

P-06-1468 Set stricter rules to limit gifts, donations and payments received by Members of Senedd - Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 13 January 2025

Thank you for this reminder. As stated in my immediate response, I had missed your email of 6 January, and I am grateful for the extension until tomorrow.

That earlier email invited me to comment on an attached document to be considered along with my petition by the Petitions Committee at its meeting on 20 January. That attached letter of 19 December from Hannah Blythyn MS states that the Standards of Conduct Committee will consider the issues raised by my petition.

As the Standards of Conduct Committee is responsible for reviewing the code of conduct for Members of the Senedd, guidance on the code and complaints procedures, and rules for lobbying, then it would be appropriate for that Committee to consider the issues raised by my petition, and I welcome its intention to do so. Refining the rules for conduct and lobbying is not straightforward, and the details require careful attention.

Stricter rules to limit gifts, donations and payments are required not only to protect the integrity and reputation of the Senedd and its Members. They are also needed to curtail undue influence by those whose wealth can subvert democratic processes. The malign interference of the world's richest man in the political life of the UK and other European countries illustrates the dangers.

I trust both the Petitions Committee and the Standards of Conduct Committee will take account of this wider threat that my petition only partially addresses. Once political debate is determined by the power of money, then democracy will die.

When an election is perceived to have been decided not by the quality of the candidates but by campaign expenditure, its outcome lacks legitimacy, as we have seen. Senedd must tighten its rules in advance of its 2026 election.

Thank you.

Lyn Eynon