FOI requests has decreased.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

*Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)*

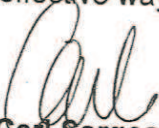
English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300  
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400  
Correspondence: Carl.Sargeant@wales.gsi.gov.uk

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Despite the regular reviews carried out by the authorities to protect against fraud there are still concerns about the potential for this information to be used fraudulently.

There is a resource commitment involved in this process for all the authorities involved, for one authority this is done centrally which reduces the pressure on the service managers. For another authority this is generally 2 days per month but they are continuing to seek ways to make this more efficient.

I continue to support the principles of openness and transparency but maintain that making it a statutory requirement for local authorities to publish expenditure details would not be an effective way to achieve transparency.



**Carl Sargeant AC / AM**

Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau  
Minister for Local Government and Communities

# Agenda Item 3

PET(4)-05-12 p3a

## **P-03-238 Pollution of the Burry Inlet**

### **Petition wording**

Petition from Carmarthenshire residents requesting a public inquiry by the Welsh Assembly Government into the sewage pollution of the Burry Inlet and Carmarthen Bay.

**Petition raised by:** Rhys Williams

**Number of signatures:** 2240

**First considered by the Committee:** September 2009

## **Petitions Committee Site Visit to Burry Port**

**27 February 2012**

The Committee received a petition calling for ‘a public inquiry by the Welsh Assembly Government into the sewage pollution of the Burry Inlet and Carmarthen Bay’ in 2009. The petition, which was submitted by Rhys Williams and collected 2,240 signatures, resulted from concerns that pollution from combined sewage overflows (CSOs) in Burry Inlet was adversely affecting the cockle population and may be the cause of the premature cockle mortalities there. On 27 February, the Committee visited Burry Port to hear from local people about the problems.

Cllr Bill Thomas addressed the Members, giving detailed information about the problems of pollution and premature cockle mortalities.

Among the points made by Cllr Thomas were that:

- Cockle gatherers do not believe pollution to be solely responsible for cockle deaths, but do believe it to be a contributory factor;
- Since 2005, the mortalities have begun every May;
- The cockles now spawn at eight months rather than two years;
- The testing done in the area, which has concluded that sewage is not responsible for the cockle mortalities, is unreliable as it was done at high tide and at one site only;
- The high incidence of overflows is not effectively recorded by the relevant agencies;
- Significant investment has been made in UV treatment, but it has been suggested that this treatment is not appropriate for the water at Burry Port;
- The pollution will worsen when 16,000 new homes are built under the LDP;
- The export industry and local economy has been hit severely by the cockle mortalities but campaigners are also concerned about the impact of the pollution on the environment;
- An effluent plan for the area is urgently needed

The Chair of the Cockle Association told Members how the problem has affected cockle pickers’ livelihoods, meaning that they now survive on roughly 12 weeks’ work a year.

Members stated that the following actions are available to them:

- Individual Members are able to raise the issue during Plenary business
- As Members of the Environment and Sustainability Committee, William Powell and Russell George could request that that Committee give the matter urgent consideration
- The Petitions Committee can request oral and/or written evidence from relevant bodies and can produce a report on the issue, which would include recommendations to the Welsh Government.

**Committee Service**

**March 2012**



PET(4)-05-12 p4a

## **P-04-329 Control of noise nuisance from wind turbines**

### **Petition wording**

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to pass a statute controlling the noise nuisance from wind turbines during anti-social hours. We ask for the implementation of respite periods during which time turbines would be switched off.

Noise respite periods are common in public health legislation. They are called for by the World Health Organisation in their Community Noise report; and are currently implemented in the U.K. on airport operations, construction sites and factories and other evening and overnight noise nuisance.

We ask that this applies to turbines above 1.3 MW, and that respite periods be between 18.00Hrs to 06.00Hrs for turbines within 1.5 Km of individual residences; and 22.00Hrs to 06.00 Hrs for turbines within 2Km of communities. Authorities within Wales determining applications under 50MW Plate Capacity, and the Infrastructure Planning Commission determining those over 50MW should make developers aware of this Public Health restriction which may affect individual turbines.

**Petition raised by:** James Shepherd Foster

**Petition first considered by Committee:** 27 September 2011

**Number of signatures:** 1074

**Supporting information:** In addition to human health, the measure would also protect nocturnal creatures, bats, owls, etc. Jonathan Edwards MP has called for a measure such as this. Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM has called for a measure similar to this. This would not affect, or be affected by TAN 8, because TAN 8 does not deal with health implications of turbines. Also it only requires turbine plate capacities as a value, and not the efficacy of the turbines themselves. Wales has a long history of neglect of Health and Safety issues, leading to large parts of the community having restricted lives. During development, the hearing of the young should not be left to chance, and until substantial and medically accepted research points to a relaxation of the times and distances set out in this petition, we should err on the side of caution.

**Evidence from Campaigner on Noise from Windfarm in Parc Cynog.**

**Original Application for six turbines at 69 metres high at Parc Cynog granted 1 Feb 2000**

**RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

Planning permission for the existing wind farm, now proposed to be extended, was granted planning permission on appeal on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2000. Permission was granted for six turbines, of which five were built. They have a maximum height, to blade tip, of 69m and a total installed capacity of 3MW. The applicant has indicated that the sixth turbine would not be erected if planning permission is granted for the current proposal.

**Planning Officer's report to the Planning Committee at meeting 19 July 2007 for the extension of 6 more turbines at 80 metres overall height at the Parc Cynog site. .**

[http://online.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/agendas/eng/PLAC20070719/REP03\\_04.HTM](http://online.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/agendas/eng/PLAC20070719/REP03_04.HTM)

**Applications Recommended For Approval**

<i>Application No</i>	<b>W/12246</b>	
<i>Application Type</i>	<b>Full Planning</b>	
<i>Proposal &amp; Location</i>	<b>ERECTION AND OPERATION OF 6 WIND TURBINES AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE, INCLUDING CONTROL BUILDING, ON-SITE ACCESS TRACKS AND UNDERGROUND ELECTRICAL CABLING. AT PARC CYNOG FARM, CASTLE LLOYD FARM &amp; WESTMEAD FARM, PENDINE, CARMARTHEN, CARMS</b>	
<i>Applicant</i>	NUON RENEWABLES, 15 CUXHAVEN WAY, LONGROCK, PENZANCE, TR20 8HX	
<i>Case Officer</i>	DAVID POULTER	<i>Date of Registration:</i>
<i>Electoral Ward</i>	LAUGHARNE TOWNSHIP	02 FEB 2006

Extract;

**5.3.0 Noise**

5.3.1 Noise from wind turbines is a frequently-raised issue. Many wind farm proposal sites are in areas of generally low background noise, particularly at night and anxiety about possible noise levels is a frequently raised issue. **The existing wind farm at Parc Cynog was subject in January 2006 to a Noise Conditions Compliance Survey.** One of the conclusions to the report was that

'residents comments also show that complaints are being made even when the night noise limit is met'.

**MINUTES OF THAT PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING ON 19 JULY 2007**  
<http://online.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/agendas/eng/PLAC20070719/MINUTES.HTM>

## **5. AREA WEST - DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

**5.1. RESOLVED** that the following planning applications be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the Report/Addendums of the Head of Planning and/or reported at the meeting:-

**W/12246                      Erection and operation of six wind turbines and associated infrastructure, including control building, on-site access tracks and underground electrical cabling at Parc Cynog Farm, Castle Lloyd Farm, and Westmead Farm, Pendine, Carmarthenshire.**

The Committee received representations objecting to the application in the following terms:

- Unacceptable impact on landscape, particularly views from the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and Tenby area;
- Detrimental to tourism;
- Noise associated with **existing turbines** will be exacerbated;
- Impact on health and safety of local residents;
- Devaluation of , and impact on, nearby properties;
- Better, more cost effective, energy alternatives available;
- Doubts as to whether the proposed development would provide sufficient electricity to meet average demand from

4380 typical UK homes;

- Height of turbines and additional height caused by sweep of blades ;

- Use of 'The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms' (ETSU-R-97) published by the Energy Technology Support Unit of the Department of Trade and Industry in 1996 to appraise noise questioned;

The applicant and landowner therupon responded to the issues raised.

**E-mail 01-03-2012**

Evidence from Local Resident of Parc Cynog

I live between 600 and 900 metres from three Castle Lloyd turbines of the Parc Cynog wind farm and can report that at times the noise is overwhelming – a dull thudding that penetrates everywhere. The problem is that it is not completely predictable. If I were to report it and ask someone to listen, it might be a day when the wind was in the other direction and there might be almost no noise. But there is no question in my mind that turbines should never be built closer than 1 or, better, 2 kilometres from dwellings.

Elizabeth Knox

## **Petitions Committee Visits to Alltwalis and Parc Cynog Windarms**

**27 February 2012**

### **Background:**

In September 2011, the Committee received a petition calling for the control of noise from wind turbines, which collected 1,074 signatures. The wording is as follows:

‘We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to pass a statute controlling the noise nuisance from wind turbines during anti-social hours. We ask for the implementation of respite periods during which time turbines would be switched off.

Noise respite periods are common in public health legislation. They are called for by the World Health Organisation in their Community Noise report; and are currently implemented in the U.K. on airport operations, construction sites and factories and other evening and overnight noise nuisance.

We ask that this applies to turbines above 1.3 MW, and that respite periods be between 18.00Hrs to 06.00Hrs for turbines within 1.5 Km of individual residences; and 22.00Hrs to 06.00 Hrs for turbines within 2Km of communities. Authorities within Wales determining applications under 50MW Plate Capacity, and the Infrastructure Planning Commission determining those over 50MW should make developers aware of this Public Health restriction which may affect individual turbines.’

The Petitions Committee issued a general call for evidence on the subject of noise from wind turbines in September 2011. Responses on both sides of the argument were received, but a significant proportion of the responses in support of the petition came from the village of Gwyddgrug. These responses outlined problems experienced with noise emitted from Alltwalis windfarm.

The Committee therefore decided to visit Alltwalis windfarm to experience the noise for themselves. They also decided to visit Parc Cynog windfarm, which is 10 years older, in order to compare the two.

### **Alltwalis:**

#### **Present:**

- William Powell AM, Chair
- Russell George AM
- Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM
- Joyce Watson AM
- Sergio Castedo, Statkraft
- Stuart Shaw, Statkraft

- Andrew Bullmore, Hoare Lea Acoustics
- Rob Fellows, Quatro Public Relations
- Abigail Phillips, Clerk to the Petitions Committee
- Sarita Marshall, Deputy Clerk to the Petitions Committee
- Helen Roberts, Committee Legal Adviser
- Rhodri Wyn Jones, Committee Support Officer

Statkraft told Members that noise complaints were received from nearby residences shortly after the windfarm was commissioned in October 2009. He told Members that it takes a certain amount of time to gather evidence of noise problems, owing to the fact that weather conditions have an impact on the sound emitted from wind turbines.

Statkraft stated that their first step was to try to establish whether the noise experienced exceeded the maximum levels set out in guidance or whether the noise was something other than the sound that might be expected to come from wind turbines.

Members were told that Statkraft acknowledged the strength of feeling in the community and therefore immediately began monitoring the noise and also implemented a helpline for local residents to contact to report noise.

Statkraft noted at the meeting that there were examples of complaints being received when the turbines were not operational.

After three months of testing and monitoring, a problem with a turbine gearbox was identified, and there was a delay while a new part for the turbine was manufactured. Statkraft stated that once the problem was identified, the turbine was switched off at night. It was also found that wind speed and direction contributed to the problem.

The overall noise levels from the windfarm then fell within guidance limits but residents at a nearby farm continued to experience tonal noise. It was decided that the fix had not worked and Siemens therefore agreed to replace the whole gearbox.

The residents affected made a claim for financial compensation. Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM stated at the meeting that the level of compensation claimed was based on legal advice. Statkraft rejected the claim as they say they acted on complaints and the sound emitted overall fell within guidance limits. Statkraft responded by making their own offer of compensation, which included employing a member of the household to monitor the noise and free electricity, but have not received a response.

The residents have now withdrawn permission to allow Statkraft monitoring equipment to be installed at their residence, so Statkraft can no longer collect data, which is needed for the monitoring work.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM stated that the monitoring equipment was no longer allowed to be on that particular farm because permission had not been sought by Statkraft on several occasions before accessing the equipment.

In conclusion, Statkraft stated that they felt they had been transparent in their dealings and had investigated problems in order to attempt to resolve them. However, they can no longer monitor the problem area as they no longer have access to the land where they need to monitor the noise.

### **Parc Cynog:**

#### **Present:**

- William Powell AM, Chair
- Russell George AM
- Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM
- Joyce Watson AM
- Ross Cant, Operations Manager, Vattenfall
- Martin Hooker, Planning Consultant working on behalf of Vattenfall
- Iori Evans, landowner
- Abigail Phillips, Clerk to the Petitions Committee
- Sarita Marshall, Deputy Clerk to the Petitions Committee
- Helen Roberts, Committee Legal Adviser
- Rhodri Wyn Jones, Committee Support Officer

Parc Cynog windfarm sits on a hill overlooking the sea, and the village of Llanmiloe is situated at the bottom of the hillside, next to the sea. Members were told that, apart from one residence, no complaints about noise from the windfarm have been received from the local community. The landowner also told Members that the turbines pose no threat to birds and that many birds use the birdfeeders on his land.

Roughly half of the turbines at the site were built in 2001, and the other half were built more recently.

The windfarm is managed by a community interest company, which makes about £30,000 profit a year for the local community.

**Committee Service  
March 2012**





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Mr William Powell AM  
Petitions Committee - Chairman  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

7<sup>th</sup> March 2012

Dear Mr Powell,

I am writing to thank the Petitions Committee for their visit to the Alltwalis Wind Farm on the 27<sup>th</sup> February. Statkraft was pleased to host the visit and to have the opportunity to meet and answer questions directly from committee members, and to provide an accurate summary of the activities that have taken place since the first noise complaints were received in October 2009.

We understand that the public meeting held on the following day in Carmarthen included numerous comments about the Alltwalis Wind Farm and the way in which Statkraft has dealt with noise complaints.

We regret to hear that some committee members might have felt misled in regards our response to complaints, so we would like to place on record that all information provided to members and previously to Carmarthenshire County Council is wholly accurate, and we would be happy to provide detailed evidence to back up our response to dealing with noise complaints.

Statkraft has worked closely with many local residents, the local council and the wind turbine supplier to rectify the noise issues at the Alltwalis wind farm which culminated in a number of turbine retrofits, operation modifications on the wind farm and even a gearbox being changed on one of the turbines

It is unfortunate that since these retrofits were implemented and before the gearbox was changed, Statkraft has for the last year been repeatedly refused the request to access wind data from the monitoring equipment deployed at the end of 2009 at the home of the main complainants, despite receiving a significant financial claim from the owners of one of the properties. After numerous request to continue to monitor the noise from Alltwalis, Statkraft decided to retrieve all the equipment deployed having successfully shown to the Council and the Welsh Government that the Alltwalis Wind Farm is operating within full compliance of its conditioned noise limits, both in terms of the overall level of noise emissions at neighbouring residential properties and the absence of audible tonal elements within these noise emissions.

We are pleased to have formed a close working relationship with Carmarthenshire County Council whilst addressing the noise complaints and I am sure that they would be happy to provide further evidence in regards the steps that Statkraft has completed to address legitimate concerns.

Statkraft has shown itself to be a responsible developer and has, on numerous occasions, shut down one or more turbines in order to address noise complaints. We would be pleased to provide you with a copy of the resident noise log that will clearly and unequivocally demonstrate all noise complaints received and what action was taken.

The wind farm continues to legally operate within the conditions laid down by the local authority when planning consent was granted. Statkraft has shown with specific actions that it is willing to correct and operate Alltwalis Wind Farm within its conditioned noise limits.

Whilst we provided you a summary of the noise report completed by our consultants, Hoare Lea Acoustics, we would also be pleased to provide the full report should you wish to receive additional analysis.

I would also like to reiterate the point that I made when we met that the wind farm is fully compliant and is operating within the conditioned limits established through the planning process. Statkraft is operating Alltwalis Wind Farm within its lawful rights. Please find enclosed a copy of the planning conditions that relate to noise.

Statkraft has conducted itself in an open and transparent manner. The information that was shared with the Petitions Committee when we provided a briefing and site visit is wholly accurate.

We would also be happy to answer any additional questions that you may have following the public meeting.

Yours sincerely



Sergio Castedo

Director

Statkraft Wind UK Ltd

cc Russell George AM

Bethan Jenkins AM

Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM

Joyce Watson AM

Sarita Marshall – Petitions Committee Clerk

## CONSENTED NOISE LIMITS

2.1 The planning consent for the Wind Farm includes, as part of its associated conditions, limits for noise immission levels that are permitted at neighbouring residential properties as a consequence of the operation of the wind farm. The noise elements of the conditions state:

12 At the reasonable request of and following a complaint to the Council the operator of the development shall measure and assess at its expense the level of noise emissions from the wind turbine generators following the procedures described in Section 2.0, Pages 102 to 104 in the document "The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms, ETSU-R-97" published by ETSU for the Department of Trade and Industry.

13 The level of noise emissions from the combined effects of the wind turbine generators when measured at Blaengwen Isaf, Rhoswen, Brynawelon, Gellifelen, Coedlannau Fawr, Lan Farm shall not exceed:

(i) During night-time the greater of 43dB(A) L90,10min or 5dB above the night-time LA90 background noise level at wind speeds not exceeding 12 metres per second.;

(a) and at all other times

(ii) The greater of 40dB(A) L90,10min or 5dB above the quiet day-time LA90 background noise level at wind speeds not exceeding 12 metres per second.

14 The level of noise emissions from the combined effects of the wind turbine generators when measured at Blaengwen Farm, Bedwhirion and Pen-llwydcoed shall not exceed:

(i) During night-time the greater of 45dB(A) L90,10min or 5dB above the night-time LA90 background noise level at wind speeds not exceeding 12 metres per second.;

(a) and at all other times

(ii) The greater of 45dB(A) L90,10min or 5dB above the quiet day-time LA90 background noise level at wind speeds not exceeding 12 metres per second.

15 Background noise levels referred to in this condition shall be those recorded by the regression lines in the Blaengwen Wind Farm Environmental Statement submitted with the application.

Night-time means 2300-0700 hours on all days. Quiet day-time means 1800-2300 hours on all days plus 0700-1800 hours on Sundays and 1300-1800 hours on Saturdays. Wind speeds shall

be measured on site at a height of 10 metres above ground level.

16 At all other dwellings excepting those specified in Condition No. 15 the level of noise emissions from the combined effects to the wind turbine generators shall not exceed the levels specified in Condition No. 13.

17 The operator of the development shall produce wind speed and wind direction data to the Council at its reasonable request to enable compliance with and performance under Condition No.13 to be monitored. This wind data shall include the wind speed in metres per second (ms-1) and the wind direction in degrees from north for each 10 minute period. At the reasonable request of the Local Planning Authority the recorded data relating to 10m height above ground level shall be made available to them. Where wind speed is measured at a height other than 10m, the wind speed data shall be converted to 10m height, accounting for wind shear by a method whose details shall also be provided to the Local Planning Authority.

18 Details of the proposed turbines and their noise characteristics shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to their becoming operational.

21 Tonal noise shall be measured by the operator of the development at its expense for audibility at the reasonable request of and following a complaint to the Council in accordance with the document "The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms, ETSU-R-97" published by ETSU for the Department of Trade and Industry.

If, at any property, the tonal noise from the combined effect of the wind turbines generators exceeds the threshold of audibility:-

(a) by more than 2.0dB but less than 6.5dB a penalty of  $((5/6.5) \times \text{Audibility})\text{dB}$  shall be added to the noise level derived for that property measured in accordance with Condition 12.

(b) by more than 6.5dB a penalty of 5dB shall be added to the noise level derived for that property measured in accordance with Condition 12.

PET(4)-05-12 p5a

## **P-04-370 Petition for the improvement of Psychic and Intuitive services in Wales**

### **Petition wording:**

We the undersigned call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to raise awareness with providers of Psychic services and the public of the Consumer Protection from unfair Trading Regulations 2008.

