



SWIM WALES  
NOFIO CYMRU  
125 YEARS

SWIM WALES  
Wales National Pool  
International Sports Village  
Swansea  
SA2 8QG

T 01782 513 636

17/02/2023

Dear Petitions Committee Members,

I am writing in response to the correspondence you shared from the Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, and Chief Whip Dawn Bowden MS, referencing Petition P-06-1321, which I, on behalf of Swim Wales, launched to call upon the Senedd and Welsh Government to protect leisure centres and swimming pools from closure during the current energy crisis.

I would like to begin by thanking the Minister and her team for taking such a proactive approach to the issue at hand, which has clearly demonstrated the Welsh Government's steadfast commitment to protect the health and wellbeing of the nation by keeping the pools and leisure centres at the heart of our communities open.

As outlined by the Minister in her correspondence to the Chair of the Petitions Committee, we met last month to discuss these issues. As a result of this meeting, both Swim Wales and the Welsh Sports Association gained insight and understanding of the financial constraints currently affecting the Welsh Government as they draft their Budget for 2023-24, titled 'A Budget in Hard Times'.

Whilst we were disappointed that the Welsh Government has no plans to provide ring-fenced funding to save facilities under threat during the current energy crisis, we recognise that it is the UK Government who operate the main policy levers to support the sector. We appreciate the Welsh Government's support in calling on the key decision makers in Westminster to include swimming pools and leisure centres as 'intensive' energy users in the Energy Bill Discount scheme.

The attached document, along with the time taken by the Minister, more than adequately addressed the issues raised in the petition text. Since receiving the information from Dawn Bowden MS, we have pivoted our campaign message to implore the UK Government to recognise leisure centres as vulnerable, and to include them in the Energy Bill Discount scheme alongside facilities such as libraries and pubs.

To conclude, we are grateful for the Welsh Government's support in lobbying the UK Government on the issue. Alongside our partners, we will continue to gather insight and data that will showcase the stark situation facing pools in Wales, and the huge impact it will have on the health and safety of the nation.

Yours sincerely,

James Candy



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Communications Manager, Swim Wales

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