

Agenda – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: 1 November 2016

Meeting time: 09.00

For further information contact:

Graeme Francis – Committee Clerk

Kath Thomas – Deputy Clerk

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1 Introduction, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(Pages 1 – 18)

2 New petitions

2.1 P-05-714 Include a Mynachdy and Talybont Station as Part of the Cardiff Metro Proposal

(Pages 19 – 23)

2.2 P-05-716 Free Train Transport for school pupils with Arriva Trains Wales

(Pages 24 – 30)

3 Updates to previous petitions

Environment and Rural Affairs

3.1 P-05-691 A Fair Deal for Forest Rallying in Wales

(Pages 31 – 36)

3.2 P-04-687 Review of Scalloping in Cardigan Bay

(Pages 37 – 39)

Education

3.3 P-04-485 Abuse of casual contracts in Further Education

(Pages 40 – 42)

3.4 P-04-676 Establish a Welsh Language Champion in our Communities in Wales

(Pages 43 – 45)

3.5 P-05-694 School Times an Hour Later

(Pages 46 – 48)



Local Government

3.6 P-04-674 Say NO to Dyfed

(Pages 49 – 50)

3.7 P-04-681 Allow Public Recording of Local Government Meetings

(Pages 51 – 53)

Economy and Infrastructure

3.8 P-04-539 Save Cardiff Coal Exchange

(Pages 54 – 79)

3.9 P-04-664 Develop Tynnton Farm as a Visitor and Information Centre

(Pages 80 – 82)

3.10 P-05-698 Rename Cardiff Int. Airport to Princess Diana International
Airport

(Pages 83 – 84)

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

Item 5.

5 Review of the National Assembly for Wales Petitions System

(Pages 85 – 90)

Document is Restricted

Agenda Item 2.1

P-05-714 Include a Mynachdy and Talybont Station as Part of the Cardiff Metro Proposal

This petition was submitted by Dr Ashley Wood, having collected 137 signatures.

Text of the Petition

We, the undersigned, call on Cardiff Council and the Welsh Government to bring forward plans to include a Mynachdy and Talybont station as part of any Cardiff Metro proposal.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Cardiff North
- South Wales Central

Petition: Include a Mynachdy and Talybont station as part of the Cardiff Metro proposal

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 1 Tachwedd 2016

Petitions Committee | 1 November 2016

Research Briefing:

Petition number: P-5-714

Petition title: Include a Mynachdy and Talybont station as part of the Cardiff Metro proposal

Text of petition: We, the undersigned, call on Cardiff Council and the Welsh Government to bring forward plans to include a Mynachdy and Talybont station as part of any Cardiff Metro proposal.

Background

The Metro is the Welsh Government's planned integrated public transport network for the South Wales Valleys and Cardiff. The Welsh Government says it is a "long term programme" which "is being developed so that it can be incrementally extended". Mynachdy and Talybont are in north Cardiff. Any rail stations constructed would be on the Merthyr Line connecting Cardiff Central with Merthyr Tydfil via Queen St and Cathays stations.

The Welsh Government's most recent [Metro brochure](#) describes the project:

Metro is likely to comprise some, or all, of these elements:

- An electrified rail system;
- Integrated transport hubs;
- Park-and-ride facilities;
- New (including some on-street) light rail and/or bus rapid transit routes;
- Better integration of services across modes and operators;
- Active travel interventions.

The brochure describes Metro Phase 1, where projects are complete or nearing completion, as including "extension [of the rail network] to Ebbw Vale town and further capacity enhancement on that line, as well as other station enhancements across the network".

Metro Phase 2 (2017–23) “will focus on modernising the core Valley Lines and the wider South Wales rail network. This infrastructure work will be integrated with the programme to procure the next Wales and Borders franchise”.

Beyond Phase 2, the brochure says “if Phase 2 contains some form of light rail, then a range of rail based extensions will be easier to accommodate. This could form the basis of a long term incremental programme of expansion”.

Welsh Government action

Rail franchise / Metro development

The Welsh Government is currently working with the rail industry to develop plans for the modernisation / electrification of the South Wales Valleys network to deliver Metro Phase 2. The [Welsh Government has said](#) it “will undertake a procurement process to deliver the [Valleys Lines modernisation / electrification] project as part of the re-letting of the Wales and Borders franchise”. The current franchise expires in October 2018. This process is being led by Transport for Wales (TfW), the Welsh Government owned transport company.

Potential franchise operators have been asked to team up with “development partners” to develop infrastructure proposals for Valleys Lines electrification. The precise scope of Valleys electrification, including the question of whether it will comprise heavy rail or light rail/tram, is therefore unclear at the moment.

The Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure set out the timetable for franchise / metro procurement in a [Plenary statement on 12 July 2016](#). He said:

We’re going to award the operator and development partner for the franchise and Metro by the end of this year; we’ll award the infrastructure contracts in spring 2018; the new franchise starts in October 2018 with the metro designed during 2018–19; infrastructure delivery on site from 2019; and, services operational from 2023.

New Stations

The Welsh Government’s [National Transport Finance Plan](#) commits to “develop assessment criteria and, using those criteria, a prioritised list of new station proposals for further consideration (in relation to securing funding from the rail industry)”.

As the letter from the Cabinet Secretary to the Chair of the Petitions Committee responding to this petition indicates, 26 potential new station sites are identified. In south-east Wales “Roath Park/ Wedal Road, Crwys Road, Gabalfa, Ely Mill/ Victoria Park, Caerleon, Llanwern, Newport West (on Ebbw Line), Crumlin, St Mellons, Newport Road/ Rover Way, Brackla, St Fagans [and] Magor” are listed for assessment.

National Assembly for Wales action

While the Fourth Assembly's Enterprise and Business Committee took evidence on City Regions policy and the Metro, this focused primarily on high level issues such as progress made, governance and strategy. Issues around individual stations were not discussed. There does not appear to have been any discussion of a proposal for stations at Mynachdy and Talybont as part of the Metro in the Assembly more generally.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

Ken Skates AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Seilwaith
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-715
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/06331/16

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee

government.committee.business@wales.gsi.gov.uk

29 September 2016

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your letter of 30 August regarding the petition you have received from Dr Ashley Wood about plans to include a Mynachdy and Talybont station as part of the South Wales Metro proposals.

The National Transport Finance plan lists 26 possible new station sites and includes a potential new station at Gabalfa, which would serve a similar area to the station proposed in the petition. This work is ongoing.

The South Wales Metro is designed so it can grow to make it even more accessible. At its core, the Metro is about faster and more frequent services on an extendable network to link communities that are currently poorly served by regional public transport. As Metro grows areas that are not currently served will be able to access the system.

We have outlined some of the programmes we think will deliver this vision, and these are illustrated on the Welsh Government website at:

<http://gov.wales/topics/transport/public/metro/?lang=en>

Yours Ever,

Ken Skates AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Seilwaith
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Agenda Item 2.2

P-05-716 Free Train Transport for school pupils with Arriva Trains Wales

This petition was submitted by Elin Tuckwood, having collected 937 signatures on an alternative e-petition website

Text of the Petition

Here in the UK we are entitled to free education so surely we should be allowed free, safe transport to and from school? the answer to this is yes for many years Arriva trains Wales have been providing Treorchy Comprehensive pupils with Free train transport which is a huge benefit to those who live outside the catchment areas, however recently this has changed they have now called for all pupils to buy a train pass to get to and from school and these prices range from £19.95 to £32.90 per school term. For some parents with more than 1 child this can work out to be very costly and because these passes are provided through Arriva Trains Wales the school is unable to help parents with this funding. Arriva trains have stated that this is for safety precautions however children who have these designated train passes are in front of a "protective" metal barrier closer to the platform edge and the children that do not have these passes are in this small enclosed barrier space which actually causes more of a safety hazard due to overcrowding in such a small space. By being allowed free train transport once again every pupil will be able to have a fair chance to gain an education and will be able to go on to what they want to do in life we will all be treated as equal and money will not be a major concern for anyone.

Assembly Constituency and Region:

Rhondda
South Wales Central

Petition: Free Train Transport for school pupils with Arriva Trains Wales

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 1 November 2016

Petitions Committee | 1 Tachwedd 2016

Research Briefing:

Petition number: P-5-716

Petition title: Free Train Transport for school pupils with Arriva Trains Wales

Text of petition: Here in the UK we are entitled to free education so surely we should be allowed free, safe transport to and from school? The answer to this is yes for many years Arriva trains Wales have been providing Treorchy Comprehensive pupils with Free train transport which is a huge benefit to those who live outside the catchment areas, however recently this has changed they have now called for all pupils to buy a train pass to get to and from school and these prices range from £19.95 to £32.90 per school term. For some parents with more than 1 child this can work out to be very costly and because these passes are provided through Arriva Trains Wales the school is unable to help parents with this funding. Arriva trains have stated that this is for safety precautions however children who have these designated train passes are in front of a "protective" metal barrier closer to the platform edge and the children that do not have these passes are in this small enclosed barrier space which actually causes more of a safety hazard due to overcrowding in such a small space. By being allowed free train transport once again every pupil will be able to have a fair chance to gain an education and will be able to go on to what they want to do in life we will all be treated as equal and money will not be a major concern for anyone.

Background

Arriva Trains Wales (ATW) introduced free travel for students from Treorchy Comprehensive approximately ten years ago to encourage good behaviour from students travelling to school on the Treherbert line on the Valleys rail network.

ATW withdrew this arrangement from June 2016 following safety concerns caused by the level of demand leading to crowding at stations. This followed a risk assessment undertaken by ATW following concerns raised by train crew and British Transport Police.

In the morning pupils normally travel on two trains, arriving at Treorchy at 08:04 and 08:34. However, the afternoon school train normally carries approximately 300 pupils. Removal of free travel has not reduced the volume of pupils travelling. ATW has introduced a crowd management plan, and now employs four security staff at Treorchy station in the afternoon.