**Petition raised by:** Ant Edwards

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 13 March 2012

**Number of signatures:** 38

# Agenda Item 5.2

PET(4)-05-12 p6a

## **P-04-372 More Ladies Toilets at Entertainment Venues**

### **Petition wording:**

We the undersigned call on the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to amend building regulations to require increased provision of ladies toilets at public entertainment venues.

**Petition raised by:** Simon Williams-Jones

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 13 March 2012

**Number of signatures:** 27

PET(4)-05-12 p6b

I would like to present my petition iformally informally to members of the committee although I am not sure if there would be time to arrange this. In the course of my little campaign I have discussed the issue of toilets provision with people who are a lot more knowledgable than me. I understand that since 2010,a code of practice is already referred to in the Building Regulations. However this would only to apply to projects which have started since then. There are not likely to be many new public venues built in the near future. consequently I would like to ask that the committee to consider a programme which would enable EXISTING public venues to be improved over a period of time. Possibilities might include incentives, accreditation, sponsorship and ultimately a deadline.

## More Ladies Toilets at Entertainment Venues

Since I first proposing this petition I have learned that the 2010 Building Regulations refer to the guidance of a code of practice for new public assembly buildings. An extract from the standards is reproduced below.

This guidance applies only to new buildings. Like many people I was not previously aware of this recent code of practice. I would now like to propose a project – a programme of works over the next five years for these standards to be applied to all non domestic buildings. This could also include provision of toilets for disabled people in existing older buildings.

I would argue that provision of equivalent rather than equal toilet facilities for men and women is an equalities issue, likewise better provision for disabled people.

This project would represent an improvement to the infrastructure of Wales and to the quality of life for a significant part of the population. A programme of works would be an employment project on a manageable scale and could benefit from contributions from different parts of the economy. It could help to provide work in these lean times. Any points of detail on this issue could be dealt with by subcommittee, eg very small venues, historic buildings and so on.

Now that Wales has legislative powers it could be a leader in this everyday equalities issue and the subcommittee could be the Number One Ladies Toilet Directive Agency. SWJ.

**BS 6465-1: 2006 - Sanitary installations. Code of practice for the design of sanitary facilities and scales of provision of sanitary and associated appliances (+A1:2009) 6.8 Assembly buildings where most WC use is during intervals or other concentrated periods of time such as where people would be arriving and leaving at the same time including , for example, theatres, cinemas, concert halls, sports stadiums, conferences and similar buildings.**

(Special thanks to Michelle Barkley and Clara Greed for the information below)

<b>Table 1 – Minimum provision of sanitary appliances for assembly buildings where most toilet use is during intervals</b>		
<b>Sanitary appliance</b>	<b>For male visitors</b>	<b>For female visitors</b>
WC	2 for up to 250 males; plus 1 for every additional 250 males or part thereof	2 for up to 20 females; plus 1 for every additional 20 females or part thereof up to 500 females; and 1 per 25 females or part thereof over 500 females
Urinal	2 for up to 50 males; plus 1 for every additional 50 males or part thereof	–
Washbasin	1 per WC and in addition, 1 per 5 urinals or part thereof	1, plus 1 per 2 WCs or part thereof



PET(4)-05-12 p7a

## **P-04-373 School Exclusion Zones for Mobile Hot Food Vans**

### **Petition wording:**

The Petitioners call upon the Welsh Government to consider legislation to exclude Mobile Fast Food Vans from operating within a 400 metre exclusion zone around all schools in Wales during the hours of 8am to 4.30pm weekdays during term time.

**Petition raised by:** Arfon Jones

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 13 March 2012

**Number of signatures:** 43

**Supporting information:** Wrexham Council have recently agreed a Planning Guidance note which states that – New Hot Food Takeaways should not be located... within 400 metres of the boundary of a school or tertiary college. Planning conditions cannot be used to restrict use of mobile fast food vehicles and if they comply with highways and environmental health regulations they can operate unlicensed. It is therefore argued that to legislate as suggested will serve to promote a social objective of reducing the availability of cheap unhealthy foods to children, to reduce obesity and to promote healthy eating., will be deprived of this valuable local asset.<

# Agenda Item 5.4

PET(4)-05-12 p8a

## **P-04-374 All dogs to be kept on leads at all times in public places**

### **Petition wording:**

Due to the rising amount of irresponsible dog owners allowing their dogs to approach intimidate and endanger members of the public and their children and pets whilst off leads in public places i propose all dogs be legally required to be under leashed control in public places or places that are accesable to the public their leashed animals and children.

**Petition raised by:** Wyndham Mark Jones

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 28 February 2012

**Number of signatures:** 17

**Supporting information:** You only have to read about people being attacked to feel how the law should change to take into account that people are having their enjoyment spoiled and lives ruined by irresponsible dog owners who don't give a damn about other people ,children and pets, or maybe they thought their pets were safe until their Dalmatian or whatever jumped up on a child pushed them over and caused a skull fracture or brain damage due to impact even if the dog does not bite, help to protect children and people and the dogs that are running free also get hurt, knocked down or attacked by concerned fathers, pet owners, please sign my petition, it's got to be the right thing to do.

PET(4)-05-12 p9a

## **P-04-375 Stop Opt-Out Organ Donation**

### **Petition wording:**

We call on the Welsh Government to stop proposals for its opt-out organ donation system. I think it is completely unethical for the Welsh Government to be pushing through an opt out system for organ donation. This system should not be implemented, particularly if it does not consider the views of relatives. Whilst appreciating the need to donate organs in order to prevent unnecessary deaths, I still strongly believe it should be a decision that each individual takes and not something that is forced on them by the state. Archbishop of Wales Dr Morgan said: organ donation surely ought to be a matter of gift and not of duty and I agree with his statement. This is violating individual rights and is an unfair system. Please sign this petition should you feel the same and want to stop this legislation being passed.

**Petition raised by:** Bablin Molik

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 13 March 2012

**Number of signatures:** 71

# Agenda Item 5.6

PET(4)-05-12 p10a

## **P-04-376 Reorganise Education in Powys**

### **Petition wording:**

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to call in Powys County Council's proposals to reorganise education in Powys, which would lead to Builth Wells' bilingual dual stream English-medium sixth form becoming a Welsh designated sixth form.

**Petition raised by:** Sarah Wheeler

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 13 March 2012

**Number of signatures:** 1,177

PET(4)-05-12

Petitions Committee 13 March 2012

P-04-376 Reorganise Education in Powys

**Petition Committee evidence**  
**Builth Wells Supporting Education for All**  
**1<sup>st</sup> march 2012**

‘We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to call in Powys County Council’s proposals to reorganise education in Powys, which would lead to Builth Wells’s **bilingual dual stream** English-medium sixth form becoming a Welsh designated sixth form.’

As a community what we are petitioning for is that the Education Portfolio Holder Cllr. Stephen Hayes, Powys County Council, will re-instate the Sixth form English Medium A level designation at Builth Wells High School, which he has closed in the secondary education modernisation in Powys. He has stated there have been radical changes in secondary education, but it appears the only change he has made is close the second largest viable English medium sixth form in Powys (Currently 125 pupils). This option taken by Cllr Hayes was not part of the consultation for secondary school modernisation. This decision has now created inequity, segregation of pupils who wish to maintain their Bilingual dual stream sixth form. (Currently there is one pupil studying 'A' levels in Welsh medium from the 2011 cohort). Builth Wells High School Welsh designation sixth form is mentioned throughout the draft Welsh Education Strategy Plan document for Powys, which also has made the Builth Wells community feel very nervous and powerless despite the majority of the community not being in support of this proposal. The community are very proud of the bilingual dual stream High School at Builth Wells and it forms the centre of a rural community, the change to the designation of the school will also lead to negative effects to the socio-economics of this rural bilingual speaking community.

Please find attached two letters that were sent to the Builth Wells Supporting Education for All, one from local councillors and one from the Education Portfolio Holder Cllr. Stephen Hayes on the 7th December 2011 to the local Councillors. The letters evidence that there is not the critical mass to have a viable Welsh medium sixth form at Builth Wells High School :-

*“the implementation of post 16 education solely through the medium of Welsh should be allowed to grow organically and at its own speed and not implemented until a) it was financially viable and b) that there were sufficient pupils seeking to be educated through the medium of Welsh at ‘A’ Level.*

**AND**

*“I also accept that the date mentioned in the report of 2015 for full change-over is likely to prove unrealistic, as the time necessary for cohorts of pupils to move through earlier stages of their education will require a lengthier transition period.”*

With this statement in mind, why sanction the closure and demise of a large thriving, successful and viable English medium sixth form? The majority of the community oppose this decision and still remain proud of the bilingual dual stream 11-18 yrs High School. All the members hope for is that the Welsh designation is changed back to Bilingual dual stream sixth form, to give the English medium A level students equality of opportunity which is an entitlement for all pupils regardless of the medium of education.

### **Summary of points relating to the closure of the English Medium Sixth form at Builth Wells High School.**

This decision still dismays and confuses the Builth Wells community for several reasons:-

- Builth Wells High School is the only sixth form in Powys to be closed for English medium, the community feels there is now an **inequity** that Powys County Council education portfolio holder has endorsed, compared to the rest of Powys sixth forms. Equality of opportunity which is an entitlement for all pupils regardless of the medium of education.
- Builth Wells High School is the second largest English medium sixth forms in South Powys and has maintained high achievement's with A level results and the sixth form is financially viable.
- The current sixth form AS & A level 2011-2012 has 120 pupils opting to take their A levels at Builth Wells High School, this figure includes 8 pupils from the Welsh medium GCSE cohort, 7 of those pupils elected to take English medium A levels and now 1 (one) pupil is taking Welsh medium A levels.
- The area is 95% English speaking households, but the community remains proud of the bilingual status of the High School and closure of the English medium sixth form will inevitably lead to the demise and eventual closure of the 11 to 16 English medium education provision.
- The education portfolio holder Cllr Stephen Hayes has now acknowledged that *“the implementation of post 16 education solely through the medium of Welsh should be allowed to grow organically and at its own speed and not implemented until a) it was financially viable and b) that there were sufficient pupils seeking to be educated through the medium of Welsh at ‘A’ Level.*

- *Education Portfolio holder, Cllr. Stephen Hayes quoted “I also accept that the date mentioned in the report of 2015 for full change-over is likely to prove unrealistic, as the time necessary for cohorts of pupils to move through earlier stages of their education will require a lengthier transition period.”*
- **Most importantly the pupils wish to continue the bilingual dual stream sixth form in Builth Wells High School, pupils do not want separation or segregation from their friends/peers.**
- The decision will lead to the slow demise of the school with parents opting to not send their children to Builth Wells High School English Medium school due to the lack of choices, uncertainty and loss of continuation of English medium education provision to 18yrs.
- The local economy of Builth Wells community will be severely affected, potentially less investment and less migration to this beautiful area due to loss of English medium High School Education. The community are proud of the bilingual status of the school.

We hope that Powys County Council will change the designation of the sixth form and re-instate the English medium sixth form. Please keep our High School as a Dual Stream Bilingual sixth form. Let the school prove they have a financially viable bilingual dual stream sixth form, why close a Band 2 school, one of only two High Schools who achieved this level in all of South Powys?

Please help the High School and community in Builth Wells to request a re-think of Powys County Councils decision to close the English medium sixth form, give Builth Wells High School an equal chance with the rest of the sixth forms in Powys. The request is that Powys County Council removes the welsh designation and re-instates the bilingual dual stream sixth form. Please do not treat Builth Wells High School and community unequally compared to the rest of Powys High School pupils.

Yours sincerely  
 Builth Wells Supporting education For All  
 (Sarah Wheeler)

NB. Sarita Marshall, Deputy Committee Clerk, Petitions Committee has a copy of the manual petition containing over 1020 signatures as supporting evidence for Builth Wells Community.

## Annex A

### Letter to petitioners from Cllr Avril York

#### Schools Modernisation Programme

Since the announcements on Schools Modernisation on 8th November, I have been working to improve the position of Builth Wells High School in relation to its sixth form provision.

**Cabinet meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> November:** I spoke against the proposal for a Welsh only sixth form provision and requested that Builth Wells High School was able to work with the commissioning body to put on a range of economically viable English medium courses. This was picked up by one of the cabinet members, Tony Thomas; the minutes for the meeting state ..

*The Portfolio Holder explained the rationale for a central planning and funding system for commissioning post-16 courses. He confirmed that this approach had the support of the Welsh Government. In answer to Members' questions he advised that it was necessary for the commissioning body to be autonomous and free from competing interests. Democratic overview would be provided by the Scrutiny Committees. He confirmed that when a preferred model for the commissioning body had been approved by Cabinet, consultation would take place before submission to Welsh Government. He wanted the commissioning body to work with neighbouring authorities including those in England. He advised that there was nothing preventing the new body commissioning a small number of subjects in English at the schools designated Welsh medium.*

Because of continued confusion about what had been agreed, Cllr Tim Van Rees, myself and three other councillors wrote to the portfolio holder, Stephen Hayes, on 5<sup>th</sup> December to clarify the position. We reminded Cllr Hayes that the concession was given that *"the implementation of post 16 education solely through the medium of Welsh should be allowed to grow organically and at its own speed and not implemented until a) it was financially viable and b) that there were sufficient pupils seeking to be educated through the medium of Welsh at 'A' Level. It was also conceded that the commissioning body could provide 'A' Level education through the medium of English in subjects again if financially viable"*

Cllr Hayes responded by letter on December 7<sup>th</sup>. He accepts that the date in the report of 2015 is likely to prove unrealistic and that it will require a much lengthier transition period. He confirmed that *"any new commissioning body would be free to make such decisions relating to courses in either medium as it considered justified by demand and available resources"* Cllr Hayes continued that *"It is not proposed that any application to change the designation of Builth and Caereinion High Schools will be made prior to setting up of the new Commissioning Body"*

I trust this clarifies the position for Builth Wells High School – and I wish to record my thanks to Cllrs Tim Van Rees, David Price, Maureen Mackenzie and Kelvyn Curry for supporting me.



**PET(4)-05-12**  
**Petitions Committee 13 March 2012**  
**P-04-376 Reorganise Education in Powys**

## **Annex B**

### **Letter to Builth Wells Councillors from Cllr Stephen Hayes, holder of education portfolio**

Cllr Kelvyn Curry,  
Cllr Maureen MacKenzie,  
Cllr David Price,  
Cllr T Van Rees,  
Cllr Avril York

Dear Members,

#### **Secondary, Welsh Medium and Post-16 school modernisation**

Thank you for your letter of 5<sup>th</sup> December regarding the modernisation proposals as they affect Builth High School.

As you know, and I am happy to confirm, the proposals to establish centres of excellence for post-16 Welsh Medium education at Caereinion and Builth High Schools, which were agreed by Cabinet on 22<sup>nd</sup> November, envisage a move by increments to a position where the two schools offer A and AS courses through the medium of Welsh only.

As the Cabinet paper stated, the intention is 'to create sufficient critical mass of learners to enable the cost-effective delivery of courses and to enhance the range of courses available'. The aim, as the paper said, is to commission an increasing number of Welsh medium A/AS courses from Builth Wells Secondary school. The paper went on to say that it is anticipated that English Medium A/AS provision will cease to be provided at Builth in due course, with pupils accessing this provision at Llandrindod Wells High School.

It is clearly accepted, therefore, that progression to designated Welsh medium status at post-16 will occur over time, with no overnight cessation of English medium courses. I referred in presenting the report to the undertaking that no pupil who begins a course or a key stage at a school will be required to move before they complete that course of study. I also accept that the date mentioned in the report of 2015 for full change-over is likely to prove unrealistic, as the time necessary for cohorts of pupils to move through earlier stages of their education will require a lengthier transition period.

At the Cabinet meeting, a question was asked about the effect of the new central commissioning of courses on post-16 provision in Builth HS, and I confirmed that any new commissioning body would be free to make such decisions relating to courses in either medium as it considered justified by demand and available resources. It is not proposed that any application will be made to alter the designation of Builth and Caereinion High Schools prior to the setting up of the new commissioning body.

The commitment to providing a full range of Welsh-medium courses at post-16 is an important one, and goes hand in hand with the decision to fund enhanced Welsh medium provision at 11-16 at both Builth and Brecon High Schools. There are currently over 450 pupils receiving primary education through the Welsh medium in the catchments of the two High Schools, with demand growing. It is important that we give these pupils, and others in the future, the prospect of first-class secondary education through the Welsh medium. Far from being a threat to the future of Builth HS, the proposal gives the school a key strategic role in the south of the county.

Finally, I am happy to confirm that the details of implementing what is a high-level strategy decision will need to be considered and taken forward through the Authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. The draft of this plan will be worked up with stakeholders, including school governing bodies and senior management teams, and consultation will take place before submission of the final document to Welsh Government. This gives a genuine opportunity not only for those immediately affected, but for the wider public, to input their views on all aspects of implementation of the decision.

Yours sincerely,

PET(4)-05-12 p11a

## **P-04-377 Continuation of Concessionary Fares on Community Transport**

### **Petition wording:**

We ask that the Welsh Government takes account of the recommendations in the externally commissioned evaluation of the Community Transport Concessionary Fares Initiative (CTCFI) and that the scheme is rolled out to community transport schemes across Wales on a separate fares basis, to ensure equality for our most vulnerable citizens – those elderly and disabled people who are unable to use their bus pass on conventional public transport.

**Petition raised by:** Betsan Caldwell

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 13 March 2012

**Number of signatures:** Approximately 4,000

**Supporting information:** CTCFI will have undertaken c1.3m vital journeys by March 2012, taking elderly and disabled people to services which they would not otherwise have been able to access. Evidence demonstrates clearly the beneficial impact of the scheme on service users' lives, which was set up to ensure equality of access to all. Since Wales' population is ageing, and rates of disability are slightly higher, the need for this service will only grow, with nearly 18,000 registered users of the service already. Around Â£3.9m is needed in 2012-13 to bring CTCFI in as part of the all-Wales CF scheme on a separate fares basis. This would include transition funding to some of the 15 original schemes who could well be facing closure at the end of March, leading to some job losses and loss of valuable volunteer commitment. Cutting CTCFI will not solve the issue of equality, which the Welsh Government has a statutory duty to promote, and will have a disproportionate effect on our most vulnerable citizens.

# COMMUNITY TRANSPORT CONCESSIONARY FARES INITIATIVE

PET(4)-05-12 p11b

## BRIEFING PAPER

### Background

The introduction of the all-Wales Concessionary Fare scheme in 2002 provided free bus travel for the elderly and disabled. However, many eligible people were unable to use their concession due to severe disability which prevented their use of mainstream public transport.

In December 2002, the Welsh Assembly Government's EPC Committee published "A Policy Review of Public Transport" whose recommendations included extending free travel for elderly and disabled people to community transport (CT). A group was formed to advise on operational and financial implications, and a consultation paper was issued in July 2003. In 2004, the Welsh Assembly Government's Public Transport Unit invited a proposal by the Community Transport Association (CTA) to take forward a three year demonstration project based on a £1m annual fund, which was submitted in November that year.

The scheme was launched by WAG in March 2005, with funding for the projects awarded on a competitive basis in two tranches. 10 bids were approved in September 2005 and 5 in April 2006. In September 2007, at CTA Wales' Annual Conference, the Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport announced a year's extension to the pilots for the 2008-09 financial year.

The CTCFI has been project managed throughout by CTA Wales on behalf of the WG's Integrated Transport Unit. The WG commissioned an external evaluation of the pilot, and Capita Symonds commenced work in early 2008, with the final report submitted in December 2008. The study examined the performance of the schemes in achieving their objectives, and the results were published to help determine future policy and funding implications. The scheme has been extended several times in its pilot format, with WG officials confirming in autumn 2011 that that the programme would end in March 2012.

#### Some key statistics.....

- Over 1,000,000 passengers journeys have been undertaken over a six and a half year period
- Average of 2 journeys per week per service user
- 96% of journey requests are accommodated
- Over 34 people are employed directly on the projects
- Additional jobs and businesses supported

## Demonstration Projects



**"I cannot use buses as I am physically disabled and also registered partially sighted. I am 85 and very grateful as I can use the taxis for hospital, surgery and shopping visits. Plus I can see my friends."**

**CAVO taxi voucher user**

There are 3 main types of Community Transport (CT) schemes within the Community Transport Concessionary Fares Initiative (CTCFI) are:

**Dial-a-Ride**, where journeys are booked in advance, are responsive to the needs of the users, are for single or several passengers and may be by minibus or car.

