

Agenda – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: 11 July 2017

Meeting time: 09.00

For further information contact:

Graeme Francis – Committee Clerk

Kath Thomas – Deputy Clerk

0300 200 6565

SeneddPetitions@assembly.wales

Informal pre-meeting (08.50 – 09.00)

1 Introduction, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(Pages 1 – 47)

2 New petitions

2.1 P-05-763 Introduce updated stroke advice – B.E.F.A.S.T. – and help save lives and livelihoods

(Pages 48 – 54)

2.2 P-05-766 Make a Vegan Option Compulsory In Public Canteens

(Pages 55 – 59)

2.3 P-05-767 A487 Trunk Road Through Tre-Taliesin: Urgent Need for Effective Speed-Calming Measures

(Pages 60 – 68)

2.4 P-05-768 A call for the return of 24 hour Consultant led Obstetrics, Paediatrics and SCBU to Withybush DGH

(Pages 69 – 75)

3 Updates to previous petitions

3.1 P-04-526 Please make Senedd TV accessible to deaf people

(Pages 76 – 78)

Health

3.2 P-04-408 Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder Service

(Pages 79 – 81)



3.3 P-05-749 Reinstate Corwen's Mobile Dental Service
(Pages 82 – 83)

3.4 P-04-564 Restoration of Inpatient Beds, Minor Injuries Cover and X-Ray
Unit to the Ffestiniog Memorial Hospital
(Pages 84 – 86)

Education

3.5 P-04-481 Close the Gap for deaf pupils in Wales
(Pages 87 – 93)

3.6 P-04-522 Asbestos in Schools
(Pages 94 – 97)

3.7 P-05-722 Protect Special Educational Needs
(Pages 98 – 99)

Environment and Rural Affairs

3.8 P-04-683 Trees in Towns
(Pages 100 – 104)

3.9 P-05-747 TB testing of cattle
(Pages 105 – 110)

3.10 P-05-753 Strengthening the Legislative and Regulatory Framework
Surrounding Waste Wood Processing Facilities
(Pages 111 – 119)

3.11 P-05-759 Re-open the Cwmcarn Forest Drive at Easter 2018
(Pages 120 – 123)

3.12 P-04-648 Unconventional Oil and Gas Planning Applications
(Pages 124 – 125)

Economy and Infrastructure

3.13 P-05-692 Build an International Mother languages Monument at Cardiff
Bay
(Pages 126 – 128)

3.14 P-05-737 Save Our Bus
(Pages 129 – 130)

3.15 P-05-716 Free Train Transport for school pupils with Arriva Trains Wales
(Pages 131 – 133)

3.16 P-04-688 TATA Steel Port Talbot Power Plant
(Pages 134 – 136)

3.17 P-05-690 Resurfacing of the A40 Raglan–Abergavenny Road
(Pages 137 – 138)

3.18 P-05-740 Petition to Protect our High Street
(Pages 139 – 144)

Finance and Local Government

3.19 P-05-726 Give Rate Relief to Local Authorities for Leisure and Cultural Facilities
(Pages 145 – 148)

Communities and Children

3.20 P-05-734 Ban Letting Agent Fees to Tenants
(Pages 149 – 150)

3.21 P-05-751 Recognition of Parental Alienation
(Pages 151 – 154)

3.22 P-05-711 Ensure Disabled People’s Housing Adaption Needs Are Adequately Met
(Pages 155 – 156)

4 Paper to note
(Page 157)

5 Evidence Session – P-04-682 Routine Screening for Type 1 Diabetes in Children and Young People
(9.45 – 10.30) (Pages 158 – 164)

Beth Baldwin, Petitioner

Sara Moran, Diabetes UK Cymru

Libby Dowling, Diabetes UK

- 6 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the remainder of the meeting
- 7 Discussion of Evidence Session: P-04-682 Routine Screening for Type 1 Diabetes in Children and Young People

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Agenda Item 2.1

P-05-763 Introduce updated stroke advice – B.E.F.A.S.T. – and help save lives and livelihoods

This petition was submitted by Phillip Easton, having collected 105 signatures online.

Petition text:

We the undersigned request the Welsh Assembly to review the stroke advice currently given to healthcare professionals and in other marketing literature. At the moment this follows FAST – Face, Arms, Speech, Time. Some parts of the brain affected by stroke don't deal with any of those functions, so adding Balance and Eyes to create BEFAST will cover much more.

My brain lesion indicating a cerebellar stroke was found incidentally during an MRI for a different reason. This explains the sudden vertigo I experienced over a year previously. Had this been recognised by the multiple medical professionals I saw I could have received stroke treatment immediately and the extent of brain damage may have been avoided. Had I known about it as a member of the public I would have been aware of the risks of my symptoms. Stanford University has been advising BEFAST for years: <http://scopeblog.stanford.edu/2014/05/02/be-fast-learn-to-recognize-the-signs-of-stroke/>

Additional information:

My personal story is that I live alone, and I suffered a sudden and intense bout of vertigo in early December 2015. I was in bed for three whole days and was unable to move to eat, drink, or anything else. Had I known this could have been a stroke I would have called an ambulance immediately. I recovered enough to work again, and about a week later I suffered another bout in public – an ambulance was called. This calmed down far quicker, but a paramedic was still with me for an hour before booking me an appointment with my doctor that evening. At this time I had a further episode as I was entering the hospital where my doctor was sited at the time. I was unable to work at all for at least a month after this. After several visits to the doctor over the next three months I was finally referred to ENT for vertigo as my symptoms weren't going away as hoped. In late January 2017 I was finally allowed an MRI for lingering ear pain and was checked for infection. As a consequence, evidence of a stroke was found – I was told this on 14th February 2017. More than 15 months after my first symptoms.