Following withdrawal of free travel, students are able to apply for an ATW education season ticket. ATW issues approximately 300 of these season tickets annually to students travelling by rail to a number of schools across the Wales and Borders Franchise area. These offer a 55 per cent discount on the fare, with pupils in receipt of free school meals travelling free. A valid pass can be used at any time between the stations shown on the pass.

Welsh Government action

Franchise management and procurement

Rail franchising is not currently devolved. However, the Welsh Government is responsible for the day to day management of the Wales and Borders Franchise.

The current ATW franchise expires in October 2018. The Welsh and UK Governments are currently negotiating devolution of executive powers to the Welsh Government to procure the next Welsh rail franchise from 2018. Powers are expected to be devolved from 2017.

The Welsh Government launched a public consultation, [Setting the Direction for Wales and Borders Rail](#), in January 2016. A [summary of consultation responses](#) has been published. The summary says that respondents support the current rail concessionary fares arrangements, although a number of suggestions were made including “considering concessionary offers for Welsh university students/young people”.

Welsh Government concessionary travel policy

The Welsh Government’s [All Wales Concessionary Fares Scheme](#) primarily provides free bus travel for the over 60s, people with certain disabilities and some injured service personnel / war veterans. However, the scheme also extends to rail travel in areas where bus services are limited, primarily in north and mid-Wales. Currently this scheme is funded until March 2017.

In 2015 the Welsh Government introduced the [My Travel Pass scheme](#) in partnership with the bus industry to provide a one third discount on bus travel for 16 to 18 year olds across Wales.

Learner Travel

Local authorities' duties with regard to home to school transport are set out in the [Learner Travel \(Wales\) Measure 2008](#). Under the provisions of the Measure, local authorities are required to assess the travel needs of learners who are aged under 19 in their area. They must provide free home to school transport for learners of compulsory school age who live further than certain distances from their nearest suitable school. For secondary pupils this is three miles. However, Rhondda Cynon Taf has used its discretionary powers to set this distance at two miles. If the local authority determines that the school is not the nearest suitable school, the pupil generally does not have a right to free school transport even if they live beyond walking distance.

[Rhondda Cynon Taf's school transport policy](#) states that the efficient use of resources will dictate the mode of transport provided. Transport may be provided by means of contracted school transport services or existing public transport services which, together with the size and type of transport (bus, minibus, train, taxi, etc.), will be dictated by cost effectiveness.

The [local authority has said](#) that ATW's arrangements are independent of the local authority and pupils who meet the criteria would be eligible for free transport under the Rhondda Cynon Taf's scheme.

National Assembly for Wales action

The issue free travel for Treorchy Comprehensive pupils does not appear to have been discussed in the Assembly to date.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-716
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/06439/16

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee

government.committee.business@wales.gsi.gov.uk

20 September 2016

Dear Mike

The Franchise was let in 2003 by the strategic rail authority to Arriva Trains Wales (ATW). There was no requirement to provide free rail travel to school pupils, but ATW took the commercial decision to make this available. The decision to remove this offering is a commercial matter for the company.

However, the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 places a requirement on local authorities to provide free transport to learners of compulsory school age (5-16) who live more than two miles from their nearest suitable primary school or more than three miles from their nearest suitable secondary school.

I appreciate the concerns expressed by the petition organiser concerning safety on the station platform and will pass these on to the train operator.

If the Committee's decision is to consider this petition, I would look forward to providing evidence to the committee.

Yours ever,

Ken Skates AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Seilwaith
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

P-05-716 Free School Transport for all Children in Wales – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 20.10.16

Free Train Transport for School pupils

Although it was Arriva Trains Wales' choice to start the free transport so they can end it on their own terms they haven't really looked at the problems this causes for pupils especially of Treorchy Comprehensive school, due to the buses being limited to the catchment area the train is the only option for pupils and as stated within the learner travel wales measure of 2008 free transport should be provided for pupils 3 miles away from their school. The pupils that catch these trains are usually within this 3 mile allowance therefore it is mandatory that their transport is made free. Alongside the travel cost there are many health and safety implications that this charging of trains has caused, as Arriva separate pupils that have pre paid passes and those who do not which causes overcrowding between these tight barriers and the pupils that have to buy tickets often end up missing the train due to the long queues at the ticket office. Treorchy Comprehensive School is one of the best secondary schools in Wales so many pupils join and attend the school each year and majority of them travel on the train services provided, however even though Arriva Trains Wales are aware of the large volumes of pupils that travel to school on the train they still provide two carriage trains on a weekly basis which adds even more of a health and safety risk, many pupils have to stand up and are crushed due to the limited carriages which seems rather absurd considering pupils are paying £60 or more per term for these passes. The other safety implications that these barriers cause is that the pupils that have paid for these passes are closer to the platform edge which contradicts Arriva's decision for the free transport to be reversed as they stated, "the volumes of school pupils near the very edge of the platform, potentially unaware of the risks to themselves by approaching trains, had to be addressed." Even though Arriva has made this statement the safety on the trains has not improved since the train passes have been enforced, If anything the safety on the train and platform has gotten worse more pupils are having to stand up on the train journey which causes the train to become very warm and claustrophobic as stated above mainly due to the two carriages provided, even though Arriva are provided with more money due to the price of the passes and the amount of pupils that travel to school it would seem logical that, that money would have been spent

on improving safety which the company has repeatedly stated was going to happen which it evidently has not been the case.

In relation to the prices for these passes provided by Arriva they work out to be very costly especially for parents with more than one child these costs could see parents spending £120 per term for two children to travel to school to get their education, which is impossible for some families such as a single income family as even though Arriva are giving a 55% discount it is still very costly. As stated in my petition "For some parents with more than one child this can work out to be very costly and, because these passes are provided through Arriva Trains Wales, the school is unable to help parents with this funding." Many families rely on the Train transport in order for their children to travel to school and back to school safely and stress free.

Agenda Item 3.1

P-05-691 A fair deal for Forest Rallying in Wales

This petition was submitted by Rally4Wales, having collected 5.246 signatures.

Text of the Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure that future cost increases for the use of forest roads for car rallying in Wales are fair and in line with costs in England and Scotland.

Natural Resources Wales' proposed pricing structure from June 2016 onwards would double the current cost, and is completely at odds with new contracts in place for the same purposes with Forestry Commission's in England and Scotland.

Whilst NRW are seeking to double the current cost – England and Scotland are raising the cost (from the previous contract) by just 0.7%.

Rallying in Wales is a £15 million pound industry with huge tourism benefits to rural Wales. NRW's proposed costs would make future events unsustainable in Wales due to high costs. We request that this is investigated fully to find out why the proposed costs are so hugely inflated by comparison to other regions.

Additional information

#Rally4Wales is a campaign group set up by rally competitors, rally organisers and supporters to lobby the Assembly Government over these proposed cost increases from NRW which are completely at odds with counterparts in England and Scotland.

We have contacted a range of AM's with our concerns, including Ken Skates, Carl Sargeant, Leanne Wood, Llyr Gruffudd and we are aware that supporters of our group have lobbied other AM's in recent days. We also have support from Members of Parliament in Mid Wales.

We have also raised the issue with the Welsh Automotive Forum who support our stance fully.

NRW claim that they have been undercharging for road repairs caused by rallying for many years. However, this argument as a justification for a 100% price increase is impossible to understand due to the complete opposite price hike in England and Scotland. There is no technical difference in road preparation and repair in England, Wales or Scotland.

We cannot believe that these costs are a true reflection of the situation and we call upon the National Assembly to investigate why NRW is taking action that will ultimately close down a vital cog in the rural economy of Wales.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Wrexham
- North Wales

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-691
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/05763/16

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
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government.committee.business@wales.gsi.gov.uk

3 August 2016

Dear Mike

Your letter of 27 July, addressed to Ken Skates AM, Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure, regarding Petition P-05-691 A Fair Deal for Forest Rallying in Wales, has been passed to me to reply as this issue falls within my Ministerial portfolio.

This is primarily an issue for Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and Motor Sports Association (MSA). I am aware the two bodies met recently and NRW made a proposal to the MSA who are still considering the offer. Discussions are ongoing and I am hopeful an agreement will be reached shortly.

Regards
Lesley

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs

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Pack Page 34

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

P-05-691 A Fair Deal for Forest Rallying in Wales – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 10.10.16

Hello,

Further to my last email, I can confirm that a meeting was held today with Rally4Wales, Natural Resources Wales and MSA.

An outline agreement has been reached for a self repair proposal to come into effect for the 2017 rally season following that meeting and a press statement will follow in due course.

Can I therefore request that the petition now formally be closed and updated?

I'd like to thank you for your support and guidance through this process. We have achieved what we wanted and created a new concept to safeguard the sport of rallying in Wales.

Thanks,

Jamie



**Cyfoeth
Naturiol
Cymru
Natural
Resources
Wales**

Our ref: TJ/SP/ONM16-392

Your ref:

Llwyn Brain

Ffordd Penlan

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Mike Hedges AM
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

20 October 2016

Dear Mr Hedges AM

RE: Petition P-04-691 – A Fair Deal for Forest rallying in Wales

Many thanks for your letter dated the 4th October.

Since the date you received this petition, Natural Resources Wales has worked closely with Rally4Wales to come up with an affordable and sustainable way for rallying to continue on the Welsh Government Woodland Estate.

Throughout those discussions Rally4Wales accepted that Natural Resources Wales is not seeking to profit from repairing roads following rally events, and that the proposed charges are in line with the costs incurred by NRW. We have worked constructively on an affordable proposal from Rally4Wales to carry out road repairs following rallies on behalf of the Motor Sports Association (MSA) and its member clubs.

NRW, the MSA & Rally4Wales have reached agreement in principle on a way forward, and we are now working together through the finer contractual points that would enable the proposal to proceed in a safe, sustainable and legally compliant manner.