**Minibus Services**, which tie in with regular journeys for social and other purposes, and where many users are carried to similar destinations.

**Community Car Schemes**, where volunteer drivers provide transport, often using their own vehicles, although some schemes purchase their own vehicles especially where wheelchair access is required.

**Taxi-card Schemes**, were included within the initial 4 year pilot where journeys were booked with pre-agreed taxi companies. Vouchers supplied by the scheme enabled the user to pay the fare for the journey and afforded a great deal of flexibility in terms of travel times. These were discontinued during the pilot's second phase, with the affected areas receiving funding to develop alternative services to meet the needs of service users.

## The 15 Pilot Schemes

**Aberfan and Merthyr Vale Youth and Community Project:** Dial-a-Ride minibus service and group hire minibus service operating across Merthyr Tydfil

**Accessible Caring Transport:** Dial-a-Ride minibus service operating in the Cynon Valley area.

**Ceredigion Association of Voluntary Organisations:** initially a Taxicard Scheme utilising over 40 private sector operators across the whole of Ceredigion. Replacement services are now in place.

**Conwy Community Transport:** Dial-a-ride service utilising MPV's to provide door to door service in the rural Llanwrst area.

**Dial-A-Ride Denbighshire Ltd:** door to door dial-a-ride minibus services.

**Llanwrtyd Wells Community Transport :** Dial-a -Ride and voluntary car scheme service operating across a deeply rural area.



**Dulais Valley Community Transport (DANSA):** Dial-a-Ride minibus service to set destinations for Dulais, Neath and Afan valley residents.

**Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations/Monmouthshire County Council:** Dial-a-Ride and group hire minibus service.

**Neath Port Talbot Community Transport:** Operates door to door Dial-a-ride and minibus group hire service for eligible Sandfields Estate residents.

**Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Services:** Initially a Taxi Card scheme utilising a single taxi operator to deliver services across mainly urban wards. Now replacement Demand Responsive service operated by NPTCT.

**Pembrokeshire Association of Community Transport Organisations (PACTO):** providing Demand Responsive Town Rider and Country Car services, along with Pembrokeshire Pass Photo scheme.

**Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations (PAVO):** umbrella group providing central administration for 15 schemes, including taxi-card, Dial-a-Ride and minibus services and community car schemes.

**TraVol CT:** operates Dial-a-Ride minibus services for eligible Rhondda and Taff-Ely valley residents

**VEST CT:** Dial-a-Ride and minibus services operated across the City and County of Cardiff and some Vale of Glamorgan areas.

**Welsh Border CT /Estuary Cars Partnership:** supplying group hire and dial-a-ride minibuses and community car services.



**“The rural transport scheme operating in the Llanrwst area, has been a lifesaver for us elderly and disabled valley residents”**

**Conwy CT service user comment**

## The Impact on Service Users

The monitoring carried out by CTA Wales during the course of the pilot has included both quantitative and qualitative data, and has demonstrated high take up rates, with many groups running at capacity. Feedback from service users over the last few years demonstrates clearly the very positive effect on the lives of elderly and severely disabled people, many of whom had been unable to leave their homes previously, or had relied heavily on the input of family or friends.

The benefits identified included increased confidence and self esteem; greater social interaction; maintaining independence by lessening reliance on others; enabling service users to remain in their own homes for longer periods; and gaining access to services and activities previously out of reach.



## COMMUNITY TRANSPORT CONCESSIONARY FARES INITIATIVE

### Scheme Extensions

Following an outcry from service users and CT operators in February 2009 due to a late decision by WG to close the initiative that March, the Minister decided to extend CTCFI for a further year to March 2010. An extension was then granted to March 2012, seemingly to allow time for the operators to implement revised, common criteria prior to possible rollout of the free fares initiative. (At the inception of CTCFI in 2005, schemes had been permitted to establish their own criteria, to enable the testing of concessions on different types of CT.)

Despite consultation with all groups in early 2010 on moving to common criteria, a decision on the adoption of the new criteria was not made by the Minister until March 2011 which was too late for implementation in April. As part of this, the two taxi card schemes were discontinued, but the budget for this service was reallocated to the respective schemes to pump prime replacement services for service users.

**"I can't begin to tell you about the difference the community bus has made to my life"**

**Dulais Valley Community Transport service user**



### The Future?

The Community Transport Concessionary Fares Initiative was set up to ensure equality for elderly and severely disabled people, who are unable to use their bus pass on conventional public transport. However, this has only been available with a limited number of schemes to date.

Since Wales' population is increasingly ageing, particularly the "oldest old" over the age of 85, and since we have slightly higher rates of disability and disadvantage, the need and demand for this service will only grow.

CTA members wish to see the scheme rolled out to all CT operators on a separate fares basis, rather than the current core funding pilot model, to bring it in line with the all-Wales concessionary bus-pass and to ensure equality for their service users across Wales.

**"This service gives me a freedom I have not enjoyed for some time, except when kind friends are able to transport me"**

**TraVol service user comment**

## Comments from Town Rider Passengers - January/February 2012

A series of Sounding Board meetings were held with passengers on the Pembrokeshire Town Rider service during January and early February 2012. The meetings were attended by nearly 200 people, including over 100 passengers.

The meetings demonstrated the strength of support for the Town Rider service, and how important it is in the lives of its' elderly and vulnerable service users. It is part of the Community Transport Concessionary Fares Initiative (CTCFI).

We collected many comments from passengers about what the service means for them and how they will be affected if the service is withdrawn following the end of the Welsh Government funding in March 2012. A small but representative sample of their comments are reproduced below:

### What does the Town Rider Service mean for you?

- The Town Rider is my lifeline. I have a hip and also a knee that needs replacement. I find it very hard to walk. The joy of being able to get my own food shopping is so important to me. I'm nearly 84 years and I'm trying to cope completely alone in every way..... Do any of you realise just what it's like to spend days indoors not seeing or speaking to anyone. I love my outings to see the outside world and chat to people. I'm begging and pleading please don't take away the Town Rider. It's not a luxury – it's a necessity to the old – keeping our independence.
- I can visit church, bank, solicitors and the post office, feeling safe on my own. I need a helper for everything else. It is a real lifeline. The personal care on the Town Rider is so much better than a taxi, I have been most grateful for it.
- It's really very much what "keeps me going" – the Town Rider service is truly my last bit of independence.
- Being disabled and unable to use public transport, prior to using the Town Rider service I was totally reliant on the good will of family or friends to get my weekly shopping. This service has helped to maintain my independence and also freed me from the isolation of being housebound. I am able to meet up others and look forward to my shopping trips.
- As a wheelchair user it means being able to live an independent life, and to join in with community life.
- The service means a great deal to me as I am unable to climb hills & every which way I go there is an incline.
- It is a vital service to Kensington Court, Milford Haven. Without this service 20 of the residents would be isolated because it is ½ mile to walk to the normal bus stop.
- A great service for those who have mobility problems, enabling them to access visits to friends, social clubs (Darby & Joan), shopping.
- I am on sticks and cannot carry any shopping at all – hence Town Rider is essential for me.
- [The Town Rider] has been a real lifeline for the last few years. I can be taken to my surgery, dentist, hospital, as well as the library. It enables me to do my own shopping & live independently.
- The Town Rider gave me a new lease of life when I registered for it as I was able to socialise again and meet people and get away from my "four walls".



- Neither my husband nor myself have any form of transport, and we are on Government pensions only. He is 84 and unable to walk any distance. I myself have had two artificial hips and consequently walking is limited, particularly where shopping is concerned.
- Much of Goodwick is built on steep hillsides and 'as the years condemn' the hills seem to grow steeper. My wife (91) and I (87) manage very well in the home but we have found the Town Rider service an essential for the weekly shop which is heavy
- Shattered by the news that the future of the Town Rider is in doubt. I am 91 and have found the Town Rider invaluable: help given to get from the house to the bus, help given on arrival in the shopping area and on departure, help given me on arrival back home. This is help, support and kindness which TAXIS DO NOT GIVE. SOS Town Rider – please keep going.
- My husband is wheelchair bound after having a stroke. The service that you currently provide has made a vast difference to the quality of his life. He looks forward to his trips out in the Town Rider. It enables him to socialise and get out and about in the community. Not going out as much would definitely affect his confidence and general well-being.
- I use it [the Town Rider] once a week for shopping. It gives me my independence. I would be perfectly willing to go on the bus, but with this arthritis in the knees I can't walk to the bus stop which is a long way, and after I've done my shopping it's impossible to walk back home from the bus stop. It's made a complete difference to my life.
- I use the Town Rider quite frequently. I'm not a driver and I depend on the Town Rider, especially for the GP, chiropody, dentistry, visiting friends, or shopping, especially my weekly shopping. I use it when I want to go out. I think it's a service you can rely on; it's not like a taxi. You say you're going; you book for it; and you know it will be there at the time. You know that it will put you down where you want, and collect you as well, which gives the elderly a better quality I think.
- It would be a big loss to us if we lost [the Town Rider]. I always use it on a Friday because we have a club at the community centre. A few of them [the members] live quite a way away and they depend on it ...it would be missed very much if we didn't have it.
- I've lost the use of my right arm, and it's very difficult for me to carry the shopping. I think it's quite vital for me to have the help that the Town Rider gives, because the driver is wonderful - he will carry the things into the house for me. They come to pick me up at the house and take me back to the house, so I only have to walk round the shop. I like to do my own shopping. I think everyone likes to choose their own stuff.
- Since I've had a stroke I've got no balance. Any distance, I have to use a stick, and it's very awkward to carry shopping, your handbag and walk with a stick. It's impossible! If you've got 2 bags of shopping you can't even carry an umbrella.
- It's invaluable to me because without it I could be more or less isolated in my own home. I couldn't get to the bank or the Post office, or the doctors, or the shops. I'd be quite lost without it. I thought they were trying to encourage older people stay in their own homes, and this is going against that entirely, isn't it? One can't understand the logic of cutting services like this ..... and you do read in the papers about them paying for taxis for local government employees and civil servants.

### **If the Town Rider service was taken away, how would that affect you?**

- Disaster! Please don't get rid of it!
- We'd be absolutely stuck - I really have to say that I wouldn't be able to get out. Unless someone took me out, I would be stuck in the house all the time, which would be horrible.
- It would be disastrous – I would have to find a carer to accompany me everywhere.
- My wife would be unable to shop, pay bills, visit the market and socialise with friends. A prisoner in her own home.
- It would affect my independence, my confidence, and my ability to lead a normal life.
- I would be isolated in my home which is at the top of a long hill.
- I have no bus stop close to my home. Without the Town Rider I would have to use taxis that I cannot afford. I would be stuck at home.
- [If the Town Rider stopped] I would have to find an alternative. I'm afraid I can be rather independent. I don't like asking neighbours, and other than that it would be taxi, which would restrict my use a little bit because its £6 a time and, well, one has to think twice.
- Without the Town Rider people like myself would not be able to shop or go out. We would definitely become housebound.
- I'd have to rely on neighbours, and that is not fair because neighbours feel obligated and they shouldn't. And I'd probably starve; I don't think they [the Welsh Government] want the elderly to starve because they can't get to the shops!

### **Other Comments**

- Why should the disabled pay for the service? Why are the elderly or disabled more at a disadvantage when the able person has a free bus service?
- People at 60 shouldn't be having bus passes; 60 is only middle age now. People say "I've had my bus pass – I'm 60, now I'm off to New Zealand." You shouldn't have it until you draw your pension. It would save a lot more money.



Some testimonials from other areas of Wales.

"When I moved here a few years ago I was mobile and had the post bus and I could walk to get some shopping. Now I am on my own, and can only walk a few steps and cannot afford to hire a taxi at £48 per trip to Builth on my state pension. This transport is a vital part of my life." Llanwrtyd Wells user

"I am now unable to drive and on a very restricted budget. Without the service I would be totally housebound and unable to get to the basic necessities. I would be unable to stay in my home and have to go into a home." Llanwrtyd Wells service user

"I couldn't do without the service, as I wouldn't be able to see my husband at the nursing home. It's a godsend, the bus is fine and helps me meet lots of new people." Merthyr service user

"I have been housebound since my accident, but thanks to this service I'm now independent. Thank you." Merthyr service user

"It's the first time I've been out of the house in 2 years I've been wheelchair bound. I would not be able to get out if you did not provide this service". Fflint service user

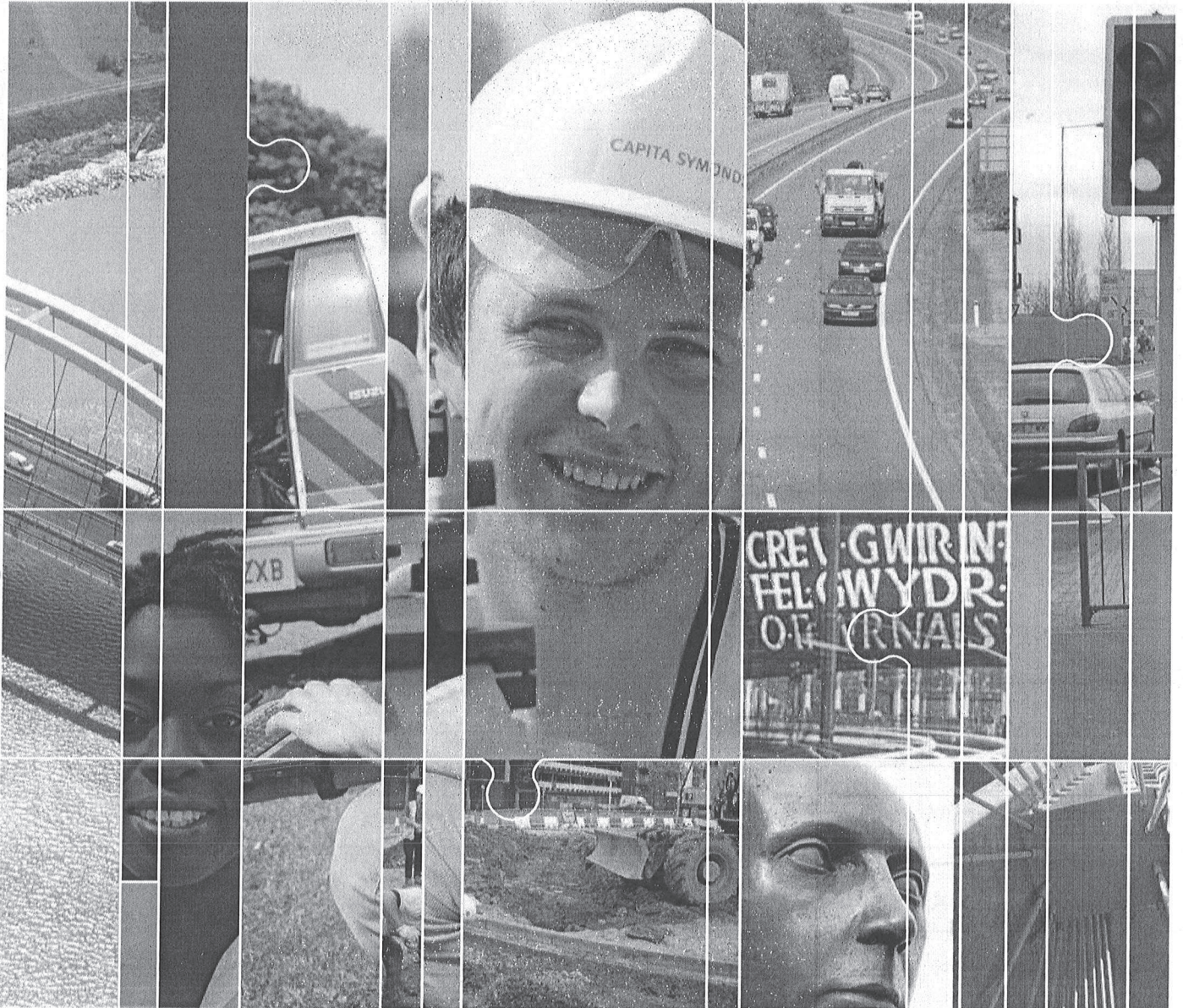
"Thank you for all your help in providing transport for my wife and I whilst I was unable to drive due to a stroke. It has been a lifeline". Welsh Border service user

"The bus service is very valuable – I am crippled with arthritis and unable to walk much. Our driver is very helpful and does a lot for us. " Neath Port Talbot service user

" My friend and her husband are both 87 years of age and rely very much on this service for their shopping. Both are poorly - Len suffers with severe chest problems and his wife has osteoporosis (sic) and will be really sad if this services comes to an end." Neath Port Talbot service user

" A lot of people in our club are not totally disabled but partly, which means if they are living any distance from the bus route, they wouldn't be able to go anywhere without this transport." Aberavon Club organiser



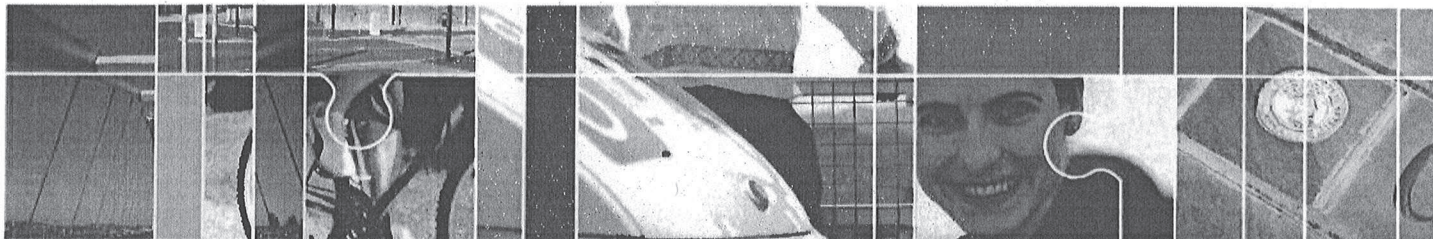


Community Transport Concessionary Fares Initiative for the  
Severely Disabled and Socially Disadvantaged in Wales

Executive Summary | January 2009

**CAPITA SYMONDS**

successful people, projects and performance



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Community Transport Concessionary Fares Initiative for the  
Severely Disabled and Socially Disadvantaged in Wales

Executive Summary

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**Issue Record**

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*Capita Symonds would like to thank the Community Transport Association Wales and the Community Transport operators for their co-operation, which has been critical to the preparation of this report.*



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 1 Background

- 1.1 The introduction of the All Wales Concessionary Fare Scheme in April 2002 provided free local bus travel for the elderly and disabled. Whilst the scheme has resulted in significant social benefits, many eligible people are unable to enjoy these opportunities due to severe disability. Accordingly, the Welsh Assembly Government has sought to improve transport opportunities for such persons, with the implementation of a pilot initiative for severely disabled people, enabling them to travel free on suitable Community Transport services.
- 1.2 Fifteen projects were awarded funding (the first ten in September 2005, with a further five in April 2006). The initiative is currently administered by the Community Transport Association (CTA) Wales on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government.
- 1.3 The funding of pilot projects is due to end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009. This study was commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government to evaluate the performance of the existing pilot schemes in achieving their objectives and inform policy and funding implications should the Initiative be extended.

### 2 Study Outcomes

- 2.1 In order to assess the impact of the scheme an observational visit was made to each of the pilot groups and two control groups (those who had not received funding). In addition a follow up exercise comprising five regional workshops was undertaken. Key findings were:
  - There was a wide variety of schemes, including minibus based, taxi-card schemes and volunteer car schemes;
  - Local factors were the main determinant of service type and cost, including:
    - geographical coverage;
    - local topography;
    - population density;
    - specific user requirements (type of disability, journey requirements); and
    - availability of volunteer staff.
  - Schemes provided a high level of service, with vehicles displaying a high visual standard of cleanliness and maintenance;
  - Staff had undergone the necessary checks and training prior to commencement of their duties;
  - Groups understood their legal requirements and had systems in place to meet these, although it was noted the increasing range of legislation has a considerable impact on administration resources;
  - Recruitment of volunteers was a key concern.