I am still unable to work full time hours, and am still undergoing tests with regards to the cause of the stroke. It's possible that the first incidences were TIAs and the full stroke that caused lasting damage was only the last one – after the paramedic saw me. We cannot know if I would definitely have been saved these issues if the condition was caught earlier – even if I'd just started taking daily aspirin at the first sign to thin my blood (a common procedure after suspected TIA). We do know that without that advice, I have definitely suffered brain damage.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Cynon Valley
- South Wales Central

Briefing for the Petitions Committee

Petition number: [P-05-0763](#)

Petition title: **Introduce updated stroke advice – B.E.F.A.S.T. – and help save lives and livelihoods**

Text of petition: We the undersigned request the Welsh Assembly to review the stroke advice currently given to healthcare professionals and in other marketing literature. At the moment this follows FAST – Face, Arms, Speech, Time. Some parts of the brain affected by stroke don't deal with any of those functions, so adding Balance and Eyes to create BEFAST will cover much more.

My brain lesion indicating a cerebellar stroke was found incidentally during an MRI for a different reason. This explains the sudden vertigo I experienced over a year previously. Had this been recognised by the multiple medical professionals I saw I could have received stroke treatment immediately and the extent of brain damage may have been avoided. Had I known about it as a member of the public I would have been aware of the risks of my symptoms. Stanford University has been advising BEFAST for years: <http://scopeblog.stanford.edu/2014/05/02/be-fast-learn-to-recognize-the-signs-of-stroke/>

Background

A stroke occurs when the blood supply to part of a person's brain is cut off. This can be due to a blockage (known as an ischaemic stroke, about 85% of cases) or by bleeding in or around the brain (a haemorrhagic stroke, about 15% of cases).

A TIA (transient ischaemic attack, sometimes referred to as a 'mini-stroke') happens when the blood supply to the brain is interrupted for a very brief time. Symptoms of a TIA are very similar to those of a stroke, but are only temporary, lasting less than 24 hours. However, a TIA is a warning sign that there are problems with the blood supply to the brain, and is associated with a very high risk of stroke in the first month and up to a year after the event.

Each year around 7,400 people in Wales will have a stroke (including TIAs). The likelihood of a patient making a successful recovery following a stroke greatly depends upon the time taken between the first sign of symptoms and the patient receiving treatment. Since 95% of those with acute stroke will have their first symptoms outside hospital, ensuring that the

public and healthcare professionals can quickly recognise stroke symptoms is crucial to improving patient outcomes.

The [Stroke Association](#) lists common symptoms of a stroke as including:

- Numbness, weakness or paralysis on one side of your body (for example, a limp arm or leg, or a drooping lower eyelid or mouth);
- Slurred speech, or difficulty finding words or understanding speech;
- Sudden blurred vision or loss of sight;
- Confusion or unsteadiness; and
- A sudden, severe headache.

FAST (Face–Arms–Speech–Time)

The [Act FAST campaign](#) has been running in England and Wales since 2009, promoted by several organisations including NHS Wales and the Stroke Association. The aim of the campaign is to increase public awareness of stroke symptoms, and of the importance of calling 999 immediately if any of these symptoms are observed. The campaign does this by promoting the FAST acronym:

- **Face** – has the person’s face fallen on one side? Can they smile?
- **Arms** – can the person raise both arms and keep them there?
- **Speech** – can the person speak clearly? Is their speech slurred?
- **Time** to call 999 if you see any of these signs of a stroke.

FAST was developed in the UK in 1998 as a simple stroke identification instrument, to be used primarily by ambulance staff. The test doesn’t check for visual field defects or problems with perception, balance and coordination, and therefore may be relatively insensitive to lesions in certain parts of the brain. During the development of FAST however, it was felt that increasing the complexity of the test would “lengthen paramedic assessment time and could increase the proportion of false–positive diagnoses without greatly increasing the sensitivity of the instrument”¹.

This fact that some people with stroke symptoms won’t be identified by FAST was recognised by the Royal College of Physicians in their [2016 National clinical guideline for stroke](#). However, the guideline goes on to say that further evidence would be required before the

¹ J. Harbison *et al.*, [Diagnostic Accuracy of Stroke Referrals From Primary Care, Emergency Room Physicians, and Ambulance Staff Using the Face Arm Speech Test](#), *Stroke*. 2003;34:71–76.

authors could recommend the use of other screening tools² that detect non-FAST symptoms in the pre-hospital phase. They advise that if community-based clinicians are suspicious of the diagnosis following a negative FAST test, they should continue to treat the person as having a suspected stroke until a stroke diagnosis has been excluded by a specialist stroke clinician.