Yours sincerely

Tim Jones
Executive Director Operations - North & Mid Wales

cc Diane McCrea – Chair, Natural Resources Wales
Dr Emyr Roberts – Chief Executive, Natural Resources Wales

Agenda Item 3.2

P-04-687 Review of Scalping in Cardigan Bay

This petition was submitted by Harry Hayfield, having collected 33 online signatures.

Text of the Petition

We, the undersigned, call upon the Welsh Government to prevent scallop dredging in Cardigan Bay and to ensure that the resident populations of dolphins and porpoises are protected both now and in the future.

Assembly Constituency and Region

Ceredigion

Mid and West Wales

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol
Minister for Natural Resources




Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-687
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/00460/16

William Powell AM
Assembly Member for Mid & West Wales
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Petition@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

 March 2016

Dear William,

Thank you for your e-mail of 15 February including details about a petition against scallop dredging proposals in Cardigan Bay from Harry Hayfield.

The proposals on which we consulted last year were about seeing whether it was possible to establish a viable and sustainable scallop fishery and the introduction of a flexible management plan which could allow scallop fishing whilst safeguarding the important marine species and habitats in the location of Cardigan Bay. The Welsh Government has to maintain its statutory obligations under the Habitat Directive to safeguard the important species and habitats in the Special Area of Conservation.

I consider that the negative media representations published have misrepresented our proposals for scallop fishing. This did not properly reflect the true nature of the proposals to consider the flexible management of this fishery for future generations.

I hope this helps to explain the situation which Mr Hayfield is concerned about.

Yours sincerely,



Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol
Minister for Natural Resources

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

**P-04-687 Review of Scalping in Cardigan Bay - Correspondence from the
Petitioner to the Clerking team, 13.10.16**

I am pleased that the then Minister was aware that it was a concern, however I would like to know if the current Minister is aware and shares my concerns that local communities should be consulted on this plan of action before any dredging takes place.

Harry Hayfield

Agenda Item 3.3

P-04-485 Abuse of casual contracts in Further Education

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to use its influence to ensure that the use of hourly paid (zero hour) and fixed term contracts are not abused in the Further Education sector and only used when there is a genuine objective justification for a short term contract with flexibility.

Petition raised by: Briony Knibbs

Date petition first considered by Committee: 4 June 2013

Number of signatures: 674



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE **Publication of Research on the Use of Zero Hours Contracts in Devolved Public Services**

DATE **7 July 2015**

BY **Leighton Andrews AM, Minister for Public Services**

On 10 December I issued a Written Statement announcing research into the use of zero hours contracts in public services in light of concerns around their use and the impact on workers.

The completed research has been published today and is available on the Welsh Government website at: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/research-use-zero-hours-contracts-devolved-welsh-public-services/?lang=en>

The research shows the varied circumstances in which zero hours contracts are used across public services and highlights issues associated with their use which warrant further consideration and action.

Issues include the impact of uncertain earnings on workers, suitable advance notice of work, sufficient notice and compensation for cancelling work, fair distribution of work, and access to employment rights such as annual leave, sick pay and redundancy pay.

The research also highlights specific concerns around the use of zero hours contracts in contracted out public services, in particular in relation to domiciliary care services which are already being considered by the Minister for Health and Social Services.

I therefore intend to ask the Public Services Staff Commission, when established this autumn, to develop guidance to address concerns identified on zero hours contracts. This will set clear expectations on practices we should expect of all public sector employers to ensure that zero hours contracts are not used inappropriately. Alongside this, it is also intended to issue a Procurement Advice Notice to set similar expectations for public service contractors. This action reflects our commitment to the public service workforce and will support the delivery of public services to people across Wales.

P-04-485 Abuse of casual contracts in Further Education - Correspondence from the Petitioner to the clerking team, 13.10.16

Dear Kayleigh

This response is positive. I would only suggest that the Committee check that the guidelines referred to at the end of the statement have been drawn up, given that it is dated July 2015.

Many thanks

Briony Knibbs.

Agenda Item 3.4

P-04-676 Establish a Welsh Language Champion in our Communities in Wales

This petition was submitted by Councillor Sion Jones, having collected 10 signatures.

Text of the Petition

I present this petition to you as a starting point in the campaign to establish a Welsh language champion in our communities in Wales. The role would be a voluntary one, based in the community, and the champion would be appointed to promote the use of the Welsh language in Wales and to support developments in our communities.

The language champion would lead on issues with regard to the language, which would include having a role within primary and secondary schools and within parish and town councils, as well as close engagement with county councils and county councillors.

The champion would be supported by the Welsh Language Commissioner to carry out the role's functions and to ensure that communities in Wales are aligned with local and national policies in Wales.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Arfon
- North Wales



Eich cyf/Your ref: P-676
Ein cyf/Our ref:FM -/00024/16

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

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

27 January 2016

Dear William Powell,

Establish a Welsh Language Champion in our Communities in Wales

I am writing in response to your letter dated 12 January with regards to petition P-04-676 Establish a Welsh Language Champion in our Communities in Wales.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my views on the issues raised in advance of your first consideration of the petition.

The Welsh Government currently funds numerous organisations to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language across the communities of Wales. These organisations include the Mentrau Iaith, Merched y Wawr, the Young Farmers Clubs, Urdd Gobaith Cymru and the network of Papurau Bro. In total it is estimated that over 3,000 individuals volunteer on a regular basis within our grant funded organisations to support and strengthen the use of the Welsh language on a community level.

The Mentrau Iaith and Urdd Gobaith Cymru are examples of our grant funded organisation that currently undertake the duties noted in the petition with regards to working with local primary and secondary schools. They also work strategically with Local Authorities with the aim of ensuring a prosperous future for the Welsh language.

I do, however, believe that there is a scope for community and town councils to consider appointing a Welsh language champion within their structures. The voluntary duties could include responsibility for ensuring that the vitality of the Welsh language is mainstreamed throughout their area of work.

Yours sincerely

CARWYN JONES

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
YP.PrifWeinidog@cymru.gsi.gov.uk • ps.firstminister@wales.gsi.gov.uk

**P-04-676 Establish a welsh language champion in our communities in
Wales- Correspondence from the Petitioner to the clerking team, 14.10.16**

Thanks for the email.

I very much appreciate the correspondence by the First Minister, but would like to see further progress on the matter. The FM outlined that there is a potential here to put this matter in the hands of local and town community Councils, perhaps this could be discussed in the Welsh language committee?

Regards

Sion Jones

Cynghorydd Bethel

Bethel Councillor

Agenda Item 3.5

P-05-694 School Hours an Hour Later

This petition was submitted by Cai Ellerton, having collected 16 signatures.

Text of the Petition

I am writing to ask you to consider my petition. As parents, teachers and students/pupils know, primary schools start at 08:45 and secondary schools start at 08:30. I would like schools to start an hour later in the mornings meaning primary schools would start at 09:45 and secondary schools at 09:30.

A test in England has shown that students get better exam results if school starts an hour later.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cai Ellerton, 13.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Vale of Glamorgan
- South Wales Central

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-694
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/05873/16

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

government.committee.business@wales.gsi.gov.uk

11 October 2016

Dear Mike

Thank you for your letter dated 4 October asking if I would consider issuing guidance to local authorities and whether further research is needed and if Welsh Government would support such research.

As I advised in my response of 15 August, the responsibility for determining school session times lies with the school governing body. Decisions to change school session times can be made by the governing body or the local authority following consultation with key stakeholders and taking into account a range of issues including transport arrangements. Consequently this is not something for the Welsh Government or Welsh Minister to decide or to provide guidance.

It would appear from the link that the Petitioner provided that the project referred to has not yet concluded and is much broader than just session times in schools. I think it would be sensible to await the conclusions of this project.

You may wish to advise the Petitioner that within the context of wider Education areas, the current school curriculum provides opportunities for schools to address matters such as wellbeing through personal and social education (PSE). PSE forms part of the basic curriculum for all registered pupils in maintained schools and the non-statutory PSE framework for 7 to 19-year-old is the key document that schools should use in planning their PSE programme.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Gohebiaeth.Kirsty.Williams@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

There are five key themes within the PSE framework, these are: Active Citizenship; Health and Emotional Well-being; Moral and Spiritual Development; Preparing for Lifelong Learning; and, Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship.

Through the Health and Emotional Well-being theme, schools are encouraged to include teaching and learning strategies which use interactive and experimental approaches. Learners are helped to maintain their physical health and wellbeing, sustain their growth and development. Learners are given opportunities understand the factors that affect physical development, such as proper nutrition, exercise, hygiene, safety and healthy choices. Central to the process is equipping them with the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions in these areas.

Essentially it is the responsibility of schools to plan and deliver a broad, balanced programme of PSE to meet the specific needs of learners and we encourage schools to work with organisations that could enhance the provision they already provide.

The PSE framework will be considered as part of the design and development of a new curriculum for Wales which is taking place following the publication of the 'Successful Futures' report written by Professor Graham Donaldson. In his report, Professor Donaldson identifies 4 key purposes of the education – one of which is that it should support all our children and young people to become healthy, confident individuals. In addition, his report sets out 6 Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLE) as central to the structure of the new curriculum, and one of these AoLEs is Health and Well-being. The design of the new curriculum is being taken forward by a network of Pioneer Schools working in an all-Wales partnership with Welsh Government, Estyn, Higher Education, business and other key partners.

During the development process there will be opportunities for the Pioneer Schools to consider the content and structure of the six AoLEs, including Health & Wellbeing, and there will be mechanisms for stakeholders to feed into this process over time. 'A curriculum for Wales - a curriculum for life' sets out the high level timeline for taking these recommendations forward, with a view to the new curriculum to being made available in 2018 and used to support learning and teaching in schools and settings by 2021.

Yours sincerely



Kirsty Williams AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education

Agenda Item 3.6

P-04-674 Say No to Dyfed

This petition was submitted by Bob Kilmister, having collected 877 signatures online and 1,200 paper signatures.