### **3 Vehicle Issues**

- 3.1 Vehicles had a shorter than average working life due to the additional weight of the modifications necessary to meet user needs (e.g. lifts/hoists, auxiliary heating equipment and fire suppression systems), whilst the nature of journeys result in a high number of stops – further increasing wear on brakes and clutches.
- 3.2 Only a small number of operators have a vehicle replacement fund, with most relying on capital grants or sponsorship to replace vehicles. One of the main reasons for this is the uncertainty as to whether the CTCFI scheme will continue beyond the pilot period. This makes it difficult to plan for the longer term. Some groups incorporate an element in their fares to cover vehicle depreciation.
- 3.3 The Community Transport sector as a whole potentially has a high level of purchasing power, which if combined, could enable significant discounts to be obtained from manufacturers. There was a mixed response to this suggestion, with some groups very interested, whilst other received benefits in kind from local suppliers which they would lose from a centralised scheme. We recommend:
- Reimbursement rates include an element for depreciation; and
  - Consideration is given to establishing a centralised purchase scheme, which Community Transport members could opt in.

### **4 Impact on Other Transport Sectors**

- 4.1 The objective of the CTCFI scheme is the provision of transport for those persons who are unable to access conventional public transport due to disability; therefore the scheme has a negligible impact on other transport services, indeed, in some rural areas the CTCFI scheme is the only form of non-private transport available.
- 4.2 The introduction of taxi-card schemes in some areas has assisted the economic viability of some local taxi-firms. This has resulted in the maintenance and expansion of firms, who may not have been able to offer the same level of service without the indirect support from CTCFI funded trips. This has resulted in a wider benefit to the local community at large.

### **5 Journey Coverage (Including Health Related Trips)**

- 5.1 In general the pilot schemes provide travel for a range of journey types, including shopping, attendance at social/lunch clubs and health related trips. It was noted that some groups limit the type of journey purpose; in particular some schemes restrict travel to group trips and others do not provide transport for hospital appointments. Whilst this may disadvantage some users, it does enable more effective utilisation of vehicles and drivers with a greater overall benefit to scheme members.
- 5.2 Where hospital trips were accommodated and data was available, the proportion of trips ranged from 17% to 42%. These trips are extremely

resource intensive with an adverse impact on cost and utilisation – particularly when clients require a course of treatment or rehabilitation.

5.3 Although some groups had engaged with Local Health Boards to address utilisation and funding issues, there had been limited success. We therefore recommend:

- Greater communication between Hospital Trusts and Community Transport groups to try and co-operate over appointment times to reduce vehicle downtime; and
- Hospital related appointments are excluded from the CTCFI scheme unless a financial contribution is received from the local trust.

## **6 Evaluation of CTCFI**

6.1 Each of the demonstration pilots was required to identify measurable targets as part of the application procedure. The type and number of targets varied, with most groups identifying generic targets which encompassed the operational requirements of the scheme (e.g. purchase of adapted vehicle, recruitment of staff or volunteers, etc). Although some groups did set quantifiable targets, the majority were only suitable for high level appraisal. An appraisal matrix was constructed which indicates in general group targets have been met.

6.2 In addition to the self-defined targets, an appraisal was undertaken against the strategic outcomes of the Wales Transport Strategy (WTS). Whilst there were some minor differences between schemes, the CTCFI has significantly contributed to key WTS objectives by:

- Improving access to healthcare, education, training and life long learning opportunities, shopping and leisure facilities and key visitor attractions;
- Facilitating healthier lifestyles, keeping users mentally stimulated and mobile; and
- Improving actual and perceived levels of safety within travel.

## **7 Impact on Scheme Users**

7.1 Without exception the implementation of the demonstration projects has had an extremely positive effect on the lives of severely disabled and socially disadvantaged people, providing access to a range of socially necessary facilities and services.

7.2 The positive impact of the scheme is demonstrated by the high take up rates, with some groups running at capacity. Whilst this limits the number of people currently receiving the benefit it should be remembered this is a pilot project and by definition not able to cover every eligible person in Wales.

## **8 Scheme Administration**

8.1 The scheme is currently administered by the Community Transport Association (CTA) Wales. During the study it was noted the CTA Wales has

provided a very effective role in the administration of the pilot scheme, with the establishment of an effective and robust monitoring regime. In addition, the experience of CTA Wales staff in running schemes has provided assistance to groups at inception and during the course of the pilot – particularly when schemes have encountered potential problems.

8.2 CTA Wales also provide a centralised resource for information and contacts, facilitating contact between different CT groups. We therefore recommend:

- CTA Wales remains the administering host for any future form of the community transport concessionary fare scheme;
- Resources and funding are made available to CTA Wales to enable them to conduct this role effectively; and
- Should the scheme be expanded, a proportionate increase in resources be made available to CTA Wales.

## 9 Scheme Costs

9.1 The pilot schemes have delivered enhanced service provision. The key consideration therefore is whether this has been achieved at a reasonable cost.

9.2 For many users, there is no alternative form of public transport available; however it has been possible to consider some examples of the cost per journey compared to other modes. This provides an indication of the relative value. Where such comparisons have been made, CTCFI schemes have provided their service at a lower cost per passenger than comparable taxi fares.

9.3 In addition, the efficiency of the pilot has improved, with a higher number of passengers for carried for similar cost. This demonstrates groups are developing economic efficiencies as the schemes mature.

9.4 Most of the groups are fully reliant on the funding provided by the Assembly under the pilot, with two thirds receiving 95% or more of their income from the CTCFI pilot. In the event funding is reduced or discontinued it is likely that groups would not be able to offer the current level of service without the introduction of charges in the form of user fares or increased membership fees.

9.5 Whilst the possibility of using other forms of grant funding has been considered, these are diminishing in availability (due to current economic climate and diversion of National Lottery funding to support the 2012 Olympics); therefore these are not considered a reliable alternative.

9.6 The hiring of vehicles to raise revenue has also been considered, however there are potentially considerable disadvantages to groups, with a reluctance to hire except to selected groups.

## 10 Rollout Cost

10.1 The study estimates the 5-year cost for a national roll-out, and proposes a phased roll out. In summary the proposed scheme would consist of the following elements:

- **Eligibility** – Recipients of Disability Living Allowance (higher level mobility element) or Blue Badge holders, without an alternative form of transport.
- **Scope** - Covers socially necessary journey purposes except Hospital appointments. Other purposes available for user paid fares. Trips within local authority boundary included, trips outside local authority boundary charged at standard rate.
- **Usage** – First journey each week is free, any in excess charged at standard rate (using mobility element of DLA if appropriate).
- **Scheme Expansion** – Additional funding element to enable start-up of ten new groups per annum over the five year period. Phased roll-out with 20% increase in funding per annum. Application procedure required.

10.2 Based on a 71% take up of eligible persons the following cost estimate (mid range) was derived:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total cost
<b>Capital Costs</b>						
New Scheme Start up	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000	<b>4,000,000</b>
Scheme Administration	70,098	140,196	210,294	280,392	350,490	<b>1,051,469</b>
Card issue	238,056	11,903	11,903	11,903	11,903	<b>285,667</b>
<b>Revenue Cost Elements</b>						
Medium	7,009,791	14,019,582	21,029,373	28,039,164	35,048,955	<b>105,146,866</b>
Contingency	700,979	1,401,958	2,102,937	2,803,916	3,504,896	<b>10,514,687</b>
<b>Total cost</b>	<b>8,818,924</b>	<b>16,373,639</b>	<b>24,154,507</b>	<b>31,935,375</b>	<b>39,716,243</b>	<b>120,998,688</b>

## 11 Other Recommendations

11.1 During the study a number of other pertinent issues were identified, which generated additional recommendations, including:

- Groups consider charging a cancellation fee to reduce the risk of late cancellation;
- Should Regional Transport Plans form the funding mechanism for CTCFI, this should be ring-fenced to prevent Community Transport funds being transferred to capital projects;
- Users should be issued with an appropriate pass using the same systems and procedures of the standard concessionary pass to maximise economies of scale;
- Future schemes should have quantifiable targets to better assess their effectiveness in delivering the objectives of the CTCFI pilot;
- Establish a centrally held contingency fund to assist groups maintain service in extenuating circumstances;
- Best practise in vehicle operation and procurement is collated and circulated; and

- A voluntary code of practice is established to link training to volunteer hours.

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[www.capitasymonds.co.uk](http://www.capitasymonds.co.uk)

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Please contact:

Capita Symonds  
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# Agenda Item 6.1

PET(4)-05-12 p12a

## **P-04-350 Retain the services of Sporttrain in Rhondda and Cardiff**

### **Petition wording:**

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to retain the vital community services that Sporttrain provide in Rhondda and Grangetown. These services are:

- Employment training for young people;
- Engagement training for NEET young people;
- Community learning;
- Welfare, support and counselling services for young people;
- Community sports coaching and activities for young people.

**Petition raised by:** Gareth Holohan

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 29 November 2011

**Number of signatures:** Approximately 2,000

### **Supporting information:**

Sporttrain's centres in Rhondda and Grangetown are to be closed in January 2012 removing a vital service for young people and leaving a hole in these communities.

The potential impact upon levels of youth engagement, employment, crime and health in these areas could be significant.

Sporttrain act as an important platform for young people who have no alternative direction in life including those who are unable to engage with school, college, training or employment by providing the support and skills that they need to turn their lives around.

Many local employers recruit directly from Sporttrain as experience has proven that our young people have the skills, attitude and ethos required to be effective employees. Employers have expressed their concern that the removal of Sporttrain's service would lead to a shortage of young people with the necessary skills in the area.

Organisations who work directly with young people including Careers Wales, Social Services and Youth Offending Teams have expressed that "Sporttrain are the most effective solution available for many of the young people that they deal with".



Removing Sporttrain's service will directly impact upon young people who are most in need including those who:

- Are long-term NEET;
- Have a learning difficulty;
- Have the lowest skill levels;
- Present the most personal and emotional issues;
- Have been convicted of crimes.

Community Leaders, Communities First and Local Police Officers have all expressed their concern that the removal of Sporttrain's services would have a negative impact in terms of levels of anti-social behaviour and crime; which have improved through the presence of Sporttrain in the heart of their communities.

We urge the National Assembly of Wales to listen to the voices of these young people and to heed the warnings provided by the independent agencies that work directly with young people in these communities

Jeff Cuthbert AC / AM  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Sgiliau  
Deputy Minister for Skills



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-350  
Ein cyf/Our ref JC/05381/11

William Powell AM

6 January 2012

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 28 November 2011, regarding the petition to retain the services of Sporttrain in Rhondda and Cardiff.

Sporttrain delivered Skill Build provision to young people via a direct contract with the Welsh Government for Work Based Learning (WBL). The provision offered learning opportunities for young people through sporting activities.

WBL provision for the contract year 2011/12 was subject to competitive tender. Further, the Skill Build provision was superseded by Traineeships from 1 August 2011. A successful tenderer would need to evidence that it offered a full range of vocational activities to facilitate delivery of the Traineeships programme.

Sporttrain unsuccessfully tendered and did not secure a programme commission to deliver Traineeships in the Cardiff and Rhondda Cynon Taff local authority areas. It has been apparent that some young people and some Careers Advisors are disappointed at the loss of Sporttrain in these areas. However, I am confident that commissioned providers will deliver the new Traineeships programme successfully.

*Best wishes*

Jeff Cuthbert AC / AM  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Sgiliau  
Deputy Minister for Skills

I live in Cynon Valley and have not received any complaints from constituents, though I'm sure those using these facilities will be seriously affected. Any such facility provided for young people will obviously have an adverse affect if discontinued.

Cllr Alby Davies M B E



3<sup>rd</sup> January 2012

Our Ref: 030112jlh

Chair of the Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Dear Sir

**Re: Petition on Retaining the Services of Sporttrain in Rhondda and Cardiff**

Red Valley Enterprises CIC is a Social Enterprise that raises funds in support of the Gilfach Goch Community Association and the services and activities that the association provides to the community and surrounding areas.

As the Social Enterprise Development Officer responsible for the development of the social enterprise, I would like to say that whilst I echo entirely the supporting information provided by the Petitioner in terms of their positive impact on the lives of local young people, I agree that the committee also needs to give due consideration to the positive impact that Sporttrain has also had on other local organisations who over a period of time have benefitted from that service.

In the case of Gilfach Goch and the Gilfach Goch Community & Recreation Centre where Sporttrain had been based since October 2010, the hosting of Sporttrain as part of the centre had provided: -

- Rental revenues of just under £22,500 for RVE CIC and subsequently the community services and activities that it supports
- Additional revenues of just under £3,000 for the above through their use of the Community Gymnasium
- Much needed additional revenues to a local catering business through their use of the centres Community Cafe
- Much needed additional revenues to a number of small shops based in Gilfach Goch

As well as the above, the hosting of Sporttrain had also: -

- Encouraged young people on the scheme to work with the centre to raise money for various charities
- Encouraged young people on the scheme to help plan and organise events and activities for children in the community



Red Valley Enterprises Community Interest Company

- Encouraged young people on the scheme to support various training initiatives as well giving up their time to help with team building and other personal development initiatives

In general, I believe that as well as losing the revenues that help sustain both local businesses and the work currently being undertaken by Gilfach Goch Community Association, both the charity and its trading arm have also lost a key partner in community development and in particular the work being undertaken by both Gilfach Goch Community Association and Sporttrain to support the development of young people both in Gilfach Goch and the surrounding areas.

As further evidence of the partnership that had been built with Sporttrain and the level of support that the Gilfach Goch Community & Recreation Centre was able to offer Sporttrain, the centre was able to provide the following: -

- The use of a Gymnasium, Sports Hall and playing fields in order to support physical development as well as providing many opportunities for Health & Wellbeing related activities.
- Facilities for academic and vocational training to include the use of 2 training rooms, an office, an IT Suite as well as full meeting and conference facilities
- The centre was also able to provide many opportunities for additional training as well as access to a number of services and facilities being provided by both the association and other organisations based at the centre.

Should the Committee require any further information regarding the views submitted in our letter, I will be only too happy to oblige. In the meantime it is the hope of everybody represented in this letter that the Petitions Committee give due consideration to its contents and the implications for a local community when community services such as those provided by Sporttrain are not retained.

Yours Faithfully

*Julian Harman*

Julian Harman  
(Social Enterprise Development Officer)

Carfan Y Cymer



communities first cymunedau yn gyntaf

Cymmer Ward

**Cymmer Ward**  
**Communities First**  
**Cymunedau'n Gyntaf Y Cymer**  
70 The High Street  
Cymmer / Cymer  
Porth  
Rhondda Cynon Taf  
CF39 9AR  
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**National Assembly for Wales**

Petitions Committee  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

20<sup>th</sup> December 2011

To, Mr William Powell (Chair of the Petitions Committee)

**Petition on Retaining the Services of Sporttrain in Rhondda and Cardiff**

On behalf of Cymmer Ward Communities First Partnership I would like to express our support for the retention of support to the Sport train project.

Prior to October 2010 when the project was based at the Waun Wen Community Centre in Trebanog, Cymmer, we had a very positive partnership with Sporttrain. This included their support for our Parent and Toddler Groups, After School Clubs and Youth Club. The young people volunteering were able to put into practice what they were learning during the day and this benefitted not only them but the surrounding community by having sports trained volunteers helping out with the children. This arrangement was also used for play schemes during the Summer and Easter, when students would spend a day having practical experience of working with younger children under the supervision of a qualified play worker. Indeed such was the success that several young people were used as sessional workers or coaches in the Youth Club.

Indeed the very ethos of the programme is to try and demonstrate the importance of team work and cooperation. This has I believe played an important



communities first cymunedau yn gyntaf



RHONDDA CYNON TAF  
BOTWYNGHAN | BRIDGES ICE



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

element in preventing some of these young people from negative careers and anti social behaviour and showing them the positives gained from work and community involvement.

However, in addition to what we and the community gained through the project, we believe that many young people, some being our most challenging young people, also gained valuable experience, qualifications and self confidence through the project. At a time when figures show that levels of NEETS are rising and young people are not achieving the basic levels of exercise required, to stop such a beneficial project targeting these young people would certainly seem a very retrograde step.

If you would like to discuss any of the points above or have any questions please feel free to contact me at the address above.

Kind regards  
Steve Smith  
Coordinator, Cymmer Ward Communities First

To whom it may concern,

My name is Chris Jones and I have been the Rhondda Schools Rugby Development Officer for the last 19 years.

In this role, I have had numerous young people from Sports Train come to help me coach and organise rugby tournaments and training sessions in both Primary and Secondary Schools in the Rhondda Valley.

They have learned to prepare, organise and deliver these sessions. Many schools have been so impressed by their good work and by the quality of the Sports Train students themselves that they have asked that they continue to deliver sessions in the schools on a weekly basis.

Obviously the school children of Rhondda have benefited from Sports Train input but I know first-hand that Sports Train students themselves have gained from this experience.

For example my assistant Rugby Development Officer, Ben Daniels who is currently the youngest ever Welsh Rugby Union Level 3 coach, began his coaching career as a 17 year old student, 6 years ago, with Sports Train.

I really believe that by removing this Training Provision so many young people in the Valleys will lose out, especially those who are of an age where they are not in education or employment.

In an area deprived in so many ways Sports Train has provided a positive environment for such youngsters to thrive and at the same time be of a benefit to their community.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Jones.



PET(4)-05-12 p13a

## **P-03-318 Cross-border maternity services**

### **Petition wording**

We, the undersigned, note the proposal to move the consultant-led maternity unit, neonatal intensive care unit and child inpatient unit from the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital (RSH) to the Princess Royal Hospital (PRH) at Telford.

We believe this would cause a great deal of hardship and stress for patients and their families travelling from Montgomeryshire. It would add an extra twenty minutes onto a journey which is already fifty minutes at best and ambulance response times will inevitably be significantly increased.

It is vital that these proposals are not considered in isolation to proposals in Wales and that the Welsh Government adopts a strategic approach to cross border health issues, to ensure that the needs of patients from Mid Wales are fully represented in any proposals at catchment hospitals.

We therefore call on the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to fully engage in the 'Keeping it in the County' consultation process, to ensure that patients from Mid Wales are not disadvantaged by any changes.

**Petition raised by:** Mrs Helen Jervis

**Petition first considered by Committee:** March 2011

**Number of signatures:** 164

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM  
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-318  
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/05351/12

William Powell AM  
Chair  
Petitions Committee

[committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk)

6<sup>th</sup>

February 2012

Dear Bill,

**P-03-318 Cross Border Maternity Services**

Thank you for your letter of 12 January on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding the decision to transfer the consultant led maternity unit, neonatal intensive care unit and child inpatient unit from the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital to the Princess Royal Hospital in Telford.

You refer to my letter to the Committee of 29 November 2011 which stated Powys Teaching Health Board is reviewing its maternity services and developing a local delivery plan in light of this decision. I will of course be following events and I note you would like to be kept informed when the delivery plan has been developed.

I will send a copy of your letter and my response to Andrew Cotton, the Chief Executive of Powys Teaching Health Board to ask him to keep the Committee updated on progress.

Regards  
Lesley

**Lesley Griffiths AC / AM**  
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300  
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400  
Correspondence.lesley.Griffiths@wales.gsi.gov.uk  
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**Y Pwyllgor Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol  
Health and Social Care Committee**

Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru  
National  
Assembly for  
Wales



**William Powell AC AM**  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
Cadeirydd, Pwyllgor Deisebau

3 February 2012

Dear William,

**Health and Social Care Committee – Petition on cross-border maternity services**

Thank you for your letter of 12 January regarding the petition on cross-border maternity services.

As you may be aware, the Health and Social Care Committee is not currently considering maternity services. However, given that the subject of this petition does fall within the Committee's remit, Members agreed at their meeting on 2 February to keep the issue under review, as requested.

I would be grateful if you could keep us informed should the Petitions Committee receive any further information about this petition.

Yours sincerely,

**Mark Drakeford AC AM**  
Cadeirydd - Chair

Bae Caerdydd  
Cardiff Bay  
CF99 1NA

Ffôn /Tel: 029 2089 8403  
E-bost /Email: HSCCommittee@wales.gov.uk

# Agenda Item 6.3

PET(4)-05-12 p14a

**P-04-337 Tenovus: Free sunscreen**

**Petition wording**

We call upon the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to provide free sunscreen for all children under the age of 11 in Wales.