Text of the Petition

We the undersigned are fully prepared to see a reform of local government in Wales but reject the proposal to recreate the former hugely unpopular Dyfed authority which was abolished in 1996. Welsh Government should learn the lessons of history and not try to impose a solution that the three Counties involved all reject.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Preseli Pembrokeshire
- Mid and West Wales

P-04-674 Say NO to Dyfed - Correspondence from the Petitioner to the clerking team, 13.10.16

Thank you for your correspondence.

I am delighted by the Ministers statement and it is exactly what our petition sought to achieve.

I am quite happy in these circumstances for this petition to be closed as it has achieved it's aims.

Kind regards

Bob

Agenda Item 3.7

P-04-681 Allow Public Recording of Local Government Meetings

In Wales

This petition was submitted by Michael John Powell, having collected 186 signatures.

Text of the Petition

We the undersigned ask that the Welsh Government gives the people and electors of Wales the same ability to record their Local Government meetings as their English counterparts have.

Additional Information:

The detailed provisions are contained in the secondary legislation made under the 2000 Act, that is the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. The regulations were enacted in September 2012 and announced on the Department for Communities and Local Government website.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Pontypridd
- South Wales Central

Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
Minister for Public Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P—04-681
Ein cyf/Our ref LA -/00033/16

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

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk


26 January 2016

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 19 January regarding a petition from Councillor Mike John Powell calling for the public recording of Local Government meetings in Wales.

I encourage all Local Authorities to allow, when possible, access to their proceedings and I am pleased to see that broadcasting of council meetings is now a regular practice in many Local Authorities. I consider the public should also have a right to report live from these meetings through live blogging or using social media.

Our plans to reform broadcasting and engagement are set out in the Draft Local Government (Wales) Bill 2016, which was published for consultation in November. The Draft Bill contains proposals to make it compulsory for Local Authorities to make arrangements to broadcast their full council and executive meetings and giving the public a right to report live from council proceedings. These provisions are designed to promote democracy and transparency, and make council meetings more accessible to the public.

Yours sincerely,


Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
Minister for Public Services

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
Correspondence.Leighton.Andrews@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Pack Page 52

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

**P-04-681 Allow public recording of local government meetings in Wales -
Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Clerking team, 17.10.16**

Dear Kayleigh,

I write in response to your email of 13th October and the attached letter from Leighton Andrews from January this year. The letter refers to the draft Local Government Bill which was put out to consultation last November. That Bill has now been shelved and along with it, as far as I am aware, the intention to make it compulsory for Local Authorities to broadcast meetings. Several Council throughout Wales already do this and it makes proceedings more accessible for a larger number of residents. However, in other areas people are being denied this opportunity Rhondda Cynon Taff Council on which I serve is one such example. Even though the public can come along to Council meetings the headquarters which house the Council meetings is quite a difficult place for many to get to as there is no public transport to it, and the timing of meetings make it impossible for some to attend. The public have a right to see their elected representatives in action. Minutes are published but they are extremely bland and only record decisions they do not provide a verbatim record of what was said by any one person or what position was taken by individual councillors. The previous Minister for Local Government obviously thought that there needed to be compulsory measures in place, it is a shame for that element of the Bill to be lost because some more contentious elements made the overall plan unworkable.

Mike

Agenda Item 3.8

P-04-539 Save Cardiff Coal Exchange

Petition wording:

This petition seeks a commitment from the Welsh Government to set up a public enquiry into the events surrounding the Coal Exchange and to support public opinion which seeks to protect and conserve the building.

The Coal Exchange is one of Cardiff's most important buildings and one of the finest buildings in Wales. It's where the world's first million pound deal was struck during the city's industrial heyday (equivalent to over £100m today). Yet far from cherishing this building, Cardiff council proposes to demolish the main body of the building, keeping only the facades.

If this happens, then the magnificent interior with its immense historical significance will be lost forever. This grade 2* listed building deserves better, and the views of the public need to be heard.

The Council have been claiming for the past year that it is on the point of collapse. No works have been done, yet there is no apparent evidence that the building is about to collapse. It is questioned if Cardiff Council were able to use section 78 powers under the building act to progress their plans, and this needs to be investigated openly.

So much of Cardiff Bay's social and built heritage has already been destroyed; it seems inconceivable that more can be cast aside with cynical abandon.

It's unclear why the council refuses to see the value of restoring the Coal Exchange to protect this iconic building for the use and enjoyment of future generations.

The issues are of the highest level of public interest, and it is considered essential that an open public consultation occurs to review matters.

Petition raised by: Jon Avent

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 11 March 2014

Number of signatures: 389 signatures. An associated petition hosted on another website collected 2680 signatures.

**SWYDDFA'R ARWEINYDD
OFFICE OF THE LEADER**

Fy Nghyf / My Ref: CM35461

Eich Cyf / Your Ref:

Dyddiad / Date: 22nd September 2016

Mike Hedges AM
National Assembly Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Phil Bale
Arweinydd Cyngor Dinas Caerdydd
Leader of the City of Cardiff Council

Neuadd y Sir
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www.cardiff.gov.uk



Annwyl / Dear Mike

Petitions Committee - Save Cardiff Coal Exchange

Thank you for your letter requesting an update on progress to safeguard the future of the Coal Exchange.

I would be very pleased if you would advise the committee that in the relatively short time since they considered the matter in July, that there has been considerable and very tangible progress in respect of saving the building.

Cardiff's Planning Committee Granted Planning Permission for the Change of Use of the Building to a hotel and nominated ancillary uses on 15th July 2016. The planning application established the use of the building in land use terms and provided comfort to funders/investors.

Subsequent to this a number of Listed Building Consent Applications have been submitted to the Local Planning Authority to progress the works necessary to fully survey the building, and to gain a better understanding of its condition, and to progress a conservation plan to inform future repairs, refurbishment and alterations as detailed below:

- Application 16/01879/MJR discharged conditions 20 and 21 of Planning Permission 16/01024/MJR and initiated a room by room and elevation referencing of the building and provided a point in time photographic record.
- Listed Building Consent Application 16/01727/MJR proposes the demolition of the stairs and access ramp and the removal of the balustrade and surfacing material associated with the 1970s reinforced concrete car park to the south (front) elevation of Coal Exchange to allow for the building to sit in an enhanced landscape setting. This application is currently with Cadw.

- Listed Building Consent Application 16/1764/MJR seeks Listed Building Consent for the strip out of modern fabric from the building to allow access to the historic structure of the building to assess its condition. Soft stripping of the building has revealed significant wet rot and dry rot and fungal decay but there are still further affected areas which are currently masked by intervening fabric. This application is also currently with Welsh Government (Cadw).
- Listed Building Consent Application 16/01935/MJR seeks Listed Building Consent for the fit out of three rooms within the building as show pieces of future intentions for the building. The application will allow a better understanding of the practicalities of providing hotel guest rooms within the existing building and working with historic fabric. The application is currently with Welsh Government (Cadw).
- Listed Building Consent Application 16/02026/MJR is one of a number which will seek Listed Building Consent for topic based repair works and covers the management of stonework repairs to the building and currently with the local planning authority for consideration, and will be referred to Cadw upon expiry of the statutory consultation period.
- Listed Building Consent Application 16/02037/MJR seeks Listed Building Consent for the management of window repairs to the building and similarly is currently with the local planning authority for consideration, and will be referred to Cadw upon expiry of the statutory consultation period.

Details of all of the above applications are available on the Council's website, have been advertised on site and in the Local Press , and made available for public comment.

Outside of regulatory processes, the Council's Planning Conservation Officer has been in regular contact with Signature Living and their contractors to oversee soft stripping works and to advise on the removal of decayed fabric; repair works; and more generally to provide advice on conservation matters. Signature Living also advise that their conservation consultants are near completion of the conservation plan for the building which will hopefully be forthcoming in the next few weeks. Given the short space of time that Signature Living have had control of the building and their opportunity to investigate its condition, I find this quite remarkable and would applaud their commitment to realising such a plan. To date dialogue between Council officers and Signature Living suggests that the renovation/conversion of the building interior will likely be undertaken in 2 phases, with an application to undertake the first phase of works concentrating on the restoration of the main hall and ante rooms and the fire damaged SE wing to be submitted very shortly; the second phase, which will relate to the northern areas of the building will follow on from this, thereby prioritising the restoration of the best architectural and historic elements of the building in terms of protection and restoration and re-establishing the structural integrity of the building as first priorities. Moreover, Signature Living's plan is to make their commercial scheme work within the existing frame of the building, and as far as is possibly this will also include the retention of the existing internal frame.

I therefore remain convinced that the use of the building as a hotel is the most appropriate use to secure its future, and that Signature Living have both the best interests of the building at heart; and the greatest potential to deliver what they have proposed.

I trust this is sufficient to reassure your Committee that the Council's activities in managing any danger to the public presented by the building, and in encouraging proposals for its development and restoration have been completely appropriate and have provided the best possible outcome for the building in the given circumstances.

The Local Authority will continue to manage the development in accordance with due regulatory process.

Yn gywir,
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Bale', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**CYNGHORYDD / COUNCILLOR PHIL BALE
ARWEINYDD, CYNGOR DINAS CAERDYDD
LEADER, THE CITY OF CARDIFF COUNCIL**

The following comments are recorded for consideration by the petitions committee at their forthcoming meeting as an update on recent events.



Jon Avent

It is now several years since our Petition was submitted. This seems sufficient time to gain an answer to the request made in the petition; namely a public enquiry into the actions of Cardiff Council. The lack of transparency by Cardiff Council under the leadership of Cllr P Bale has been formally documented in the attached letter dated 8th July 2016 from the council Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee.

Quotes from the letter:-

'.....lessons to be learnt by the Council from its dealings with the Coal Exchange, particularly in relation to transparency and engagement with interested parties.'

'....we are concerned that the Council got to a position where it was willing to call into question the decisions made by the independent body set up to promote openness within public bodies and uphold information rights of the public.'

Also attached to this paper is a transcript of the debate held in Westminster on 20 April 2016 and led by Cardiff MP Stephen Doughty:-

Quotes from his submission:-

'I have some concerns about Cardiff Council's involvement, which are focused on the officers of the council.'

'.....sadly, our hopes and optimism for a collaborative and transparent process seem to have been misplaced and I am sorry to say that over the last six months we have seen some deeply untransparent manoeuvres by a small group of council officers to cut a backroom deal, first with a Liverpool company, Harcourt Developments, and then with another Liverpool company, Signature Living.'

The progression of physical works at the Coal Exchange by **Signature Living** is superficially and broadly welcome, and most likely (but far from conclusive) a preferred alternative to allowing the building to decay.

It is however essential that such apparent '*progression*' does not cloud the issues that have surrounded the Coal Exchange, and most importantly the actions and methods adopted (and still being adopted) by **Cardiff Council**.

It would be reasonable to question the past and ongoing lack of transparency in the dealings surrounding the Coal Exchange on a range of levels.

The involvement of Cardiff Council has been noted in the past and surfaces again with the appearance of **Signature Living** as the 'chosen developer', with no apparent open or public scrutiny. Where was the public procurement process for such high value works ???

It would appear that links exist between Cardiff Council, Signature Living and a company 'Maritime Heritage Trading Limited' that predate the recent engagement of Signature Living on the Coal Exchange project.

The full activities and trading objectives of **Maritime Heritage Trading Limited** and the apparently associated **Maritime Heritage Trust** and **Cardiff Council** are unclear, but the associations can be established with a brief 'search'. On the face of it there would appear to be a potential for conflict of interest, and this should be explored in a public enquiry so that true transparency can be achieved, and not simply talked about.

Home Venue Programme Speaker Profiles Partners Report

Programme - Day 1
 Programme - Day 2

RECONNECTIONS
 Land, Water, Cities and Heritage
 Sustainable Futures for Waterfront Cities and for our Industrial, Maritime and Transport Heritage
 19/20 October 2015
 Titanic Hotel, Stanley Dock, Liverpool L3 0AN

RECONNECTIONS Conference

A two day conference exploring the links between cities and the world and the links between past and present.

This is the first of a trilogy of conferences to explore these issues promoted by Liverpool, Belfast and Cardiff City Councils

Twitter

RT @fotsqm: Missed our news? We've launched a £2m campaign to restore the famous TS Queen Mary. <https://t.co/lB3nhrMz9O> <https://t.co/lAun2X...> 1 day ago

RT @dannynsteam: Find us at the cruise terminal all wkend. Sign up to newsletter for cruise times <https://t.co/CoBvLkgWQ3> <https://t.co/CoBvLkgWQ3> 3 days ago

RT @SeaChangeTrust: Hilary Halajko launches Blue Mermaid <https://t.co/RhUDuVTFDd> 3 days ago

Liverpool City Council are organising the first day to discuss the connections between land, water, cities and heritage

The Maritime Heritage Trust are delighted to have been invited to organise the second day which will focus on achieving sustainability for our maritime, transport and industrial heritage.

We are grateful to our partner organisations for their support and input into the content of the day

THE MARITIME HERITAGE TRUST Company No.01175051 Charity No. 268609
 MARITIME HERITAGE TRADING LTD Company No.08080789
 202 LAMBETH ROAD LONDON SE1 7JY

Cardiff Council Promoters of the event

RECONNECTIONS
 Land, Water, Cities and Heritage
 Sustainable Futures for Waterfront Cities and for our Industrial, Maritime and Transport Heritage
 19/20 October 2015
 Titanic Hotel, Stanley Dock, Liverpool L3 0AN

Partners

his conferences only possible with the support of the following City Councils:

Signature Living
 A sponsor of the event led by Maritime Heritage Trust and promoted by Cardiff Council

Also these organisations in the maritime, transport and industrial heritage sectors have kindly provided funding and speakers:

NATIONAL HISTORIC SHIPS UK
 The official voice for historic vessels in the United Kingdom

MARITIME NETWORK
 MARITIME HERITAGE TRUST

UK-WIDE NETWORK FOR SHIP CONSERVATION
 National Historic Ships UK

ABTEM
 ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH TRANSPORT & ENGINEERING MUSEUMS

GIVING TO HERITAGE
 TRAINING FOR FUNDRAISING

30 James Street
 MARITIME HERITAGE TRADING LTD

This petition sought a public enquiry into events surrounding the Coal Exchange and particularly the actions of Cardiff Council and their use of Building Act Section 78 powers. The expenditure of local rate payers money remains a significant concern together with the historical neglect of the building that contributed significantly to its decay.

The latest 'loan' (believed to be around £3m) that has been provided by Cardiff Council to the developer, and the background to this, is of interest and the decision process that led to the selection of **Signature Living** as 'preferred developer'. Accountability of those persons at Cardiff Council (Cllr Phil Bale, and others) and the decisions they have made and funds they have expended on behalf of the electorate is considered essential. This is particularly relevant where persons involved have historical links outside of direct council activities.

It is believed that this should occur in an open and transparent manner in contrast to the veil of secrecy that has surrounded the vast majority of dealings to date.

It is considered essential that the Petition does not lose sight of this objective and the petition should now seek to achieve the public scrutiny that is clearly justified.

Fy Nghyf / My Ref: NRS/RM/PB/09.06.16

Dyddiad / Date: 8 July 2016



Councillor Phil Bale
Leader, City of Cardiff Council
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Dear Councillor Bale

ECONOMY AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 19 JUNE 2016

Coal Exchange

Thank you for attending the May meeting of the Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee, where the meeting focussed on Cardiff Coal Exchange. I will be grateful if you could also pass on the thanks of the Committee to Paul Orders, Neil Hanratty and the officers supporting them for their presentations and for addressing the questions that arose during the meeting. The Committee had a few comments and observations following the meeting, which are set out below.

Members of this Committee would like to formally recognise our appreciation for what has been achieved by Save the Coal Exchange and Coal Exchange Ltd, and the service they have done for the city of Cardiff in the care and attention given to this historic building. Their passion for the building, in making repairs, addressing water ingress and making sections of the West Wing fit for use, has no doubt contributed to the preservation of the Coal Exchange. We sincerely hope that the proposals put forward by Signature Living to restore the building to its former glory, maintaining many of the historic features, are a satisfactory result for all the individuals involved in these organisations.

Members of the Committee recognise that relationships between the Council and organisations involved at the Coal Exchange have been tested at times over recent years, as can be expected when passions run high for an important building like the Coal Exchange. Members felt that positive working relationships between the Council and groups like Save the Coal Exchange and Coal Exchange Ltd are critical to the building's future success, and that any past tensions can be subsumed as all parties look to collectively support the developments being driven forward by Signature Living.

In considering the evidence presented by the various stakeholders at the meeting, it is clear to Members of the Committee that there are lessons to be learnt by the Council from its dealings with the Coal Exchange, particularly in relation to transparency and engagement with interested parties. We feel that some of the tensions that have existed over the past few years could have been eased if the Council had been more open about its plans and kept stakeholders more informed, rather than creating a perception of secrecy about the developments. We are encouraged to hear that dialogue has become more frequent and open since Signature Living has taken the lead on development plans for the Coal Exchange. This historic lack of communication was recognised at the meeting and Members were pleased that assurances were provided of close and positive engagement going forward – we are confident that you will act as champion that these assurances are delivered on.

The Committee recognises that we have no constitutional remit to test or challenge the merit of regulatory decisions made, such as the use of Section 78 at the Coal Exchange as was mentioned by several external stakeholders. We do, however, hope that lessons have been learnt by the organisation in this respect, and cannot escape the feeling that, as mentioned above, greater transparency and communication could have helped mitigate any discontent created.

Members of the Committee were disappointed to be informed that the Council challenged a decision made by the Information Commissioner with regard to the release of documentation through a Freedom of Information request. While we understand the reasons given by officers for the challenge of this decision, namely the risk of challenge from developers and owners of the Coal Exchange for prejudicing the ongoing discussions, we are concerned that the Council got to a position where it was willing to call into question the decisions made by the independent body set up to promote openness within public bodies and uphold information rights of the public.

During the meeting Members heard concerns from stakeholders that documents such as a Community Engagement Plan and Conservation Management Plan have not yet been made available. We recognise that these are important documents that need to be produced for projects such as the this one, and welcomed the assurances that a Memorandum of Understanding is in place, which is a legally binding document and sets out the Council's expectations, including the development of these documents as the project progresses through various Planning stages.

The Committee is mindful that the Coal Exchange currently has a number of tenants using the office space in the West Wing of the building. Clearly these organisations will need to relocate prior to building work commencing to transform the building into an operational hotel. Members were pleased to be informed that both the Council and Signature Living will be working with these organisations to minimise the impact they experience and relocate them to suitable alternative office facilities.

A number of participants at the meeting stated that the redevelopment of the Coal Exchange could unlock the wider regeneration of a number of historic buildings located within the Mount Stuart Square Conservation Area. Members of this Committee hope this is indeed the case, and will look to monitor the Council's proposed role in delivering this through plans for the Mount Stuart Square Heritage Quarter and the Cardiff Bay Master Plan. Please could you ensure officers make arrangements for these items to be considered at an appropriate future meeting of the Committee?

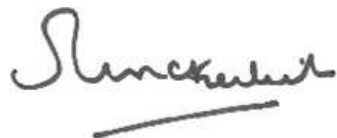
During the meeting it was suggested that in recent weeks the Council had provided a loan to Signature Living to support this development. We welcome and note the clarifications given at the meeting that this was not in fact the case, but was rather a deferment of payment to the Council in relation to sums due for the works carried out in making the building and public areas safe.

A small note Members wish to make is with regard to Licensing. Historically a number of bars in this area of Cardiff, such as The Point, have had issues obtaining licenses to serve alcohol and operate late opening hours – we trust that the Council will work with Signature Living to ensure that such issues do not prevent or hinder the success of the Coal Exchange Hotel.