**Petition raised by:** Tenovus

**Petition first considered by Committee:** October 2011

**Number of signatures:** Approximately 9,500

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM  
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-337  
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/06663/11

William Powell AM  
Chair, Petitions Committee

William.powell@wales.gov.uk

24<sup>th</sup> October 2011

Dear Bill,

**Petition P-04-337 Tenovus: Free sunscreen**

I am replying to your letter of 7 October in relation to the above petition.

As a Government, we are committed to promoting the need to adopt sun protection behaviours. For children we emphasise it is important to cover up and wear suitable clothing whilst outside, including wide brimmed hats and clothing which offers suitable protection from the sun. They should also be encouraged to spend time in the shade between 11am and 3pm, the hottest time of day, and wear at least a factor 15 sunscreen on exposed areas of skin when shade and protective clothing are not practical.

This broader approach has been adopted as part of the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes, of which 99% of schools in Wales are now part of. As schools progress through the scheme they are expected to put in place a whole-school approach to a range of health issues. As part of this work the local healthy school co-ordinator would direct the school to guidance on sun safety policy provided by the SunSmart campaign.

This guidance advises schools to develop their own policy taking account of the individual needs of the school and its pupils and to consult with the whole school community including parents, school governors, Healthy School practitioners, school nurses, Health & Safety co-ordinators and pupils when looking to develop the sun protection policy. The guidelines are intended to outline ways in which the community can work towards minimising harmful effects from over exposure to the sun's ultraviolet rays. It advises schools to develop their own policy.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300  
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400  
Correspondence.lesley.Griffiths@wales.gsi.gov.uk

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I believe this broader approach will be more effective in protecting our children from over exposure to sun.

Regards  
Lesley

**Lesley Griffiths AC / AM**

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services

**Y Pwyllgor Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol  
Health and Social Care Committee**

Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru  
National  
Assembly for  
Wales



**William Powell AM**  
Chair  
Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales

11 November 2011

Dear William

**P-04-337 Tenovus: Free Sunscreen**

Thank you for your letter of 14 October in relation to the above petition.

At our meeting on 10 November, the Health and Social Care Committee considered the petition and agreed that it falls more clearly within the remit of the Children and Young People Committee, which is responsible for matters relating to children's health. We therefore agreed that it would be more appropriate to allow the opportunity for any further consideration of this issue to be undertaken by that Committee.

I am copying this letter to the Children and Young People Committee.

Yours sincerely

*Mark Drakeford*

**Mark Drakeford AM**  
Chair

Bae Caerdydd  
Caerdydd  
CF99 1NA

Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Ffôn / Tel: 029 2089 8403  
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# Comisiynydd Plant Cymru

## Children's Commissioner for Wales

### Keith Towler

William Powell AM  
 c/o Abigail Phillips  
 Clerk  
 Petitions Committee  
 National Assembly for Wales  
 Cardiff Bay  
 Cardiff CF99 1NA

21.12.2011

Dear William

I write to you in relation to two petitions that have been received by your committee regarding which you have requested a response from me as the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

#### P04-346 Free Childcare for 3-4 year olds

My Investigations and Advice officers have taken calls relating to associated issues, which tend to reflect the confusion among members of the public. Early years services is a complex area of service provision which differs from area to area and has a variety of structures, such as flying start, foundation phase and early education funding.

I think it would be useful to clarify the wording of the petition. When the petitioners refer to free childcare for 3-4 year olds, are they referring to free education places? My understanding is that though the setting could be in nursery schools, nursery classes in primary schools or reception classes in primary schools, playgroups, private day nurseries, independent schools, or with child minders who belong to an approved network, they can all be referred to as providers of free education places. It is clear that the local discretion afforded to local authorities leads to various models of discharging their obligations to free education places.

I would refer you to Newport Council's family service to ascertain that the information attached in your correspondence is an accurate description of the situation in Newport. Its website states:

*'Some Private Day Nurseries are also recognised as providers of education. Children who are resident in Newport and who attend one of the Private Day Nurseries or Playgroups who are Registered Education Providers, may be entitled to funding to cover a half-time early years education place (term time only) instead of a Council Nursery place. Please note that the funding will be paid directly to the setting. If your child does attend one of these settings, they must attend a minimum of 3 sessions on separate days to be eligible for the funding. Please be aware that this funding may not cover the usual charge of the setting, therefore you may still incur a charge. Please speak to individual settings to discuss this in more detail.'*

This will, of course, benefit some families. However the Council may not be able to offer



the flexibility to facilitate the needs of all families. It is almost inevitable that some parents will benefit more than others, based on their particular circumstances.

**P-04-337 Free Sunscreen for all School Children under the age of 11**

Whilst acknowledging this as an issue which is relevant to children's right to be healthy, I don't feel as if my Office can add value to the deliberations relating to this particular petition. I do note with interest the response from the Minister for Health and Social Services and will monitor other contributions published by the Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Keith Towler  
Children's Commissioner for Wales

**Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc  
Children and Young People Committee**

William Powell AM  
Chair  
Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff CF99 1NA

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd / Cardiff CF99 1NA

1 February 2012

Dear Bill

Apologies for the delay in responding to your letter of 14 October 2011, regarding Petition P-04-337 on Free Sunscreen, but we have been awaiting information on the Welsh Government's approach to sun protection.

At this morning's meeting, the Committee considered responses from the Minister for Health and Social Services and Minister for Education and Skills. The issues raised by the petition have prompted us to consider the importance of sunscreen as part of a broader view of sun protection.

We have therefore decided to hold a short inquiry into sun protection policy, which will look at issues such as provision of shade in schools, wearing suitable clothing outdoors, as well as use of sunscreen.

Yours sincerely



**Christine Chapman AM  
Committee Chair**

PET(4)-05-12 p15a

## **P-04-342 MS Nurses**

### **Petition wording**

We, the undersigned, believe that MS specialist nurses provide a vital service for people living with MS and their families and should be protected from Health Board cuts. We therefore call on the Welsh Government to ensure that the numbers of MS specialist nurses are not reduced over the length of the Fourth Assembly and that investment continues to provide 1 nurse for every 300 people living with MS.

**Petition raised by:** Joseph Carter

**First considered by Committee:** November 2011

**Number of signatures:** 2,163

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM  
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-342  
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/07018/11

William Powell AM  
Chair  
Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

29<sup>th</sup>  
November 2011

Dear Bill,

Thank you for your letter of 15 November regarding petition P-04-342 about MS Nurses.

I am aware of the serious nature of Multiple Sclerosis and would like to reassure the petitioner of the Welsh Government's commitment to ensuring Health Boards provide the highest standard of care possible for people who suffer from MS, including access to specialist neurological nursing care. It is our intention to ensure all patients get access to the right staff, in the right place, at the right time.

Ultimately, Health Boards are responsible for planning and funding services for people with MS. Health Board actions to implement the recommendations from the Independent Review of Adult Neurosciences include work to address the roles of specialist nurses, and ensure patients have access to the nursing care they need, as close to home as possible.

I am unaware of any proposal to reduce the current number of dedicated MS nurses. The 2010-11 NHS Wales Annual Operating Framework did not require NHS organisations to reduce the percentage of senior nursing staff. The Framework actually stated 'all organisations are expected to work towards achievement of a 3% reduction in staff in Agenda For Change Bands 5 and above, with a reflected increase in staff in Bands 1 to 4, per annum, between 2010 to 2013 and a 10% increase in the proportion of staff providing services in a community setting, to be achieved between 2010 to 2013.'

This target was not seeking primarily to reduce posts at band 5 and above, nor was it specific to nurses. It was set principally to support organisations with workforce redesign to ensure skill mix reflects actual service delivery needs. The aim is to increase the number of support staff to ensure skilled health professionals have more time to utilise their higher levels of expertise most appropriately. This would include enabling nurses to specialise in care for specific conditions such as MS.

Regards  
Lesley

**Lesley Griffiths AC / AM**

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services



**GIG**  
CYMRU  
**NHS**  
WALES

**Bwrdd Iechyd  
Addysgu Powys  
Powys Teaching  
Health Board**

Cyfarwyddiant Cyllid  
Pencadlys y Bwrdd Iechyd  
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Finance Directorate  
Health Board Headquarters  
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Brecon, Powys  
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Phone: 01874 712721  
Fax: 01874 712 554

E mail: [Rebecca.richards3@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Rebecca.richards3@wales.nhs.uk)

Your ref: P-04-342

19<sup>th</sup> December 2011

Sarita Marshall  
Deputy Petitions Clerk  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Dear Sarita,

### **Provision of Neurology Specialist Nursing in Powys**

Thank you for your enquiry dated 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2011. I apologise for the length of time taken to respond to your request for information. The sections which follow describe the input of specialist nursing within Powys teaching Health Board including specialists for neurological conditions which would include the care for Powys residents with MS.

The development of specialist nurses and specialist nursing is an important aspect to the teaching Health Boards forward plans. The aim of Powys teaching Health Board is to enable the people of Powys to be treated and cared for closer to home. Instrumental to this is the role that specialist nurses will play in supporting general staff, including district nurses, community hospital nurses, doctors and others to care for patients with specific condition, including neurological conditions.

The nature of the rural setting means that creative ways of working will need to be employed to ensure that services are appropriately provided for patients and we believe that our current approach is an example of good practice. Within North Powys for example, there is currently a collaborative approach being developed to support patients with neurological conditions, with health professionals working in alliance with the Voluntary Sector. MANGO (Multi-agency Neurological Group) is working with Therapists and Nurses (generalists and specialists) in service provision.

Taking a broader approach to service provision has meant a greater use of professional expertise for patients with neurological conditions available locally. A key emphasis has been on supporting primary care in their ability to

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care for patients with neurological conditions and ensuring ease of access of opinion without resorting to referral to a District General Hospital service which often involves a significant travel for many patients. These redesigned clinics and support services so far have been positively received and as they develop further work to roll out such good practice across the rest of Powys will be important.

In relation specifically to specialist nursing, the role of specialists in our services is crucial. Given the challenges of low population numbers with certain conditions and high rurality, the broader, multi-professional approach is a model of care we are testing, with the support of patient groups and the Voluntary Sector, and our evaluation of the service development will guide future service provision.

The Teaching Health Board has had membership of the mid and South Wales Neurosciences Programme – a body formed to take forward the recommendations of the Axford report. I am pleased to inform you that as a result of the *'adult rehabilitation and supportive care'* strand of work within the auspices of this project that Health Boards in Wales have agreed to fund 2 consultant neurologist posts on a regional basis. Powys patients will be seen as part of the mid and west service. The recruitment process for these posts is underway and job descriptions have been developed.

A needs/service assessment has been undertaken by the work stream to identify sub-specialty expertise required from the new appointments. A service model for neurology developed for recommendation to the Project Board.

I hope the information supplied above helps to demonstrate the direction being taken by Powys teaching Health Board in the context of a rural population to ensure appropriate services are and continue to be provided to residents with neurological conditions.

Yours sincerely,



**Rebecca Richards**  
**Director of Finance**

Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board Response

Dear Ms. Marshall,

I refer to Mr. W. Powell's letter of the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2011 seeking information relating to MS Specialist Nurses.

Within ABM the current nurse staffing compliment for the MS service is 4 wte MS Nurses. 3.5 wte of this staffing establishment is recurrently funded and 0.5 wte is funded by the MS Society until Nov 2012. The Health Board is currently exploring options to continue the funding for the 0.5 wte once the MS society funding ceases, but we are unable to confirm this commitment at the current time.

Across all of our clinical services we are setting the challenge to clinical teams to explore options and opportunities for delivering improved quality of care to patients within a reducing financial envelope, the HB recognizes the important part that the MS nursing team plays in provision of care for patients with MS across south west wales, but cannot commit to exclude the MS service from a process which all services within the HB are required to go through.

I hope this provides the information you require, but if you require any further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Paul Stauber  
**Director of Planning.**





**GIG**  
CYMRU  
**NHS**  
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Betsi Cadwaladr  
University Health Board

Mr William Powell  
Chair  
Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

**Ein cyf / Our ref:** MB/JB/NWA11/0395  
**Eich cyf / Your ref:** P-04-342  
**☎:** 01248 384910  
**Gofynnwch am / Ask for:** Mary Burrows  
**Ffacs / Fax:** 01248 384937  
**E-bost / Email:** mary.burrows@wales.nhs.uk  
**Dyddiad / Date:** 16<sup>th</sup> January 2012

Dear Mr Powell

**Re: MS Specialist Nurses**

I refer to your letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2011 regarding MS Specialist Nurses and firstly, may I apologise for the delay in responding.

I can confirm that the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board has no plans to reduce the number of MS nurses. The Health Board contracts with The Walton Centre in Liverpool for neurology services.

Work is in progress to set up a North Wales Neurosciences Network which will support the planning and design of service responses reflecting best practice. Based on assessment of health needs, the service will monitor and review the impact and outcomes of the service upon needs.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely

**MARY BURROWS**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**



**GIG**  
CYMRU  
**NHS**  
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd  
Cwm Taf  
Health Board

Your ref/eich cyf: P-04-342  
Our ref/ein cyf: AJP/CN/C-30  
Date/Dyddiad: 24 January 2012  
Tel/ffôn: 01443 744803  
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Email/ebost: amanda.powell@wales.nhs.uk  
Dept/adran: Corporate Services

Mr William Powell AM  
Chair  
Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Dear Mr Powell

**P-04-342 MS Nurses**

Thank you for your letter of 23 November 2011, received on 8 December 2011, in relation to the provision of MS specialist nurses.

I can confirm that Cwm Taf Health Board does not employ any MS specialist nurses. Residents of the area, i.e. Rhondda Cynon Taf or Merthyr Tydfil, who have MS are referred to the Consultant Neurologists at Cardiff & Vale University Health Board. The Consultants are supported by Clinical Nurses Specialist, who are also employed by the Cardiff & Vale University Health Board.

Each MS patient will have an MS specialist nurse who acts as their key worker and outreach services may be provided within the locality.

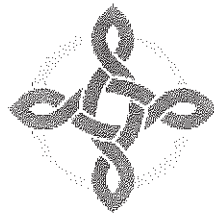
I trust that this addresses your request for information but please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries

Yours sincerely

**Allison Williams**  
Chief Executive

**Return Address:**

Ynysmeurig House, Navigation Park, Abercynon, CF45 4SN



GIG  
NHS

Bwrdd Iechyd  
Hywel Dda  
Health Board

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Dyddiad/Date: 8 December 2011  
Ein cyf/Our ref: Emma Crees  
Gofynnwch am/Please ask for: 01437 771244  
Rhif Ffôn /Telephone: 01437 771222  
Ffacs/Facsimile: Trevor.purt@wales.nhs.uk  
E-bost/E-mail:

William Powell AM  
Chair Petitions Committee  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF88 1NA

Dear Mr Powell

Thank you for your letter dated 23 November 2011 regarding the above.

Hywel Dda Health Board recognises the value and contribution to patient care provided by Specialist nurses and in fact other practitioners and certainly have no plans to reduce the posts we have within the Neurological field. At present we do not have specific Clinical Nurse Specialist in MS but are designing our clinical strategy which will ensure we support a more community and primary care based approach to services. In order to develop this approach many services will require a variety of practitioners and skills and the workforce issues are being considered alongside the strategy development.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trevor Purt', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Trevor Purt  
Chief Executive



**GIG**  
CYMRU  
**NHS**  
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd  
Aneurin Bevan  
Health Board

Ref: AG/RB/SM/loe

Direct Line: 01495 765072

2 February 2012

Sarita Marshall  
Deputy Clerk  
Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Dear Ms Marshall

### **Petitions Committee – MS Nurses**

Further to the letter received from William Powell AM, Chair of the Petitions Committee in relation to the Petitions Committee's consideration of petition P-04-342 relating to MS Nurses, I should be grateful if you would find below, as requested, a comment from Aneurin Bevan Health Board. I apologise for the delay in forwarding these comments to you.

Aneurin Bevan Health Board in partnership with the other Mid and South Wales Health Boards, in response to the Axford Report recommendations relating to support for patients with acquired neurological and spinal injuries, have developed an integrated community rehabilitation service model. Aneurin Bevan Health Board is currently reviewing its existing provisions and will redesign services, where appropriate, to align with the new model. With specific regard to MS nurse provision the Aneurin Bevan Health Board currently employs three MS Clinical Nurse Specialists. These specialist nurses work closely with other health professionals to support MS patients in our community.

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**Aneurin Bevan Health Board**  
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Telephone: 01873 732732  
e-mail:  
[enquiries@aneurinbevanlhb.wales.nhs.uk](mailto:enquiries@aneurinbevanlhb.wales.nhs.uk)



**Bwrdd Iechyd Aneurin Bevan yw enw gweithredol Bwrdd Iechyd Lleol Aneurin Bevan**  
Aneurin Bevan Health Board is the operational name of Aneurin Bevan Local Health Board

I hope the above information is helpful to the consideration of this matter by the Committee. However, should you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me or Richard Bevan, Board Secretary.

Yours sincerely



**Dr Andrew Goodall**  
**Prif Weithredwr/Chief Executive**

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau  
Petitions Committee

Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales



Andrew Goodall - Chief Executive,  
Aneurin Bevan Local Health Board  
Block A, Mamhilad House  
Mamhilad Park Estate  
Pontypool  
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Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd / Cardiff CF99 1NA

Our ref: P-04-342

23 November 2011

*Dear Mr Goodall*

P-04-342 MS Nurses

The Petitions Committee considered the following petition during its meeting of 15 November:

*'We, the undersigned, believe that MS specialist nurses provide a vital service for people living with MS and their families and should be protected from Health Board cuts. We therefore call on the Welsh Government to ensure that the numbers of MS specialist nurses are not reduced over the length of the Fourth Assembly and that investment continues to provide 1 nurse for every 300 people living with MS.'*

The Petitions Committee agreed to write to all Local Health Boards to enquire about their budgeting for the future provision of MS specialist nurses.

I'd be grateful if you could forward this information to the Petitions Committee Deputy Clerk at [sarita.marshall@wales.gov.uk](mailto:sarita.marshall@wales.gov.uk) at your earliest convenience.

Thank you for your consideration of this issue.

Yours sincerely,

*William Powell*

William Powell, AM  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
CC Neil Desmond, Welsh NHS Confederation



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Caerdydd a'r Fro  
Cardiff and Vale  
University Health Board

**Ysbyty'r Eglwys Newydd  
Whitchurch Hospital**

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Phone 029 2069 3191

Heol Parc, Yr Eglwys Newydd  
Caerdydd, CF14 7XB  
Ffôn 029 2069 3191

Eich cyf/Your ref:  
Ein cyf/Our ref: JW-jb-01-1620  
Welsh Health Telephone Network:  
Direct Line/Llinell uniongychol: 02920 745682

**Jan Williams OBE  
Chief Executive**

4 January 2012

William Powell, AM  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Dear Mr Powell

**P-04-342 MS Nurses**

Further to your request for information regarding the current and future provision of MS Nurses within Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, I am pleased to be able to provide you with the following information.

I can advise that there are currently 7 nurses within the Health Board dedicated to the care of people with MS. This headcount equates to a whole time equivalent of 6.24 nurses. These specialist nurses are involved in the delivery of local and outreach services to patients across South East Wales. The team includes a Specialist Continence Advisor and an MS Research Nurse. I can confirm that there are no plans to downsize the MS nursing workforce at this time and any changes to the team would be in line with service and workforce modernisation with the aim of improving patient care.

I would like to reassure you that the MS Nurse Specialists are highly valued by the Health Board. We acknowledge the tremendous and highly professional work performed by this team. It is recognised that their remit is vital to ensuring that patients enjoy quality of life in their home environment and for emergency admissions to hospital to be minimised.

I hope that my response provides you with the information you require.

Yours sincerely

**Jan Williams  
Chief Executive**



Multiple Sclerosis Society  
Cymru

## **MS nurse petition – briefing for the Petitions Committee** **March 2012**

*MS Society Cymru is concerned that the future of MS and other specialist nurses is uncertain due to budget cuts and current Welsh Government policy.*

*This briefing paper is designed to give some background to MS Society Cymru's campaign to protect MS nurse posts and provide useful information for a supplementary question.*

### **Background**

Multiple sclerosis specialist nurses (MS nurses) are a vital source of support for people affected by MS. They provide a wide range of services, from managing relapses, giving advice on drug treatments through to acting as a gateway to physiotherapy, counselling and other functions of the multidisciplinary team. MS nurse posts are currently under threat. MS Society Cymru has launched a campaign to protect these posts.