Like many of the stakeholders we heard from at this meeting, Members of the Committee are truly encouraged by the plans being proposed by Signature Living to transform the Coal Exchange into a hotel that captures and preserves the history of this building for future generations. We hope that Lawrence Kenwright and his team can deliver the vision that has been set out for this building, and look forward with optimism to the progression of this development.

I will be grateful if you would consider the above comments, observations and recommendations, and look forward to receiving your feedback.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rod McKerlich', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Councillor Rod McKerlich
Chairperson, Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee

cc Paul Orders – Chief Executive
Neil Hanratty – Director of Economic Development
Geoff Shimmel – Operational Manager, Legal Services
John Worrall – Operational Manager, Major Projects
Richard Cole – Senior Planning Officer
Lawrence Kenwright - Signature Living
Cabinet Support Office
Members of the Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee.
Ian Hill – Save the Coal Exchange
Mike Johnson – Coal Exchange Ltd
Nerys Lloyd Pierce – Cardiff Civic Society
Jon Avent – Mann Williams
David Leathley
Hilary Roberts

1. [Contents](#)
2. Westminster Hall

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[Previous](#)

Cardiff Coal Exchange

20 April 2016

11.00 am

- [**Stephen Doughty \(Cardiff South and Penarth\)**](#)
[**\(Lab/Co-op\)**](#)

I beg to move,

That this House has considered the future of the Cardiff Coal Exchange.

It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship, Mr Howarth. I welcome the new Wales Office Minister to his post. We have both served on the Welsh Affairs Committee and I was pleased to hear that he would respond to this debate.

The subject of the recent ownership and the future of the Cardiff Coal Exchange is extremely complex. It cuts across devolved and reserved matters and the responsibilities of several UK Departments, including the Wales Office, and the Welsh Government. Let me make it clear at the outset that I do not expect the Minister to have all the answers today, but I hope he will listen carefully to my concerns. I am interested in his views on them and ask him to make representations to the Departments involved and the incoming Welsh Government, and to take a personal interest in the future of what is arguably one of the most important buildings of the Welsh national heritage and indeed our industrial heritage from the 19th and 20th centuries.

I do not want to detain the House too long on the remarkable history, architectural merits and the importance of the coal exchange to Cardiff and the Butetown community, as I want to focus on current matters, but I would be remiss not to remind the Chamber of some crucial issues.

Cardiff became the largest coal port in the world at the end of the 19th century and the coal exchange was constructed in the 1880s by Edwin Seward as a base from which to conduct trade negotiations regarding the coal mines of the south Wales valleys, with Cardiff being the key coal port in the world at the time. Following its opening, ship

owners, their agents and many others interested in the coal trade met daily on the floor of the remarkable trading hall, where agreements were made by word of mouth and telephone. It has been estimated that 10,000 people would pass in and out of the building each day. At one time, the price of the world's coal was determined in the Cardiff Coal Exchange in Butetown. It is famously claimed that the first £1 million business deal took place and the first £1 million cheque was signed at the coal exchange during a transaction in 1901.

With the decline of the coal industry and of the export of coal from Cardiff and the Bute docks during the 20th century, the coal exchange eventually closed in 1958 and coal exports from Cardiff dock came to an end in the 1960s.

- **Jonathan Edwards (Carmarthen East and Dinefwr) (PC)**

I congratulate the hon. Gentleman on securing this debate and on his extensive work on the issue. He mentioned the proud history of the building, which is iconic for Wales. Does he agree that the Labour council that currently runs Cardiff should consider all those matters?

- **Stephen Doughty**

I have some concerns about Cardiff Council's involvement, which are focused on the officers of the council, and I will make that clear.

The building became grade II* listed in 1975 and there were discussions about the use of the building, which is so important that it was considered as the future home of the proposed Welsh Assembly during the devolution referendum in the 1970s. It was also considered as the headquarters for S4C, the Welsh language television channel. Eventually, it was refurbished and reopened as a major venue hosting acts such as the Manic Street Preachers, Ocean Colour Scene and the Stereophonics. There has been support from across the music and entertainment spectrum and people who have enjoyed gigs and events there. I see my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff West (Kevin Brennan) here and I know he has been there for many gigs, as has my hon. Member for Cardiff Central (Jo Stevens), as have I. There was even support recently from Sir Tom Jones, no less.

However, the coal exchange closed indefinitely in August 2013 as a result of claimed building safety issues and the imposition of prohibition orders by Cardiff Council, which were themselves a matter of controversy. There has been an issue about the council's regulatory functions potentially being used unsympathetically to frustrate access to the building over a number of years. We then saw the liquidation of Macob, the company that owned the exchange, and in 2014, ownership of the coal exchange was disclaimed by the liquidators and passed to the Crown Estate. That was an unusual legal situation and led to a great deal of uncertainty.

At that point, I became aware of a lot of local concern about the future of the building. My office is nearby in Mount Stuart Square in one of the other historic buildings of

Cardiff Bay. The coal exchange is a building I have long felt a great attachment and passion for. Many people in the community came forward and, with the opportunity presented by its being disclaimed to the Crown Estate, I decided to make a public call for all the parties interested in its future to come together for the benefit of the community and to save the building.

I was contacted by many hundreds of people: existing tenants, experts, former workers in the building and people from the diverse Butetown community and those associated with the building in the past, as well as an extensive number of interested developers. We held a first major public meeting in Butetown in October 2014, which was followed by a smaller working group coming together to form what was to become the Save The Coal Exchange Campaign at the end of the same month. It was clear there was a significant appetite for a collaborative effort involving all those who cared about the building to find a solution.

A number of formal claims persisted against the building from Cardiff Council, Julian Hodge bank, Barclays bank and Coal Exchange Ltd, the company that had previously hosted events at the venue and had effectively been forced out of it by the council-imposed prohibitions, but there was great optimism that a solution involving the local community, the council, the Welsh Government, Cadw, the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Victorian Society and others who had expressed an interest, as well as a private developer or investment of private funds, might result in a solution that would not only save this remarkable piece of heritage, but find a use or uses that could meet multiple needs, retain community access to it and generate revenue to secure its future. In the months following, there was much progress.

Over the past 18 months, the Save The Coal Exchange Campaign has secured parts of the habitable building, ensuring bills were paid for utilities, attracting a significant number of new tenants, ranging from lawyers to creatives and community organisations and, crucially, challenging the false perception that has repeatedly arisen that the entire building is derelict and at immediate risk of falling down. Parts of it are in a difficult state, but other parts are entirely functional and the public debate has at times been extremely misleading.

Surveys were undertaken and approaches made to prospective partners. The Save The Coal Exchange Campaign secured a grant of £10,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund Wales with a view to a larger application. I commend the campaign for doing a remarkable job in keeping the building going and keeping open the options for its future. At the same time, the Welsh Government commissioned their own survey and studies, and a series of developers expressed interest in being involved.

On no fewer than seven occasions, I met Cardiff Council officials—

- **[Craig Williams \(Cardiff North\) \(Con\)](#)**

The hon. Gentleman alluded to the Welsh Government study, which was done by Capita, and the Cardiff Council study, which was done by RVW. The costs were estimated to be in the region of £35 million to £45 million. Does he accept that that is an enormous amount of money, that the issue is not new, that the Welsh Government

have sat on their hands when it comes to helping Cardiff Council out with this problem, and that a large amount of money could fall on taxpayers?

- **Stephen Doughty**

I have concerns about the liability for taxpayers, but the Welsh Government have engaged proactively and positively. I hope that the new Government will look carefully at these issues.

As I said, on no fewer than seven occasions, I met council officials and was provided with repeated assurances of partnership. I spoke to Julian Hodge bank and Barclays bank, which assured me they would act in the interests of all those with a stake and the local community, and not sign off any deal that they did not think met those concerns. I also spoke to the Crown Estate, the Heritage Lottery Fund and many others. However, sadly, our hopes and optimism for a collaborative and transparent process seem to have been misplaced and I am sorry to say that over the last six months we have seen some deeply untransparent manoeuvres by a small group of council officers to cut a backroom deal, first with a Liverpool company, Harcourt Developments, and then with another Liverpool company, Signature Living, and its owner Lawrence Kenwright.

Despite my misgivings, I have tried at all times to maintain an open mind to various developers and proposals that have come forward. Indeed, I was happy to put them in touch with relevant parties and the Save The Coal Exchange Campaign. That includes Signature Living. I met its representatives on a number of occasions, including Lawrence Kenwright on three occasions, to listen to their plans and to ask detailed questions, not least because one of the positive aspects of its proposal was, on the face of it, to maintain the core heritage fabric. However, as time went on and more matters came to my attention, I became increasingly concerned about its suitability as a developer and the nature of its assurances, which seemed to vary at every meeting. I raised those directly with Cardiff Council and many of the other parties but I was assured that they would be fully examined again and again.

So we come to the present day. The Minister will be aware that in the last two weeks there has been a sudden announcement that a deal has been facilitated by Cardiff Council to transfer ownership of the coal exchange to Signature Living, followed by a barrage of heavy corporate PR from Mr Kenwright and subsequent controversy in the media and local community, with nearly 800 local individuals now having signed a petition criticising the deal.

Let me be clear. I am not opposed to a private developer being involved in a solution to save the coal exchange. Indeed, since day one, I have been clear about the level of finance needed. I am also perfectly happy to put my personal concerns about Mr Kenwright to one side in the interests of any deal about the building and the local community. It is easy to provide a *fait accompli* in these situations—to present oneself as the only alternative, threaten dire consequences, respond to any criticism or reasonable questions as a “slur” and warn of the jobs that might be lost. But we owe it to the building and the local community in Butetown, Cardiff and, indeed, the rest of Wales to secure the right solution for the coal exchange.

I want to detail a few specific concerns that I hope the Minister will listen to carefully. First, on the process, previous dealings with Macob and other potential developers reveal a concerning record. Freedom of information requests have revealed a complex web of negotiations over a number of years, including that the council was contemplating a development that would have seen a significant proportion of the building demolished and the building of a multi-storey block of flats. That is hardly reassuring.