### **Why are MS nurses a vital frontline service?**

*"The MS nurse is the human face of the NHS. Doctors are excellent, but it is the nurse who can take the time to get to know individuals, to explain symptoms and treatments. For me, when frightening first diagnosis was made, it was the MS nurse who was able to bring back some perspective and reassurance for me and my loved ones. Without the nurse, having MS could be frightening and lonely, not just for me but for my partner and relatives. She provides the reassurance and her experience inspires confidence." (Person affected by MS.)*

People affected by MS have consistently told us that access to an MS specialist nurse is invaluable to them. Nearly 1000 people affected by MS responded to a UK-wide survey on MS nurses in 2010. The responses showed just how much people value their MS nurse and how much more difficult life would be without their support. The findings from the survey are contained in the report: ***Experiences of people using MS specialist nurse services***. Key findings from the report include the following:

- **Over 60%** of respondents reported that their MS nurse always helps them when they want to know about different treatments, or their current medication.
- **Over 70%** stated that their MS nurse is always the first point of contact when they have any questions about their MS.
- **80%** said their MS nurse had provided support to their family and carers.



We also know that the withdrawal of MS nurses could negatively impact other MS services as MS nurses play a **key role in training other professionals**. Their skills and knowledge are highly valued by consultant neurologists, many of whom call on MS nurses for information. Neurologists have told us that the loss of MS nurses would be a great disadvantage to the healthcare system and people with MS.

Not only do MS nurses provide the specialist care that people with MS need, there is also evidence to suggest that they may contribute to considerable **cost savings for NHS Wales**. By providing care in the community and educating patients about managing relapses, MS nurses are able to promote self-management, prevent unnecessary hospital admissions and reduce lengthy episodes in hospital.

- Data collected by the Royal College of Nursing in 2010 showed that almost £10 million could be saved every year in Wales by MS specialist nurses intervening early and managing MS relapses at home rather than in hospital.
- The nurses have the skills and the equipment to assess and treat problems such as a Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) at home, rather than the person being taken into hospital at an average cost of £1,000 per emergency admission
- Expensive orthopaedic admissions can be avoided by MS nurses recognising “dropped foot”, a common symptom of MS leading to falls and broken bones. They make referrals to use Functional Electrical Stimulation (FES) therapy at an annual cost of less than £1,000. In contrast a broken leg would cost the NHS over £10,000

“Of all the developments in nursing, the role of the specialist nurse has been one of the most exciting, but also one of the least understood and valued” – RCN

### **Why are posts under threat?**

The former NHS Wales Operating Framework 2010/11 and other policies could lead to reductions in the number of MS specialist nurses over the next 3 years. The Operating Framework stated:

“All organisations are expected to work towards achievement of a 3% reduction in staff in Agenda For Change Bands 5 and above, with a reflected increase in staff in Bands 1 to 4, per annum, between 2010 to 2013 and a 10% increase in the proportion of staff providing services in a community setting, to be achieved between 2010 to 2013.”<sup>1</sup>

Although this framework covered all staff, and not solely nurses, this combined with financial pressures on Health Boards could see a threat to the MS nurse posts.

There is also concern that the Welsh Government’s new Community Nursing Strategy does not acknowledge the important role of MS specialist (and other condition specific) nurses as being responsible for managing the holistic health care needs of the person living with the condition.

<sup>1</sup> Welsh Government (2010): NHS Wales Annual Operating Framework 2010/11

The strategy states:

“Specialist nurses need to be developed and focused around specific population need and a review of the many disease specific specialist nurses needs to be undertaken focusing on common disease groups.”<sup>2</sup>

It is understood that several MS nurses from other parts of the UK have been asked to justify their posts; roles are under review and some services have been diluted (where a nurse has been asked to treat newly diagnosed patients only, for example). Whilst currently 35 MS nurse posts are ‘under threat’ in England despite the ‘ring-fencing’ of health in that country.

### **What does MS Society Cymru want?**

We believe that the role of specialist nurses is poorly understood by Health Board managers and by the general public. This has led to a false perception of the nurses being an “expensive luxury,” rather than appreciating the savings that are currently being made and the further savings that could be made by them working in the community.

We want the Welsh Government to ensure that the numbers of MS nurses are not reduced and for Health Boards to aim to provide 1 nurse for every 300 people living with MS. At the moment there are no nurses in Powys and just one in North Wales, so we would like to see further investment in at least one post in North Wales, and one post in Powys.

We would like the Petitions Committee to refer our concerns to the Health and Social Care Committee and recommend an inquiry into the role of specialist nurses in Wales. This would allow for a thorough examination of the role of specialists nurses across a whole range of conditions (including MS) in the Welsh NHS, and allow public scrutiny of the costs and potential savings generated by these roles.

### **About Multiple Sclerosis and MS Society Cymru**

Multiple Sclerosis is the most common disabling neurological disorder affecting young people in the UK with more than 100,000 affected by the condition. It is estimated that over 4,000 people are affected in Wales. It is a condition of the central nervous system. MS is unpredictable and can cause a wide variety of symptoms such as loss of mobility, pain, fatigue, vision problems, numbness, loss of balance, depression and cognitive problems. The condition may progress steadily or involve periods of relapses followed by periods of remission.

Multiple Sclerosis Society Cymru (MS Society Cymru) is the Wales-wide charity dedicated to supporting people who have MS, as well as providing help for their families, friends, carers and colleagues. A significant number of the MS Society Cymru National Council and volunteers either have MS or have a personal connection with MS.

The Society provides care and support through services which include a national information and helpline service, publications, a website that receives more than 40,000 visitors each month, welfare grants, funding research and funding MS specialist nurses.

MS Society Cymru is a democratic organisation and has a network of branches delivering local services to people with MS across Wales.

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<sup>2</sup> Welsh Government (2009): A Community Nursing Strategy for Wales

## Plenary meeting 9 November 2011

### Cwestiynau i'r Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Nyrsys Arbenigol

#### Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services Specialist Nurses

**1. Aled Roberts: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am ddyfodol nyrsys arbenigol yn y GIG. OAQ(4)0048(HSS)**

**1. Aled Roberts: Will the Minister make a statement on the future of specialist nurses in the NHS. OAQ(4)0048(HSS)**

**2. Mark Isherwood: A wnaiff y Gweinidog amlinellu ei chynlluniau ar gyfer dyfodol nyrsys arbenigol yn y GIG yng Nghymru. OAQ(4)0038(HSS)**

**2. Mark Isherwood: Will the Minister outline her plans for the future of specialist nurses in the Welsh NHS. OAQ(4)0038(HSS)**

**3. Alun Ffred Jones: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad ynglŷn â dyfodol nyrsys arbenigol yn y GIG. OAQ(4)0049(HSS)**

**3. Alun Ffred Jones: Will the Minister make a statement regarding the future of specialist nurses in the NHS. OAQ(4)0049(HSS)**

**The Minister for Health and Social Services (Lesley Griffiths):** Specialist nurses form an integral and important part of health services. Health boards and trusts are responsible for ensuring they have the right skill mix and level of expertise to deal with the patients that they care for. The number and type of staff is not mandated by the Welsh Government.

**Aled Roberts:** Multiple Sclerosis Society Cymru held a reception at lunch time, looking at the roll-out of MS specialist nurses throughout the NHS. Betsi Cadwaladr University Local Health Board only has one specialist MS nurse in north Wales, whereas the suggestion is that there should be two or three, according to the level of population. Are you involved in any discussions regarding the roll-out of specialist nurses at the health board level, given that the use of specialist nurses could avoid hospital admissions at more expensive facilities?

**Lesley Griffiths:** Local health boards are responsible for providing the highest standard of care possible for people with long-term complex conditions, such as MS. I agree that specialist nurses are essential as part of the package of treatment for people with neurological conditions, such as multiple sclerosis, but it is up to the LHBs to decide how many nurses they want.

**Mark Isherwood:** As chair of the cross-party group on neurological conditions, I was invited to sponsor and speak at the MS society event today. In our last cross-party group meeting, we heard a presentation by an epilepsy specialist nurse, as well as MS and Parkinson's specialist nurses, all of whom were worried about their jobs and futures, and particularly about the people who they care

for. Given the concern of so many groups, will you make a commitment to attend a future meeting of the cross-party group in the new year to listen to those concerns and consider them, or alternatively agree to meet representatives of the Wales Neurological Alliance and me, as chair of the group, to discuss the future of specialist nurses in Wales?

**Lesley Griffiths:** If you write to me with a date, I will see whether I can attend, diary permitting.

**Alun Ffred Jones:** Yr wyf am gyfeirio at yr adolygiad o'r ddarpariaeth addysg gofal iechyd anfeddygol gan yr Asiantaeth Genedlaethol Arwain ac Arloesi mewn Gofal Iechyd. A fydddech yn cytuno â mi fod cadw'r ddarpariaeth o hyfforddiant i nyrsys yn y gogledd yn bwysig a bod hyfforddiant dwyieithog ym maes nyrsio anabledd dysgu hefyd yn hanfodol?

**Alun Ffred Jones:** I wish to refer to the review of non-medical healthcare education provision by the National Leadership and Innovation Agency for Healthcare. Would you agree that it is important that the provision of nurse training is maintained in north Wales, and that bilingual training in the in the field of learning disability nursing is vital?

**Lesley Griffiths:** It is something that we are looking at in relation to north Wales and we need to ensure that we have the conditions and teaching that is needed right across Wales, not just in north-west Wales.

**Jenny Rathbone:** My question is about Parkinson's nurses. Since the launch of the latest Parkinson's report in July, I have been delighted to learn that Cardiff and Vale University Local Health Board has agreed to appoint a second nurse, increasing the ratio from one nurse per 881 patients to one per 440 patients. That is still short of one nurse per 300 patients, but it is a lot better than the absence of response from the other local health boards, who I understand have yet to appoint more nurses. How can we encourage all LHBs to ensure that there are appropriate Parkinson's nurses to support this group of people?

**Lesley Griffiths:** As I said in my answer to Aled Roberts, it is for local health boards to ensure that they have the highest standard of care possible for patients with complex conditions, such as MS and Parkinson's disease. In north Wales, a new Parkinson's nurse has just been appointed. It is a matter of funding and it is up to LHBs to decide where they wish to place the funding in relation to these specialist nurses. There are several conditions where people would like to see specialist nurses.

**Janet Finch-Saunders:** Of those suffering from Parkinson's disease in Wales, 89 per cent require primary and secondary care. This amounts to some 5,340 people. The remaining 11 per cent are also recommended access to a specialist nurse for advisory purposes, and touching on what Jenny has just said, four out of seven health boards in Wales have nurses with much higher caseloads than the recommended 300 patients per nurse. I am really heartened that that has been recognised and dealt with in Cardiff. How can you guarantee effective personalised care for Parkinson's patients when specialist nurses have such high caseloads?

**Lesley Griffiths:** Again, it is for the LHBs. This is one of the reasons why 'Together for Health' is so important—it is about ensuring that our services are safe and sustainable and are not stretched too far. It is obviously a concern if nurses feel that their caseloads are too large for them, and it is for the LHBs to ensure that that is not the case.

**William Powell:** Minister, you referred earlier to the support services of specialist nurses in areas such as multiple sclerosis as 'essential'. It was my privilege on Friday of last week to attend an MS clinic hosted in Newtown hospital, and it came to my attention that there are no dedicated MS nurses at all within the Powys Teaching Local Health Board area. The service is currently based in Telford, and the caseload for the nurses is between 420 and 440 patients. Would you consider getting in touch with Powys LHB to urge it to reconsider the decision that it has made not to commit to any provision within Powys? We have cross-border issues but we also have overload on the nurses there. It is questionable whether the quality that you seek has been delivered.

**Lesley Griffiths:** The local health boards are aware of my views on this, but I will write to the chief executive of Powys LHB in relation to that.

**Rebecca Evans:** Like William Powell, I am concerned about the approach to specialist nurses taken in my region by both Hywel Dda Local Health Board and Powys LHB. Data presented by the Royal College of Nursing and the Multiple Sclerosis Society Cymru estimates that £10 million could be saved every year in Wales by MS specialist nurses intervening early and managing MS relapses at home rather than in hospital. You have already said that you will write to the Powys health board, but, in the Hywel Dda LHB area, there is a real fear that the review of nurses will see the number reduced. Would you investigate the access that people with MS in Mid and West Wales have to treatment, support and expertise?

**Lesley Griffiths:** It is something that the LHBs can look at in the light of their service change plans. They can look at all their services, but it is something that I will raise with the chairs of the LHBs.

**Angela Burns:** Thank you for the answers that you have given to Members. Would you be more proactive in ensuring that the LHBs consider the care that they offer people in the round? We have already talked about the fact that it is the LHBs' decision whether to provide any specialist training. In Hywel Dda LHB, we already have a situation where there is no specialist nursing for people with acquired brain injury, and if this department at Morryston closes, we will have no specialist nurses for MS. We have just a few specialist nurses for the special care baby unit, given the actual amount of work there. If you are putting all that down to the LHB, they can trot out anything that they like about saving money, and you as a Government will surely need to be able to give them some underpinning level that they cannot go below. How will our constituents be able to access these services if the only answer from the Government is, 'It is up to the LHB', and the LHB chooses not to do it?

**Lesley Griffiths:** Well, it is up to the LHBs. We give them the budget and it is up to them to make sure that the services they provide for their local population are safe, sustainable, high-quality and effective. They have to look at that. Any service change plans that come forward, if that is what you are referring to, have to make sure that they fit in with that. The LHBs know clearly what we are expecting from them as a Government.

# Agenda Item 6.5

PET(4)-05-12 p16a

## **P-03-236 The Charter for Grandchildren**

### **Petition wording**

We call upon the National Assembly of Wales to urge the Welsh Government to adopt The Charter for Grandchildren and to make the Charter mandatory for professional workers who are employed in the welfare of children.

**Petition raised by:** Grandparents Apart Wales

**Number of signatures:** 19

**First considered by Committee:** October 2009

Gwenda Thomas AC / AM  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Plant a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref SF/GT/0302/12

William Powell AM  
Chair  
Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

6 February 2012

*Lea William,*

### Family Justice Review

In my letter of 16<sup>th</sup> July, I undertook to provide a copy of the final report of the Family Justice Review. I understand my office has sent the link to your Committee Clerk, but I have also included it below for ease of reference:

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/policy/moj/family-justice-review-final.htm>

I have also attached the written ministerial statement that I have issued today to the National Assembly for Wales on the publication of the UK Government's response to the Family Justice Review, which can be found at the following link:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families/a00200548/family-justice-review-final-report>

You will note in particular my plans to set up a new Family Justice Network in Wales, which will provide an opportunity to bring together key players within the family justice system in Wales and will support and inform the proposed Family Justice Board which will be in place by April 2012.

Responding to the range of improvements will be a challenge and, whilst some will happen immediately, others will take longer to implement. I am confident, however, that by working in partnership with key stakeholders, we can meet these challenges and deliver on this ambitious agenda to ensure that children in Wales are provided with a faster system which recognises, listens and responds to their needs and concerns, protects their welfare and secures their safety, and helps them enjoy their childhood in the most stable environment.

*Yours sincerely,  
Gwenda*

**Gwenda Thomas AC / AM**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Plant a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
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Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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## WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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**TITLE** UK Government's Response to the Family Justice Review

**DATE** 6 February 2012

**BY** Gwenda Thomas, Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services

I have been keeping Members updated on the progress of the Family Justice Review and today marks a key milestone with the publication of the UK Government's response to the Review, commissioned early in 2010. The Review Panel's final report which was published in November 2011 set out an extensive set of recommendations on how to reform the family justice system. This is a highly complex area crossing both devolved and non-devolved matters, including public and private law. I would like to thank the Panel for their focus and diligence in undertaking such a comprehensive review of this complex system, as well as thank all those who informed the work and responded in the consultation process. In particular I would like to pay tribute to Keith Towler, the Children's Commissioner for Wales, who was an integral member of the Review Panel in championing the voice and rights of children in Wales.

I have always maintained that the child's welfare and best interest comes first and I am committed to implementing those areas of the response devolved to Wales, based on our principles and in light of the needs of children in Wales. In particular, I expect that the **rights and voices of children** are at the heart of the process. I will continue to work with partners across the whole Family Justice System so that there are robust means to ensure that children's views are properly represented.

Improving the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people, particularly improving life chances for our looked after children, are central to our **Programme for Government** and framework for a **Sustainable Social Services for Wales**. This is based on a strong national purpose and clear accountability for delivery, underpinned by a competent and confident professional workforce.

The family justice system makes life-changing decisions which affect many thousands of children and families every year, but, as the Family Justice Review has pointed out, it is a system that is not working as well as it should and is under ever greater strain. I am pleased therefore that the Welsh Government has ensured



that the key devolved aspects have been reflected in the positive response from the UK Government to the Family Justice Review. I have arranged for Members to receive a link to the response, which I would urge you to consider. In the meantime, there are some key areas I would like to draw your attention to which are particularly salient for the Welsh Government and agencies within Wales in taking forward the ambitious plans to improve the family justice system.

I welcome that the Review has recognised the benefits of preserving the provision of expert independent social work advice to the courts in Wales, by **Cafcass Cymru**, through Welsh Ministers. Cafcass Cymru is an important part of the family justice system and each year works with over 8000 children and their families across Wales. Since the CSSIW inspection of the organisation in 2010 which assessed its overall effectiveness as satisfactory, significant improvements have been made and I am confident that through Cafcass Cymru we will continue to provide a quality service to the courts in taking forward the ambitious strategic plan we launched at the beginning of the year.

The current socio-economic climate is taking its toll on families in our local communities and there are rising pressures in the 'looked after' system which has seen an increase of 15% in the past two years. This is putting further pressures on the family justice system, and therefore the reforms proposed on **public law** will help reduce the unacceptable delays and enable better case management and care planning. It is unacceptable that processes designed to protect some of our most vulnerable children, may be adding to the difficulties they face.

Having a strong and confident workforce will be key to supporting the reform of the family justice system and helping drive the cultural and systems change in Wales. Our Sustainable Social Services agenda for the further professionalization of our Workforce will include a new career pathway for social workers and build upon our national training programme to improve assessment and case management skills of social workers.

This agenda will be underpinned by our drive to reduce complexities in core social services practices, including through the introduction of our new Social Services Bill and delivery of our legislative programme. Taken together, these will further improve local authority practices and strengthen pre-court proceedings.

Like me, Members have also been concerned about the adversarial nature of **private law** cases. I welcome therefore, proposals which will support separating parents in working together to make arrangements about their children's lives, and reducing the need to take such cases through the courts, and focussing clearly on their children's needs. I fully support plans to make consideration of mediation compulsory and we are well placed in Wales through our Children's Rights agenda and focus on citizens rights and control, to support this which will clearly be in the best interests of the child, providing greater voice and control to children and families.

Any changes to devolved legislation will be taken forward at the earliest opportunity in the context of the Welsh Government's legislative programme. For example, Members will be aware of our progressive plans through our Social Services Bill to simplify arrangements in relation to **adoption** by placing a duty on the 22 local authorities in Wales to come together and establish a single adoption agency. This complements the UK Government's plans to simplify the adoption process and the role of adoption panels.

Despite the rejection of any legislative provision in support of **shared parenting** by the Review Panel, I note the UK Government's proposal to develop a legislative statement emphasising the importance of children having an ongoing relationship with both parents after separation, where it is safe and in the child's best interests. I will continue to contribute and to influence in its development and to ensure that the rights of the child remain paramount.

The enormous challenge of addressing the issues in the family justice system will require leadership at all levels, across Wales and within the UK. The creation of a **Family Justice Board** will provide greater leadership and co-ordination across delivery agencies nationally and locally and we will have key representation from Wales on this Board. It will be supported by a young people's board, with representation from Wales and England, which will support their work and ensure the voices of children and their wishes and feelings are taken into account. I will ensure that appropriate connections are also made with our Social Services Partnership and Leadership Forums.

The Family Justice Review has established a platform for dialogue and engagement in Wales; we are already beginning to hear a new conversation across devolved and non devolved partners about how agencies can work together more effectively in the best interests of our children. I have said it many times but make no apologies for saying again that the size and geography of our nation affords us significant opportunities to make a direct and positive difference for children and families.

The First Minister's key message is one of delivery, I want to personally drive this agenda forward in Wales. I want the conversation, which started with the commissioning of this Review, to continue and extend. I will therefore be establishing a new **Family Justice Network in Wales** that brings together the key players, so that we have a local community of understanding and common purpose to improve public services and outcomes for children and families in Wales. This network will further support and inform the work of the Family Justice Board and the contribution of the Welsh representatives which sit on it.

I intend to publish the terms of reference for the Network in the coming weeks and at the same time will update Members on next steps regarding those actions that fall within the remit of the Welsh Government.

We need to build on the work already started to achieve the improvements the Welsh Government would want to see, however, whilst some changes will happen immediately,

others, including legislative changes (both devolved and non-devolved) will take longer to implement.

Our commitment to this is clear and we will work collaboratively within Government and with partners, through our new Network, to deliver on this ambitious agenda, whilst ensuring that a distinct Welsh voice is retained within the system. The publication of the UK Government response marks the start of the journey and we can build on the foundations we have already set out to maximise the opportunities for Wales. Ultimately we are working towards delivering a system which is simpler and more straightforward for parents; is streamlined and less resource intensive for professionals; and above all else provides children with a faster system which recognises, listens and responds to their needs and concerns, protects their welfare and secures their safety; and one that helps them enjoy their childhood in the most stable environment.

I firmly see the delivery of this work as an integral part of my Sustainable Social Services programme and we will provide more details of the Welsh Government's proposals shortly.

**Rhodri Wyn Jones**

4<sup>th</sup> March 2012

**Frank Bradfield**

Dear Rhodri

It is always a pleasure to hear from you and for the opportunity to write to the committee.

You will realise that since my petition was first submitted in July 2009 the Welsh Government has come a long way in trying to deal with the short comings of Family Law but I have to say with a touch of sadness that although Janet Finch-Saunders AM led a short debate in the Senedd on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 2011 not one member of any political party stayed in the chamber to listen or contribute to the debate other than the Deputy Minister for Social Services Gwenda Thomas AM and the Conservative Group.

I listened with intent to the very able Deputy Minister describe how the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was now being incorporated with domestic law and that was a vast improvement from her original stance when she first wrote to the Committee in 2009

My desire for a Charter for Grandchildren is made out of truth, that we in Wales and the rest of the UK need to address the domestic family problems that face our society today and one can only address this by examining the root cause which is destroying the fabric of society itself.

This will not be achieved by introducing more laws or introducing more institutions but it can be achieved by giving parents what they used to have which is the right to decide what is best for their child.

So that the committee can have an understanding of how we as a society came to this point in time where governments, courts and children's agencies are unable to cope with the demands placed on them by the break down in families, a fact recorded in the Family Justice Review with no suggestion on how to treat the situation that we ourselves have created.

In the fifties and early sixties when divorce was frowned on lawyers dealt with such cases easily and it is my contention that when the UK Government made divorce easier the flood gates were open which caused a dramatic rise in such cases. Lawyers seizing on the opportunity to accumulate wealth decided to branch into this new field and specialise in family law and the universities engaged with them so that they became duly qualified.

I say that if the powers incorporated in the Children's Act of 1989 were used properly then perhaps I would not be writing today but the situation is that the resident parent has the power to dictate what happens to the child irrespective of that child's best interest denying the child access to the non resident parent and grandparents, and it is the state to blame for this.

As I said earlier when couples divorced it was the state and not the parents that took the decision where that child should live and it is from this small beginning, that we have the state taking on more

and more responsibility for families, weakening parental skills that we find ourselves in the position we are in today.

Governments following the direction they are going cannot address the breakdown in our society unless they engage and bring parents back to where they should be, in charge of their family

We campaign for children's rights and we are delighted to engage with the Deputy Minister because we know that outside in the streets we are being listened to.

Children have the right to parental love which includes parental training, and when the state takes a child into care that right to parental training which includes culture, religion and family history is denied the child at a stroke worst still when there are siblings and they become separated.

I ask the committee to follow Scotland's lead by supporting a Charter for Grandchildren making it mandatory for use in Children Agencies.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank Bradfield', with a stylized flourish underneath.

Frank Bradfield

Grandparents Apart Wales

# Agenda Item 6.6

PET(4)-05-12 p17a

## **P-04-339 Enforcement of Animal Welfare Standards in the Puppy Farming Industry in South West Wales**

### **Petition wording**

We call on the Welsh Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to stage an independent inquiry into the enforcement of animal welfare standards in the puppy farming industry in South West Wales.

This intervention and independent investigation is as a result of the widespread abhorrence at the ease with which the licenses are issued and subsequent lack of enforcement. This abhorrence is creating an extremely negative image of Wales throughout Wales, the United Kingdom and internationally. It is our contention that the setting up of an independent inquiry is the only way forward and will go some way in restoring the reputation of Wales throughout the UK and Internationally. Hopefully it will also curtail the activities of unlicensed puppy farmers & their reprehensible practices.

**Petition raised by:** Colin Richardson

**First considered by Committee:** October 2011

**Number of signatures:** 2169

PET(4)-05-12 p17b  
**Y Pwyllgor Amgylchedd a Chynaliadwyedd**  
**Environment and Sustainability Committee**

Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru  
National  
Assembly for  
Wales



William Powell AM  
Chair of the Petitions Committee,  
National Assembly for Wales

6 Feb 2012

Dear William

**Petition on the enforcement of animal welfare standards in the puppy farming industry in South West Wales**

Thank you for drawing the Environment and Sustainability Committee's attention to the above petition. The Environment and Sustainability Committee ('the Committee') is pleased to consider this petition as a potential topic for inclusion in its future work plan. As you will be aware, the Committee has a committed work programme to the end of the spring term, so if it were to consider this topic it would most likely be during the summer term.

I have asked the Clerk to the Committee to notify the Petitions Clerk should the Committee decide to undertake any work in this area.

Yours sincerely

**Dafydd Elis-Thomas**  
**Cadeirydd / Chair**

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# Agenda Item 7

PET(4)-05-12 p18a

## **P-04-335 The Establishment of a Welsh Cricket Team**

### **Petition wording**

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to support the establishment of a Welsh international cricket team.

**Petition raised by:** Matthew Richard Bumford

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 11 October 2011

**Number of signatures:** 187

### **Supporting information:**

Whereas Scotland and Ireland gained associate membership of the International Cricket Council (ICC) and went on to compete in World Cups, Wales has failed to do so. In fact, no Welsh player has played international cricket for over five years as a result of being affiliated to the England Cricket Board. Recently the England and Wales cricket team played several "home" games in the capital of Wales, although no Welsh players were present. It would be unacceptable in other sports, like rugby, for a team comprised entirely of non-Welsh people, playing under a non-Welsh flag, with the badge of another country on their chest, to ostensibly play a "home" game in the Welsh capital. This would simply not be acceptable for other sports and should not be so for cricket. The current arrangements do not foster the game of cricket in Wales and are to its detriment because there is a lack of opportunity for Welsh cricketers to play at the highest level. At present Wales is completely unrepresented in international cricket and this must change with the establishment of an Welsh international cricket team.



Huw Lewis AC / AM  
Y Gweinidog Tai, Adfywio a Threftadaeth  
Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-335  
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/05785/11

William Powell AM  
Chair  
Petitions Committee  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

24 October 2011

*Dear William*

**P - 04 - 335 The Establishment of a Welsh Cricket Team**

Thank you for your letter of 7 October on behalf of the Petitions Committee which seeks my views on establishing a Welsh international cricket team.

I note the matter raised by the petitioners, however, the subject of whether Wales has a national cricket team is a matter for Welsh Cricket in consultation with the England and Wales Cricket Board and is not a matter for Government.

*Best wishes*

*Huw*

**Huw Lewis AC / AM**

Y Gweinidog Tai, Adfywio a Threftadaeth  
Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage



Abigail Phillips  
Clerk of the Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1 NA

3/2/2012

Dear Abigail

Please find enclosed a copy of the England and Wales Cricket Board's submission to the Petitions Committee for the forthcoming meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

I hope the enclosed submission will help inform the discussion and please do not hesitate to get in touch if you require any further information.

Regards

Philip French  
**Director of Public Policy and International Relations**

England and Wales Cricket Board



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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

## **ECB response to Petition P-04-335; the Establishment of a Welsh Cricket Team**

The England and Wales Cricket Board is the governing body for all cricket in England and Wales. Our responsibility is to promote and develop the game's growth and success at all levels, far beyond the boundaries of just International and domestic First Class Cricket.

### **1. Process required for Wales to establish a national cricket team and join the International Cricket Council**

Should Cricket Wales (the Welsh Cricket Board) wish to establish a national team they would firstly need to apply to the International Cricket Council (ICC) for membership. Initially this means applying to join as an Affiliate member and then subsequently looking to progress to Associate membership.

Wales would then join more than 100 other countries in having Affiliate membership of the ICC enabling them to participate in the ICC World Cricket League which has seven divisions in all.

More information about the ICC World Cricket League can be found at the following link [http://icc-cricket.yahoo.net/events\\_and\\_awards/wcl/index.php](http://icc-cricket.yahoo.net/events_and_awards/wcl/index.php) (included with this submission is the latest ICC World League bulletin).

The ICC World Cricket League culminates with competition between its members for places in the ICC's World Events. This is likely to lead to Wales competing with the other 100 Associate and Affiliate Nations for two to four places (dependent on format) for a place at the ICC Cricket World Cup which is held on a four year cycle.

Should this approach be taken then Cricket Wales would need to separate itself from the ECB and join the ICC in its own right as a member nation. It would not be possible to mix and match membership based on different levels of international competition.

Once Wales secured ICC Affiliate status it could then apply for Associate status once a track record of achievement at Affiliate level had been demonstrated to ICC. This process involves inspections of its cricket infrastructure (categories such as the state of its international venues, the professional administration it has in place and its domestic league infrastructure as well as playing performance). Schools and cricket clubs in Wales would need to compete in competitions operated by the Wales Cricket Board. We would see no reason why Wales should not achieve this status over a period of time.

### **2. Wales relationship with the International Cricket Council (instead of the ECB) – funding and fixtures**

Should Wales join the ICC as a member it would change in many ways how cricket in Wales is operated. Direct funding to Wales would likely be in the region of \$50,000 to \$1million per annum through the ICC's grants to member nations arising from the funding generated by ICC Global Events rather than from ECB. In a similar vein to Scotland and Ireland, there would be no funding from England to Cricket Wales as all relationships would have to be with ICC and Wales would in effect become a competitor nation to England.

Wales would compete directly in the ICC World Cricket League and it is realistic to envisage a fixture list that would initially include matches against the nations who currently compete in the Affiliate competitions which include Papua New Guinea, Germany, Argentina and Nepal.

The SWALEC could host these matches but would no longer stage international Test matches. It is unlikely that there will be an expansion in Test playing nations in the foreseeable future in the Future Tours programme is now set by ICC until 2019.

Should Glamorgan continue to operate as a County in the way they do now then they would be able to apply to play in ECB competitions. While this is feasible, it is not straightforward, as the issue would arise of whether players representing Glamorgan were 'qualified' to play for England or Wales and the wider competition regulations that are applied. Glamorgan would need to demonstrate the wherewithal to fund and sustain a professional playing staff and that an application to compete in ECB competitions would not conflict with Wales requirements for players to play in the ICC Affiliate or Associate competitions.

### **3. Existing funding arrangements from the ECB to Wales**

The ECB currently provides funding into Wales in several different ways including (i) award of International matches to the SWALEC, (ii) payments to Glamorgan CCC and (iii) investment in grassroots cricket in Wales.

In 2010, Cricket Wales and Glamorgan County Cricket Club received direct fee payments and grants of £2,197,492 from a total circa of £35million

awarded to County members. In addition, there is indirect support through both centralised County and community programmes and Sport Wales contributes a further £550,000 per annum.

Overall funding in 2011 increased to approximately £2,416,020 to Cricket Wales and Glamorgan County Cricket Club. Of the funding to Cricket Wales, the national governing body contributed approximately £277,200 in revenue funding towards clubs and community programmes plus a further £479,552 in capital funding to build and renovate facilities. The capital contribution included £100,000 which was paid by Sport Wales as part of their match funding scheme. There was some additional partnership funding of around £40,000 via the Cricket Foundation and Chance to Shine as well some indirect support through centralised County and community initiatives.

The ECB awards revenue funding according to a transparent formula that aligns funding to the size and scope of the game in each County. Cricket Wales reside over one of the largest cricketing counties in England and Wales and therefore receives one of the highest per capita shares of funding. Cricket Wales has 220 Affiliated Clubs, 84 Focus clubs, 720 primary schools entering ECB competitions. There are 625 senior club teams and 580 junior clubs teams in Wales.

The ECB also provides a significant amount of professional support to the Board in terms of expertise, resources to help improve delivery and help raise standards as well access to partnership funding.

### **4. Position of key stakeholders in the Game**

The ECB is proud of the status of Wales within its structure and the rich and varied contribution Wales has made to cricket over many years. In recent years certain significant developments have included David Morgan being Chair of the ECB and ICC, Test Matches being staged at the wonderful SWALEC cricket ground, The ECB's Team Managing Director Hugh Morris and players from Wales representing the England and Wales Cricket team with distinction.

Ultimately the decision for its continued involvement in the ECB structure by Wales is one for the key stakeholders of the game in Wales to make.

The ECB is aware that Glamorgan CCC, Wales Cricket and Sport Wales are all strong supporters of Wales remaining as a member of the ECB and we are certain that the Committee will take evidence directly from these bodies and note the ICC regulations concerning membership. The ECB will of course continue to support the democratic decision

and preferences expressed by cricketers in Wales concerning the future for cricket as a member of ICC or ECB .

Consultation on the Establishment of a Welsh National Team – Matthew Bumford – Principal Petitioner

Point 1. I think the action called for is both reasonable and feasible. It is currently the case that in the British Isles alone there are teams from Scotland, Ireland, the Isle of Mann, Jersey and Guernsey. There is of course the England (and Wales) team also but no Welsh person has played for it in over half a decade. Given that Wales has a cricketing population on par with New Zealand, a full test playing nation, and more than four times the number of clubs as Ireland, who regularly appear in the World Cup, then I think it is self-evident that Wales would be a successful cricketing nation. In sum, if Scotland, Ireland, the Isle of Mann, Jersey and Guernsey are all able to support national teams then it is clearly both reasonable and feasible to assert that Wales could also.

Point 2. As noted in point 1, cricketers from other nations/islands in the UK have a national team that they are able to play in. In Wales this is not the case. Instead cricketers must attempt to play for the England cricket team. This presents difficulties for several reasons. The first of these is that Glamorgan is not a fashionable county for selection for the England team. This may seem subjective but the facts speak for themselves; since 1921, when Glamorgan became a First Class county, it has produced just 16 Welsh Test players of the 650 players capped for England and only 11 One Day International players. This is a very poor return from almost a century of cricket. Furthermore, the lack of a national team for Wales means that a glass ceiling exists for Welsh cricketers that is very difficult to break through. At present, up until the under-19 age group players are able to play for a Welsh side, with Welsh women able to carry on after the age of 19. Good players are then fed into the Glamorgan system and hopefully end up playing for the Glamorgan first team. For most cricketers this is as high as they can get. Irish and Scottish cricketers are able to play in World Cricket League competitions, where they hone their skills against international teams of similar ability, whilst Welsh cricketers do not. Hence in the years since establishing their own teams Ireland have played 70 One Day Internationals and Scotland have played 49. They both now find themselves in World Cricket League Division One, regularly appear in World Cups and, in the case of Ireland, are now pushing for full membership of the International Cricket Council (ICC) and test status. This would be the case for Wales also had we chosen to set up our own teams when Ireland and Scotland did.

I also believe that the real question is not whether Welsh cricketers have the same opportunities as cricketers from elsewhere but whether they should have the opportunity to play for Wales. Some may argue that the England cricket team is sufficient representation for Wales but I vehemently disagree. The team is referred to as England in common usage (not England and Wales), the acronym for the England and Wales Cricket Board is the ECB, games begin with a rousing rendition of Jerusalem (the unofficial national anthem of England) without Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau nor God Save the Queen (as the anthem of the UK), and the team is represented by the English Flag of Saint George. In essence all of the symbolism and talk of the team is very English with no Welsh representation. It may be tempting for some to try and make the team more Welsh through something as irrelevant as a change in the ECB acronym but this will make no difference. By playing for England a Welsh person is being asked to dress up as an English person and represent England. This is distinctly different from the British and Irish Lions, where all four nations are represented in the badge and the Team GB, which reflects all of the nations that make up the UK. Welsh cricketers

should, therefore, be given a choice and given the opportunity to play for a team that represents them and not be forced to play for a team that most likely does not.

Point 3. The barriers to establishing a Welsh cricket team are Glamorgan and the Welsh Cricket Board because both believe that money from the ECB is more important than Wales representing herself and would rather see Wales being “represented” by the English team described above in which no Welsh players actually play and Wales gets no mention. This fixation with funding from England is in itself based on a fallacy because the ECB would continue to provide funding for Wales in the event of us establishing a team, as it does for Scotland, Ireland, Holland and the island teams of the UK. The International Cricket Council (ICC) would also provide funding and has recently announced new funding, such as the Bigger Better Global Game campaign, to encourage new nations to take up cricket, and there is also the Higher Performance Programme funding that is available to nations as they rise up the ranks of world cricket. It is, therefore, likely that Wales will not be financially worse off than before we had a team, meaning that rather than being reliant on English funds alone we will benefit from a mix of ECB and ICC funding.

The other major barrier is Glamorgan who seem convinced that they will not survive as a First Class county if there is a Welsh team, even though the ECB have made it clear that Glamorgan can continue to play in the English County League if a Welsh team is established. Again, Glamorgan’s view does not stand up to scrutiny. The first reason that they believe they will not survive is because they fear that they would lose players to the Welsh team when international competitions are being held. It is true that they would have to allow some players to play but it is also disingenuous to suggest that all Welsh players would come from Glamorgan. Many of Wales’s best cricketers do not play for Glamorgan and it is also likely that players from outside Wales, who have a connection to Wales, will want to play for the team, as is the case with Scotland and Ireland, for example.

The second barrier with Glamorgan is the possibility that Sophia Gardens will no longer be able to host England test matches. The first thing to be said about this is that it is financially irresponsible to base a county’s future on hosting English test matches. The test match system means that tests essentially go out to tender and counties/grounds then bid to host them. Such is the logic of Glamorgan that they bid a huge sum of money to host an England vs. Sri Lanka test match in 2011 that saw crowds of less than 1000. They have now failed to pay the ECB the £2.5 million debt that they owe for hosting that match, meaning they have been stripped of the 2012 West Indies test match that they were due to hold. This means the next test match in Wales will not be held until at least 2013. We, therefore, now find ourselves in a situation where Welsh cricket is in debt to the ECB rather than profiting from being a part of it.

It is also always assumed that there will be no money to be made from having a Welsh team. Again, I do not see why this should be the case. What we observe in rugby is that crowds at regional rugby are quite low, whilst virtually every rugby international in Wales is a full-house. I believe it likely that this would be the case for cricket. Whereas a person may not go and watch Glamorgan play Somerset it may be the case that they will go and watch Wales play home nations like England/Ireland/Scotland etc. and touring sides such as Australia and South Africa. So a Welsh team may open up cricket to an audience in Wales that did not follow it previously. This would then lead to merchandise and sponsorship deals that would mean that Welsh cricket starts to generate money.

Furthermore, with regards to economic exposure, Paul Russell, Chairman of Glamorgan CCC, has stated that the reason why they spent £3.2 million (including £1 million from the Assembly) to host the 2009 Ashes test match in Cardiff was to show off Wales. Surely, the best way to show off Wales to economic target countries such as Australia and India is not to have them play England in our country but to invite them to play Wales instead. Also, when Wales then go and play elsewhere they will be ambassadors for our country rather than England going to represent us without any sign or mention of Wales.