There has been no tender or public process in this instance. The council was fully aware of the concerns during the process, and I do not understand why it did not go forward in a fully transparent and open way to secure the right bid. In fact, one developer came to see me to tell me of his concerns—that bid was supported by officials at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, at UK level—and told me that in effect he had been scared away by the council: it was not interested and he should go away.

In recent days the council appears to have exercised its right of sale to seize and transfer the building to Signature Living. How it did that is unclear and has been questioned by independent legal practitioners. That largely centres on a claim that the council has made, but never fully substantiated, of “costs” that it incurred and then attempted to formalise by pinning a notice to the building some months ago. It appears to have done a deal with other claimants to relinquish their charges.

Lawrence Kenwright has claimed in the press this week that he beat dozens of competitors. On 8 April I had an email from the council’s director of economic development, Neil Hanratty, that made the point that the

“condition of the building has been widely publicised”.

He went on to confirm that rather than dozens, only

“four parties were interviewed by a panel of officers including the Listed Building... Officer and a representative of Julian Hodge Bank.”

I find it very odd, given the UK and international interest in the building, let alone that in Wales, that the council appears to have engaged in negotiations in the past 18 months with only two companies, both of which happen to be from Liverpool. It is a shame that the council did not get together with other key stakeholders to put together a public bid process, working with all those other people who could have played a part in finding the best solution.

I also have concerns that this matter has not received the proper democratic scrutiny. It does not appear to have gone to the cabinet or the leader of the council, or, to my knowledge, to the council’s economic development committee.

I want to turn now to Mr Kenwright’s financial background. I am afraid that Mr Kenwright has been less than transparent about his financial history, and I think it is in the public interest to raise these matters so that others can draw their own conclusions. Mr Kenwright did not proactively disclose these to Cardiff Council or to anybody else who met him. Indeed, the council claimed that it was unaware of them

when I raised them with it. He has blamed his past difficulties on the credit crunch and said that they have made him “a better businessman”. He has attempted to downplay them in the Welsh press this week. He told WalesOnline:

“I had an apartment block in Liverpool which went over budget. I was one of the first ones to go bust. The only difference between liquidation and bankruptcy is giving the personal guarantee.”

However, Mr Kenwright confirmed to me personally in a meeting in the House on 9 March that he was made bankrupt as recently as 2010, in Liverpool Crown court on 22 June in that year. The credit crunch of course started in 2008. And, crucially, he was a director, as reported in the north Wales Daily Post on 28 April 2004, of a clothing company called Yes & Co. Distribution Ltd, which in 2002 went into liquidation, with an estimated £1.9 million owing to creditors. The newspaper reported at the time that a Patricia Kenwright—believed to be his former wife—was disqualified from being a director for four years and that her husband Lawrence Kenwright accepted a similar undertaking for eight years, and a Frederick Greenwood for five years. That of course suggests that Mr Kenwright could have been disqualified until as recently as 2012, although admittedly that is not clear.

It is not clear why the directors were disqualified, but the newspaper reported that Mrs Kenwright

“allowed the company to fail to deal properly with its taxation affairs.”

For the record, the Insolvency Service lists a range of reasons for being disqualified. Of course, there could have been another Lawrence Kenwright, so I wanted to ask him directly, and he confirmed that he was a former director of Yes & Co. and that he had indeed been disqualified. It is interesting to note that until recently he was not even listed as a director of the company that he set up to facilitate the purchase of the coal exchange. As of yesterday, Signature Living Coal Exchange Ltd listed only one director, his current wife Katie Kenwright, although Mr Kenwright is listed as a director of Signature Living Coal Exchange Ops Ltd.

I want to turn briefly to the financial model—

- **Craig Williams**

Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

- **Stephen Doughty**

If I may, I will not. We have limited time and I have already taken one intervention, but I might take another later if we have enough time.

The financial model that Mr Kenwright proposes to use for the building is the BPRA—business premises renovation allowance—scheme. That was introduced in the Finance Act 2005 and was intended to bring derelict or unused properties back into use. The scheme gives an initial allowance of 100% for expenditure on

converting or renovating unused business premises in a disadvantaged area. However, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has announced the end of the scheme from the end of this financial year, after a raft of concerns, and investigations by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

The council has claimed to me that Signature Living has told it that it has secured an "approved £12 million" and up to a further £30 million. However, Lawrence Kenwright told me that only one of his previous schemes had received full approval from HMRC. I am deeply concerned. Given the investigations into these schemes in the past and the risk of their not being approved, where does the liability lie? We also ought to ask, given the current climate and concerns about tax avoidance and transparency: is this the right scheme to be funding this sort of building? Should we be assisting wealthy individuals and shadowy funds to avoid tax in this way? The Treasury has decided that it will end the scheme, which I think shows what it thinks of it.

The Financial Times reported on 14 July 2015:

"HM Revenue & Customs indicated it saw problems with arrangements involving BPRA, drawing parallels with abusive avoidance schemes, and a year later added them to its public 'Spotlights' list of arrangements it said taxpayers should avoid."

A range of concerns were raised. The FT continues:

"Where tax relief was not granted to taxpayers before 2013, the Revenue has in most cases withheld it, said Mr Avient"—

he comes from UHY Hacker Young—

"The Revenue clearly saw a situation where certain structures were stretching the rules too far'...it has issued a raft of accelerated payment demands to repay disputed tax to BPRA scheme investors. These tax bills cannot be appealed."

Interestingly, on 21 April 2014 the Liverpool Echo revealed the problems with the Stanley Dock regeneration scheme, funded in the same way. Builders were left unpaid; the council was left having to provide a significant amount of grant—multi-million pounds—and there was a complete lack of transparency. That involved another Liverpool company called Harcourt, which incidentally, as I said, was the previous preferred partner of Cardiff Council. The Liverpool Echo reported that it was

"surprisingly difficult to pin down the developers and owners",

which I think exposes the difficulties and concerns about the transparency of these schemes and their solidity.

I also have concerns about what the building will be—what is the proposal on the table? We have heard about it being proposed as a hotel. It is clear that Signature Living is a hotel developer. I am not opposed to a hotel development and I am sure that many other people in the community are not, but it is still, as of this date, unclear what parts of the building will be used for what. At various times, in various

meetings, we have been told of residential, part-hotel and normal hotel usage. In fact, Mr Kenwright suggested to me that it might be a third, a third, a third—or, as he put it, “as much as the council let me get away with”.

We need to be very clear—we need to know—before accepting or agreeing that this scheme is a good thing what the building will be used for. Tenants and businesses in the area and residents in the square—it is already a significant residential area—need to understand what will be there. Will there be lots of big parties coming there? Mr Kenwright has a hen and stag business in his hotels in Liverpool. Will lots of people be living there and will there be parking issues and all the other things associated with that? None of those schemes is necessarily wrong, but the public have a right to know what the building will be.

I come now to community benefits and issues. First, the Save The Coal Exchange campaign has listed a whole series of issues that it would want to be included in a section 106 agreement. It would want to see those outlined and agreed to. We have had promises of jobs and apprenticeships, although Lawrence Kenwright told me that the company would “bring their own people in”. Where are the clear assurances on jobs and apprenticeships?

Secondly, there are existing tenants—nearly 40 tenants—in the building. What assurances have they been given? They are deeply fearful that the council may step in, given its history, issue prohibition notices and see them evicted once building work starts. Where are the assurances for them?

We also have concerns about engagement with the local community in the square. There has not been serious consultation with local residents or businesses. Signature Living has been advertising major changes to Baltic House, home of the Wales Council for Voluntary Action. Is it aware of those; has it been consulted?

I have had an exchange of letters with the council about this matter and have had some assurances, but the letter from Neil Hanratty on 8 April confirms only that

“commitment to the above will be secured formally through the planning process”

and merely that Signature Living has “agreed in principle”. We should be having cast-iron guarantees for a building of this nature, with this kind of expenditure and the potential impact. These are really serious issues and we want to ensure that there is that community benefit, quite apart from all the other issues about access to the building.

Finally, heritage was one of the most positive aspects of the Signature Living proposal but, even so, there are concerns. In March 2016, the Victorian Society wrote to City of Cardiff Council officer Pat Thompson, copying in Neil Hanratty, saying that it had heard nothing from the council for 20 months and that

“the lack of communication from Cardiff Council is both disappointing and concerning... we are concerned that without close scrutiny, and clear direction from the local authority, aided and informed by a proper assessment...an acceptably sympathetic scheme, might...prove difficult to achieve. In 2013 and 2014 the Society

was involved in consultations with Signature Living over its proposed hotel conversion, of Albion House, Liverpool, a Grade 2* Listed Building by Richard Norman Shaw.”

That building will, of course, be of interest to those of us in this Parliament. The letter continued:

“From our point of view the process was far from ideal. Plans were drawn up hurriedly and without any evidence of the sort of high quality, detailed heritage assessment a Grade 2* Listed Building demands. Perhaps unsurprisingly therefore, the conversion involved some alterations and additions that we as well as Historic England advised were unsympathetic and harmful. These were undertaken regardless, some seemingly prior to receiving the necessary consents... None of this is to suggest that Signature Living is incapable or indisposed to deliver a high quality sensitive scheme, rather it is to demonstrate that without proper guidance...in the form of a Conservation Management Plan and a structural survey, a less sympathetic and unnecessarily damaging conversion scheme is the likely outcome.”

I conclude by identifying a few key areas. First, the questions about the financial background are deeply concerning. What does the Minister think? I want Cardiff Council to be clear about its due diligence process in that regard, particularly on the sureties around the BPRA scheme, given the concerns that have been raised. What happens if that goes wrong? Who will bail this out? Who will deal with the financial consequences?