Point 4. I am not against England playing cricket matches in Cardiff. In cricket it is often the case that countries play in other countries (Pakistan and Afghanistan, for example, play their home games in countries such as the United Arab Emirates and England due to the security situation in their countries). What I am against is an England team arriving and claiming to play a “home” game in Cardiff when it is obvious to everybody that the England team is not a Welsh team. If it was genuinely an England and Wales team with Welsh players and Welsh symbolism then the case would be different, but as this will never be the case then it would be in the best interests of everybody if we set up our team. England will then be welcome to play in Wales but under the understanding that they are not representing Wales.

The final thing I think we should note is that several Welsh national teams do already exist. As stated earlier female cricketers in Wales already have their own team. There are also several male Welsh national teams up until the under-19 age group, after which players must suddenly forget playing under the Welsh Dragon and start playing under the Flag of St. George and the English 3 Lions. There is also the Wales Minor Counties team, which plays in a lower league than Glamorgan. Even Glamorgan have recognised the need for a Welsh national team by playing their games all over Wales and changing their name to the Welsh Dragons. Glamorgan, therefore, now has a confused role of claiming to represent Wales but only in the English county leagues.

It is clear that the Welsh public want there to be a senior-male national team, but one playing other countries not minor counties. The change that needs to be made is not a big one. All of the structures are already in place except for the team itself and it is clear where the sources of funding for a Welsh team will come from. Richard Holdsworth, when Regional Development manager for ICC Europe gave his blessing to a Welsh team and even wrote a paper on the matter (which has already been submitted), David Collier, the Chief Executive of the ECB, has also stated that the ECB does not oppose establishing a Welsh team and in Scotland and Ireland they are very keen on establishing the team so that they can begin playing Wales on a regular basis. So the only opposition to Wales becoming a team is emanating from the few individuals who benefit from the status quo. We cannot let fear and the vested interests of a few individuals stand in the way of the legitimate aspirations of Welsh cricket and so the sooner we set up our own team the sooner we can take our rightful place on the global stage, and in order to do that we must get the support of the elected representatives of the Welsh people in our National Assembly.



# Response to the Petitions Committee Call for Evidence on the Establishment of a Welsh Cricket Team

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## Sport Wales Consultation Response

Simon Jones, Public Affairs Manager, Sport Wales

11/16/2011

Sport Wales is the national organisation responsible for developing and promoting sport and physical activity in Wales. We are the main adviser on sporting matters to the Welsh Government and are responsible for distributing National Lottery funds to both elite and grassroots sport in Wales. We aim to not only improve the level of sports participation at grassroots level but also provide our aspiring athletes with the support required to compete successfully on the world stage

### **1. Do you feel that the action called for is reasonable and/or feasible?**

We would like to take this opportunity to emphasise that the establishment of a Wales cricket team and the decision to take membership of the ICC rather than the ECB is a matter for the governing body of cricket, Cricket Wales, and we would be supportive of their decision on this matter. Any discussion around this issue would need to be framed by what is best for cricket in Wales on both a participation and elite level.

Recently the Cricket Board of Wales and the Welsh Cricket Association merged to form a single governing body that oversees both the junior and adult recreational game in Wales. We welcomed this decision to provide more joined up governance for the game in Wales and are continuing to work with the new governing body, Cricket Wales, to develop the game further. In 2011/12 Sport Wales has provided over £550,000 of funding to Cricket Wales for this purpose. The grant we provide is also supplemented by funding directly from the ECB, which is outlined in the response to the committee made by Cricket Wales.

The governing body has also been working to continue to develop a close working relationship with Glamorgan CC, which represents the professional game in Wales. We have been very pleased with how both agencies have worked together to ensure that there is a joined up pathway for those wanting to play cricket in Wales.

At present both Cricket Wales and Glamorgan CC are of the view that the establishment of a Welsh cricket team would not be in the long term benefit for the growth of the game in Wales and we support this position.

### **2. Is there evidence to support the assertion that the current arrangements mean that Welsh cricketers do not have access to the same opportunities as cricketers from other UK nations?**

We do not believe that this is currently the case, as talented cricketers are supported by both Cricket Wales and eventually Glamorgan CC if they reach that standard. We recognise the wider issue with regard to the England & Wales cricket team being referred to exclusively as “England” and the acronym for the England and Wales Cricket Board being the ECB, does lead to the perception that Wales is overlooked. In fact Wales has a strong history of providing players to the international side and currently both James Harris and Tom Maynard, both of whom are products of the Glamorgan Academy, are in the England development squad with aspirations of making the senior side.

We would be concerned if the establishment of an independent Wales team would see Glamorgan alienated from the County Championship. There is every chance that this could result in Welsh professionals opting to play for English counties resulting in a dip in focus and standards in Wales.

### **3. What are the barriers to establishing a Welsh international cricket team?**

For Wales to have representative teams of its own, it would have to break with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) and become affiliated to the International Cricket Board (ICC) instead. This would have significant funding implications as Glamorgan CCC and Cricket Wales who collectively receive up to £2 million funding per annum from the ECB. If Wales was ratified as an associate member of the ICC it may expect to receive a significantly smaller grant. The reduction of funding would undoubtedly have a significant negative impact on both the professional and recreational game in Wales.

The quality and regularity of competition that a representative Wales international team would be exposed to would be significantly inferior to the standard of competition enjoyed by Glamorgan in the County Championships. Wales would start at the bottom rung of the international cricket ladder and it may be some time before they achieved test / one day international status. Other small cricketing nations (e.g. Ireland and Scotland) are thought to struggle for meaningful, appropriate competition between major events (i.e. the Cricket World Cup).

### **4. Should the ECB (England and Wales Cricket Board) team play home games in Wales? What are the arguments for and against this?**

They do. There was an ashes test at the SWALEC stadium in 2009 and it has recently been announced that a further ashes test will be held here in 2015. The bid for the 2015 Ashes Test included an ambitious plan for the future of the game in Wales to ensure that a sporting legacy remains following the game.

Further to these test matches, one day internationals and twenty-twenty matches against other nations have also been held in Cardiff, all helping to boost the profile of cricket in Wales. If Wales were to become an independent cricket nation then such matches are highly unlikely to be held in Cardiff.

Simon Jones  
Public Affairs Manager  
Sport Wales  
(029) 20338275  
[simon.jones@sportwales.co.uk](mailto:simon.jones@sportwales.co.uk)



14<sup>th</sup> November, 2011

Abigail Phillips  
Clerk to the Petitions Committee  
The National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff CF99 1NA

Dear Ms Phillips

**Re: The Establishment of a Welsh International Cricket Team**

Glamorgan County Cricket Club ("Glamorgan") was founded in 1888 and is Wales' only professional cricket team. Glamorgan Cricket is a member of the England & Wales Cricket Board ("ECB") and plays in 3 competitions each season – the LV County Championship (4 day competition), the CB40 (40-over competition) and Friends Life t20 (20-over competition).

The following views are provided by Glamorgan Cricket in response to the questions raised in the petition relating to the establishment of a Welsh International Cricket Team.

**1. Do you feel that the action called for is reasonable and/or feasible?**

The action called for is neither reasonable nor feasible and is not supported by Glamorgan Cricket.

All Welsh cricketers should aspire to play for Glamorgan – Wales' only professional cricket team – where the playing standards are far higher than any that would be attained by the formation of a Welsh cricket team. Welsh cricketers also have the opportunity through playing for Glamorgan to reach the pinnacle of the professional game, to play international cricket at both Test match and one day cricket against the very best.

In September 2011, the ECB confirmed that Glamorgan Cricket will be staging a further 17 days of international cricket over the next 5 years, including another Ashes Test match in 2015.

It is worth highlighting that Glamorgan Cricket's home, the SWALEC Stadium, was specifically re-developed in 2008 at a cost of £15m to host international matches. The loan funding was provided by a number of different organisations, including Cardiff City Council.

Furthermore, through the staging of an Ashes Test match in 2009, Glamorgan Cricket was the catalyst behind the Welsh Government's decision to form its Major Events Unit, which has the support from all of the Welsh political parties and is designed to attract high profile events to the Principality, during these challenging economic times.

Glamorgan Cricket, SWALEC Stadium, Cardiff, CF11 9XR  
T: 0871 282 3401 F: 0871 282 3405 info@glamorgancricket.co.uk  
www.glamorgancricket.com

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Mae croeso i unrhyw un sy'n dymuno gwneud i ohebu a ni drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg  
Glamorgan County Cricket Club Limited. Registered as an Industrial & Provident Society - Number 30396 R



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government



CARDIFF  
CAERDYDD

PARAMOUNT

**3. What are the barriers to establishing a Welsh international cricket team?**

From our perspective, a Welsh international cricket team would lead to the demise of Glamorgan Cricket. The loss of Wales' only professional cricket team would have a devastating effect on the health of the game in Wales.

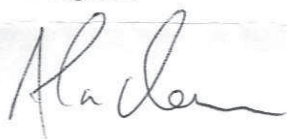
**4. Should the ECB team play home games in Wales? What are the arguments for and against this?**

They have done so for many years, raising the profile of Welsh cricket on a global scale. Nearly every international played in Cardiff since 2006 has sold out, with Welsh based supporters accounting for the majority.

The 2009 Ashes Test match played in Cardiff has had a considerable impact on increasing cricket participation numbers throughout Wales and the 2015 Ashes Test match will act as a catalyst for increased funding earmarked to further develop cricket in the Principality.

To summarise therefore, Glamorgan Cricket does not support any moves to establish a Welsh Cricket team – should you have any queries in relation to this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards



Alan Hamer  
Chief Executive Officer



**CRICKET WALES**  
**CRICED CYMRU**

Abigail Phillips  
Clerk to the Petitions Committee  
The National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff CF99 1NA

c/o Glamorgan Cricket  
SWALEC Stadium  
Cardiff  
CF11 9XR

11th November 2011

Telephone (029) 2041 9341  
Facsimile (029) 2041 9389

Dear Ms Phillips

**RE: THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A WELSH INTERNATIONAL CRICKET TEAM**

Cricket Wales is the national governing body for junior and senior recreational cricket in Wales and is recognised as such by Sport Wales and the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB). 230 clubs, leagues and associations from across the length and breadth of Wales are affiliated to Cricket Wales.

The following views are provided by Cricket Wales in response to the questions raised in the petition relating to the establishment of a Welsh International Cricket Team.

1 Do you feel that the action called for is reasonable and/or feasible?

The action called for is neither reasonable nor feasible. Cricket Wales chooses to affiliate to the ECB rather than the International Cricket Council (ICC), for very good reasons. These include:

- It provides the opportunity for eleven Welsh age group teams (from U11 boys to a senior Welsh women's team), to play over 150 games of representative cricket of an excellent standard against English County Boards, each summer (see fixtures attached). This programme develops our most talented young cricketers. If we were in membership of the ICC rather than the ECB then we would only be able to play a limited number of fixtures against the likes of Ireland, Scotland and the Netherlands who are not as strong as teams like Yorkshire, Lancashire and Warwickshire. Women's and girls' fixtures would be even more adversely affected.
- The ECB provides Cricket Wales with funding to play the above games and to undertake many other initiatives that enable the sport to develop in Wales. This funding is used to strengthen cricket within communities throughout Wales including projects for seniors, juniors, boys, girls and those with a disability. Through this funding over many years (and that provided by Sport Wales), cricket plays an important role in Welsh communities.
- Recently Cricket Wales has secured enhanced funding from the ECB's Cricket Foundation and Chance to Shine programme, which will enable a part-time Community Coach to be appointed in every Local Authority in Wales. This funding has been matched by Sport Wales with the long term target being to double the number of junior club teams by 2020. This initiative would not be possible if Cricket Wales were part of the ICC.
- Cricket Wales is part of the ECB's coach education programme which is world-leading amongst cricket nations. The ICC coach education programme is at a more developmental stage.
- Being part of an England and Wales body provides Cricket Wales with the opportunity to gain expertise and support in other specialist areas which would be far more difficult to

deliver if we were a stand-alone cricket nation. Complex areas such as the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and facility development fall into this category.

- 2 Is there evidence to support the assertion that the current arrangements mean that Welsh cricketers do not have access to the same opportunities as cricketers from other UK nations?

No. In fact, Welsh cricketers have the opportunity to play professional cricket week-in-week-out for Glamorgan County Cricket Club and to play Test, One-Day-International and Twenty20 cricket for England. If cricketers from Ireland/Scotland are good enough to play for England then they are not allowed to play for Ireland/Scotland at the same time. Recent examples include Ed Joyce and Eoin Morgan.

Most Scottish and Irish players are semi-professional cricketers who week-in-week out, play at a lower standard than county cricketers such as those who play for Glamorgan County Cricket Club. The high-profile ICC Cricket World Cup only takes place every four years.

If Cricket Wales was to join the ICC instead of the ECB then the most talented Welsh cricketers would seek to join English Counties so as to be eligible for England. It would therefore be extremely difficult for Wales to develop a strong team.

- 3 What are the barriers to establishing a Welsh international cricket team?

The formation of a Welsh international cricket team would require Cricket Wales to affiliate to the ICC rather than the ECB. All of the benefits outlined in response to question 1 would be lost to a greater or lesser extent.

Even if funding was available from the ICC (instead of the ECB), that funding would not go very far as most age-group and senior fixtures would involve international travel.

A Welsh international cricket team would lead to the demise of Glamorgan County Cricket Club since over time they would almost certainly lose funding from the ECB, not be allowed to enter ECB County events and not be given the opportunity to host England international matches at the SWALEC Stadium. All young Welsh cricketers represent Wales at age-group level with the goal of one day playing for Glamorgan and England. The loss of Wales' professional cricket team (Glamorgan) would have a devastating effect on the health of the game in Wales.

- 4 Should the ECB team play home games in Wales? What are the arguments for and against this?

Yes, the ECB should play home games in the new SWALEC Stadium since it provides great profile for cricket in Wales and also vital income to Glamorgan County Cricket Club and the local economy. Everyone involved in cricket in Wales has the opportunity to be inspired by live cricket of the highest possible standard.

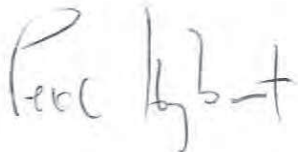
Cricket Wales played an important role in helping Glamorgan Cricket secure a 2015 England Ashes test match at the SWALEC Stadium, through the joint development of an ambitious plan for the future of the game in Wales.

England should play home games in Cardiff because it is an 'England and Wales' team. The Welsh flag was flown at the last Ashes Test Match in Cardiff. It is perhaps a case for the England and Wales Cricket Board to be renamed 'Cricket England and Wales' with the acronym changing from the ECB to CEW.

It is understandable that there will be calls for a Welsh international cricket team but the creation of such a team would have an enormously detrimental impact on the sport in Wales.

Should representation from Cricket Wales be required to further explain the above points, then I will gladly make myself available.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Hybart". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Peter Hybart  
Director of Cricket



PET(4)-05-12 p19a

## **P-04-358 Re-instate Home Support for children with ASD and their families in the Caerphilly County Borough**

### **Petition wording:**

We call upon the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to reinstate funding to enable the continuation of Caerphilly Autistic Spectrum Service Home support, accessible by parents for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders. If this service is not reinstated it will have a fundamental effect on vulnerable children with Autism throughout their formative and teenage years. Please prevent ASD families facing crisis.

**Petition raised by:** Parents Campaign for CASS

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 10 January 2012

**Number of signatures:** approximately 375 on-line and paper signatures

### **Supporting Information:**

CASS was a pilot, funded by the WAG to combine outreach teacher/teaching assistant support services with home and communication support for children, young people and their families. Since its start in 2008 the CASS service has provided, with great success, support for children with ASD and their families not only in school environments but also in the home.

Following the end of the WAG grant, a decision was taken earlier this year to continue to fund the CASS service from Education. This resulted in the reduction of the CASS budget, a depletion of staff in the CASS team and therefore a restructuring of the service provided. Much to the disappointment of ASD families in the Caerphilly Borough, home support is now only provided if there is a significant impact on the education of the individual with ASD. Whilst we understand that education is now the priority as this is where the funding for CASS comes from, the withdrawal of home support has left ASD children and their families without valuable support at home for their children.

The home support provided by CASS has helped children with ASD and their families (who often feel alienated and confused) with short and long term strategies to develop and support their children with life's basic skills, such as eating, sleeping and dressing to much more complex behavioural issues, disciplining, helping with stressful situations, aggression and the many anxieties that both families and children with ASD face in their everyday life. The withdrawal of this service has left ASD children and their families

without support at home for their children and no alternative service provision. There is a risk that many of the families will be facing crisis without this valuable support. The CASS team are experts and their experience of working with ASD children has been noted as a best practice example in Wales. Due to parental concerns in the Caerphilly Borough a campaign entitled 'Parents Campaign for CASS' has been set up to highlight the reasons why this funding must be re-considered. The campaign now requests that the Welsh Assembly Government Health and Social Services budget be considered to re-instate this much needed 'Home Support ' as well as consider the longer term financial support for the service.

We believe that the WAG has supported the ASD agenda through its world first ASD Strategy for Wales along with the additional funding to support ASD services that was announced in February this year. Despite this, the very frontline services that families with ASD children are so dependent upon are being withdrawn in Caerphilly and best practice examples that have developed through the strategy such as CASS are being abandoned.

As desperate parents we are appealing to the Welsh Assembly Government to consider our request to secure a future for CASS and our home support service and we look forward to your response.

Gwenda Thomas AC / AM  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Plant a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref :P04-358  
Ein cyf/Our ref: GT/05071/12

William Powell AM  
Chair  
Petitions Committee  
National Assembly Of Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
CF99 1NA

*HW* February 2012

*Dear William,*

Thank you for your letter of 23 January on behalf of the Petitions Committee about the Caerphilly Autistic Spectrum Service (CASS). I am aware that Jeff Cuthbert AM initially raised this matter on behalf of his constituents with the Minister for Education and Skills.

CASS was developed as part of the "Unlocking the Potential of Social Schools" initiative led by the Minister for Education and Skills. The terms of the funding included a requirement that recipient bodies have in place a sustainability strategy to ensure those services developed as a result of the funding, would continue following the end of the initiative. Caerphilly's sustainability strategy included a specific commitment to sustain the CASS model of support for children and young people with ASD.

I understand that as part of the overall package of support available to children with ASD and their families in Caerphilly, CASS aims to help families overcome a particular problem. Once that need has been met, the family is discharged from the service but is able to be referred back should that problem recur or another problem arise. As part of the Authority's ongoing responsibilities to build the skills of parents of children in need including those with ASD and provide a support mechanism for them, Caerphilly is also helping to develop support groups for parents through specialist support organisations such as the National Autistic Society.

Since the launch of our Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Strategic Action Plan for Wales in 2008-09, £6.8 million has been made available to local authorities through the Revenue Support Grant to support the delivery of services to children with ASD. In addition, since the launch of the Strategy nearly £4 million has been distributed via specific grant to local authorities to enable the further development of the key actions outlined in local ASD Strategic Action Plans.

Final budget decisions for 2012-13 have not yet been made, however, the Committee will be aware of my continuing commitment to improve the lives of people with ASD and their families.

Officials from my Department have spoken with Caerphilly Borough Council who confirmed that these are the resources through which the CASS is supported and that CASS has not been withdrawn and that there are no plans to do so. The CASS service is run by Jacquelyn Elias who has confirmed that she would be happy to speak to parents about CASS to allay their concerns. She can be contacted on 01443 866646 or via e.mail: [eliasj@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:eliasj@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Whilst the delivery of services and the distribution of resources are matters for local determination, individuals, particularly those with distinct needs such as autism as well as those who care for them, have rights and entitlements to an assessment of those needs carried out by their local social services department. As a result of that assessment they may be entitled to a range of services including day services, respite care, residential services, aids and equipment. In addition following a referral from a doctor, social worker or school, people with autism may be entitled to help from their local health service such as speech and language therapy, behaviour management and help with diet and sleeping difficulties.

I have agreed that a consultation on the future direction of the ASD Strategic Action Plan should be opened in the summer which will draw on the findings of the Evaluation Report together with other relevant reports and research such as the Report of the Adult Task and Finish Group and the Wales Autism Research Centre's study of children's diagnostic services. It is imperative that the consultation engages with people with ASD and their families and carers about what is important to them and what can make a real difference to their lives.

I hope that this information is helpful to the Committee.

*Yours sincerely,  
Gwenda.*

**Gwenda Thomas AC / AM**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Plant a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services