Secondly, on heritage and planning, there is a clear need for strict oversight from Cadw, the Victorian Society and others, for conservation management plans and for surveys, whatever developer comes in. Thirdly, we need guarantees in writing, not assurances that mean nothing, on the community issues and on access to the building. We need guarantees for the tenants of the building as it is, and we need an inquiry into the overall process over a number of years. The process has been deeply unsatisfactory and has involved the use of health and safety powers and the spending of public money in a deeply non-transparent way. We should put a halt to the proposal, re-engage with the community and other stakeholders and act in the national interest to save the coal exchange.

- **[Mr George Howarth \(in the Chair\)](#)**

I put it on the record that I had no foreknowledge of what the hon. Member for Cardiff South and Penarth was going to raise. I raised some issues about one of the developments he mentioned on behalf of some constituents many years ago, and I would not want it to be thought that I had any prior knowledge that he would mention it, otherwise it might not have been appropriate for me to take the Chair today.

11.22 am

- **[The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Wales \(Guto Bebb\)](#)**

It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship, Mr Howarth. I congratulate the hon. Member for Cardiff South and Penarth (Stephen Doughty) on his speech and on securing this debate. It is important that Westminster is still relevant to the communities that we represent in Wales, and highlighting such issues in Westminster Hall debates is appropriate and correct. He said that he does not expect me to have all the answers, and indeed it would be inappropriate for me to respond to some of the points that have been raised because many of them are issues for the Welsh Government and for City of Cardiff Council, which as part of local government in Wales is answerable to the Welsh Government. I will have to restrain myself from commenting on devolved areas. It is important to place this debate in context and to respond to the undeveloped issues, and I will particularly respond to the questions on the tax allowance system. Additionally, it is important to touch on the Crown Estate's position in the sales process to try to allay some of the fears he raised.

On the background to the debate, I fully subscribe to the hon. Gentleman's comments on the coal exchange, which is an iconic Welsh building. We should be proud that Wales was able to dictate the price of coal throughout the world, and we should trumpet that the first £1 million business transaction—the sale of coal to France—happened at the coal exchange. We should talk about that when we discuss the history of Cardiff but, in the context of Cardiff bay, this debate is also an opportunity to highlight the way in which Wales has developed. We should proudly boast of the revitalisation of Cardiff bay and highlight the economic impact of the changes in Cardiff that have been secured through the work of successive Governments here in Westminster, in co-operation with Governments in Cardiff bay—it is an example of the two Governments working together and of the local authority being proactive in redeveloping an area that was ripe for redevelopment. This is a success story, and there is no doubt that the coal exchange is an iconic building at the centre of the proposed redevelopment of Cardiff bay.

When we talk about redevelopment and business opportunities in Cardiff, it is no bad thing to trumpet, for example, the Cardiff city deal. I represent a north Wales constituency, and I often hear the accusation that all the investment in Wales goes to Cardiff, but it is important to point out that the scale of the Cardiff city deal is not confined to the city of Cardiff; it will have a huge impact on all the areas surrounding Cardiff. Indeed, a significant proportion of the Welsh population will be affected by the Cardiff city deal, which has secured a £1.2 billion investment on a cross-governmental level. I am sure that every hon. Member in this Chamber would welcome that.

Cardiff is a city that is going places and performing extremely well in attracting inward investment. There is no doubt that the Cardiff bay area has been crucial to the refocusing of Cardiff in the mind of inward investors as a city with a “can do” attitude, which has made a difference to job creation throughout the area and south Wales.

- **[Craig Williams](#)**

There is a direct comparison between the scale of regeneration in Cardiff under the Cardiff Bay Development Corporation, which was formed under the previous Conservative Government, and the city deal in partnership with the Wales

Government. It is a national disgrace that we are debating the future of the coal exchange and that it has been left to fall down through the inaction of the Labour Welsh Government. The impression has been given that the officers run City of Cardiff Council, which has a Labour cabinet.

- **Kevin Brennan (Cardiff West) (Lab)**

Speech!

- **Mr George Howarth (in the Chair)**

Order. That is very lengthy for an intervention.

- **Guto Bebb**

Concerns have been raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff North (Craig Williams) and by the hon. Member for Carmarthen East and Dinefwr (Jonathan Edwards) on the inactivity, or otherwise, of the Welsh Government. It is not for me to comment on that, but I am sure that the hon. Member for Cardiff South and Penarth will be making his views known in due course.

Two specific issues have been raised to which I can respond. First, I cannot respond to the sales process adopted by City of Cardiff Council, but it is only right and proper that I address the involvement of the Crown Estate, about which the hon. Gentleman expressed concern. It is clear that the whole process was subject to the escheat process, which means that the building was never owned by the Crown Estate. As such, the Crown Estate was neither consulted nor involved in the process by which the property's ownership is being transferred. That is not unique; it is a pattern that can be seen in many circumstances involving the Crown Estate. The actual decision-making process will be for City of Cardiff Council and the Welsh Government. Although the Crown Estate is technically involved, it is not odd that it was not consulted and did not provide any input in the process.

The hon. Gentleman mentioned the tax allowance scheme, and it is fair to say that the business premises renovation allowance is central to the redevelopment plan. He is right to highlight the fact that the scheme will be coming to an end at the end of this financial year at the end of March 2017. He is also correct that concerns have been raised about the way in which the scheme has been utilised in the past. Those concerns, which were raised, I think, back in 2011-12, have been addressed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, and it was stated in summer Budget 2015 that the scheme would be coming to an end. That is still the case. It is important to highlight the fact that the BPRA is a capital allowance scheme, and my understanding is that under such schemes any claim for the allowance would have to be made retrospectively, after the expenditure is made. It is also important to highlight the fact that any claim for a capital allowance under such a scheme would have to refer to expenditure incurred during the 2016-17 financial year. Any expenditure incurred after that point would obviously be outside the scope of the allowance scheme, which is a fairly important point.

- [Stephen Doughty](#) rose—
- [Guto Bebb](#)

I apologise, but I am afraid that I have only one minute.

The hon. Gentleman's concerns have been heard, if nothing else. By raising this issue in Westminster, he has ensured that the concerns of tenants, the local community and elected representatives have been heard. The concerns raised in relation to the tenants of the coal exchange are valid and should be addressed, and everyone would agree that the redevelopment of such an iconic business should be open and transparent and should have the support of the local community. However, on the issues relating to the involvement of the Westminster Government, I restate that the Crown Estate process has been par for the course. In the same way, the concerns raised about the tax allowance scheme are valid if this redevelopment does not happen before the end of March 2017 but, as it currently stands, the scheme is still in existence.

Question put and agreed to.

11.29 am

Sitting suspended.

Agenda Item 3.9

P-04-664 – Develop Tynton farm as a Visitor and Information Centre.

This petition was submitted by Martyn Hooper having collected 112 signatures

Text of the Petition

We call on the Welsh government to acknowledge the important contribution of Dr Richard Price not only to the eighteenth century Enlightenment, but also to the making of the modern world that we live in today, and develop his birthplace and childhood home into a visitor information centre where people of all nationalities and ages can discover how his significant contributions to theology, mathematics and philosophy have shaped the modern world.

Additional Information

Tynton Farm in Llangeinor, the birthplace and childhood home of Dr Richard Price is for sale. Once derelict, the farm has been sensitively restored and almost all of the original features have been preserved. The Richard Price Society is aware that the house attracts visitors from all corners of the globe and this is attested by the previous owner's Visitors Book that was signed by visitors to the farm. The position of the farm and its provenance would make it an ideal learning centre where people can find out just what an important person he was and remains. This is an opportunity to buy the property at market value and help celebrate the achievements of Wales' intellectual giant and apostle of liberty.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Ogmore
- South Wales West

**P-04-664 Develop Tynton Farm as a Visitor and Information Centre -
Correspondence from the Petitioner to the clerking team, 14.10.16**

Dear Kayleigh

Tynton Farm has now been renovated and is up for sale and so the opportunity has been lost. Please inform the committee of this development and close the petition.

Best wishes

Martyn Hooper

Chairman

Agenda Item 3.10

P-05-698 Rename Cardiff Int. Airport to Princess Diana International Airport

This petition was submitted by Mohammed Sarul Islam, having collected 16 signatures.

Text of the Petition

We the undersigned call on the Welsh Government to rename Cardiff International Airport to "Princess Diana International Airport"

Additional information

To rename Cardiff International Airport will get more publicity and Welsh customers.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- South Wales Central
- Cardiff West

5th October 2016

Cardiff Airport, Vale of Glamorgan, Wales CF62 3BD
Maes Awyr Caerdydd, Bro Morgannwg, Cymru CF62 3BD

Mike Hedges AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Dear Mr Hedges,

Thank you for your letter of 4th October in which you advised us that the National Assembly for Wales' Petition Committee has been considering the following petition from Mohammed Sarul Islam:

Petition Details:

We the undersigned call on the Welsh Government to rename Cardiff International Airport to "Princess Diana International Airport"

Additional Information:

To rename Cardiff International Airport will get more publicity and Welsh Customers.

You asked for our views on the specific proposal and also questioned whether the principle of naming the Airport after a prominent Welsh person has been previously considered.

There have been a number of proposals to name the Airport after a prominent Welsh person – the Princess of Wales and Dylan Thomas have been suggestions that have been raised in the past.

With regards our view on this proposal, firstly I should point out that it is not within the gift of the Cardiff Airport Board to make such a decision. We manage the Airport Company on behalf of our shareholder – the Welsh Government – and it would be a ministerial decision to implement any change of name. Our advice however, would be that the Airport is part of a global aviation industry and an important part of our business is marketing Wales and our Capital City, Cardiff, in particular, to airline customers and inbound travellers across the rest of the UK, Europe and further field. Being known as Cardiff Airport enables us to get the Cardiff and Wales message out into the market clearly and our customers are able to instantly identify the location of the Airport and the connection to the Capital City and the country as a whole. We would therefore not support the petition and would recommend that the name Cardiff Airport is retained.

Yours sincerely



Debra Barber
Managing Director & Chief Operating Officer

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