BEFAST (Balance–Eyes–Face–Arms–Speech–Time)

This petition seeks to replace FAST as the standard advice for stroke identification with BEFAST (or BE FAST), to include two other stroke symptoms:

- **Balance** – does the person have a sudden loss of balance?
- **Eye** – has the person lost vision in one or both eyes?

As the petitioner highlighted, [Stanford University](#) currently promotes the BEFAST acronym for recognising stroke symptoms. Other US institutions have also moved to using BEFAST rather than FAST, such as [Pennsylvania State University](#) and [University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center](#).

On the other hand, the [American Heart Association/American Stroke Association](#) concurs with the [Stroke Association \(UK\)](#) in advising the use of FAST, listing problems with balance and eyesight among additional stroke symptoms.

Additional Information

A [similar petition](#) was started on the UK Parliament’s petition service, but was closed early due to the 2017 General Election (and will not reopen after the election, although a new petition could be set up).

The Fourth Assembly’s Health and Social Care Committee carried out an [inquiry into Stroke Risk Reduction](#) in 2011/12. As this inquiry was focused on risk reduction rather than identification of strokes, the final report only mentions FAST as an example of a successful public awareness campaign, and doesn’t consider the merits or shortcomings of the FAST system itself.

² Two examples of other such screening tools are given: (i) forms of the National Institutes of Health Stroke Scale (NIHSS); and (ii) Recognition of Stroke in the Emergency Room (ROSIER); BEFAST is not specifically mentioned.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd, Llesiant a Chwaraeon
Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-763
Ein cyf/Our ref VG/01397/17

David John Rowlands AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
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6 July 2017

Dear David,

Petition P-05-763 Introduced updated stroke advice – BEFAST – and help lives and livelihoods.

I am writing following the letter dated 22 May seeking my views on the petition received by the Petitions Committee to update stroke advice to BEFAST.

I have referred your letter to the Stroke Implementation Group (SIG) for advice. The SIG met on 15 June and has advised that Stroke clinicians in Wales follow best practice in line with NICE guidance which currently recommends using the FAST tool. Evidence in support of BEFAST would appear to be limited and as such the SIG cannot endorse its use in Wales at this time.

However, SIG will continue to monitor use of the tool and should the situation change, will of course be happy to reconsider.

Yours sincerely,

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd, Llesiant a Chwaraeon
Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport

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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. 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-05-766 Make a Vegan Option Compulsory In Public Canteens

This petition was submitted by Rachel Turnbull, having collected 118 signatures online.

Petition text:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to make including a vegan option obligatory for all public canteens or services in Wales where they have the powers to do so.

The Portuguese Parliament has approved an obligatory vegan option in all public canteens (e.g. schools, universities, prisons, hospitals) – a huge step for vegan catering for all. Over 5% of the population is vegan and growing. A vegan diet is healthier, it conserves resources and protects the planet, above all it's cruelty free. United Nations has called upon us to consume more plant based foods. Animal products are linked to the increase in cancer and heart disease.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Newport West
- South Wales Central

Petition: P-05-766 Make a Vegan Option Compulsory in Public Canteens

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 11 Gorffennaf 2017

Petitions Committee | 11 July 2017

Research Briefing:

Petition number: [P-05-766](#)

Petition title: **Make a Vegan Option Compulsory In Public Canteens**

Text of petition: We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to make including a vegan option obligatory for all public canteens or services in Wales where they have the powers to do so.

The Portuguese Parliament has approved an obligatory vegan option in all public canteens (e.g. schools, universities, prisons, hospitals) – a huge step for vegan catering for all. Over 5% of the population is vegan and growing. A vegan diet is healthier, it conserves resources and protects the planet, above all it's cruelty free. United Nations has called upon us to consume more plant based foods. Animal products are linked to the increase in cancer and heart disease.

Background

Vegan Diet

The Vegan Society [defines](#) veganism as “a way of living which seeks to exclude, as far as possible and practicable, all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing or any other purpose”. The dietary implication of this is that vegans follow a plant based diet, avoiding all animal products including meat, fish, shellfish, eggs, dairy, and honey.

The main reasons cited for adopting a vegan diet include concern for animal welfare, concerns about the environmental impact and sustainability of non-vegan diets, and the perceived health benefits of vegan diets.

The [NHS advice](#) on following a vegan diet states that, with the right planning and understanding of what makes up a healthy and balanced diet, a vegan diet should be able to provide all the nutrients the body needs, although supplements for certain nutrients such as vitamin B12 may be required. Specific advice for expectant mothers and for babies and children is also provided. The [‘Vegetarian Diets’ Fact Sheet](#) produced by the British Dietetic Association outlines some sources of nutrients required for a healthy diet which are suitable for vegetarians/vegans.

Veganism in the UK and Wales

The petitioner states that 5% of the population is vegan, however it is unclear from where this figure has been obtained. The most recent [‘Food and You’ survey](#) by the Food Standards Agency found that fewer than 1% of respondents said they were vegan. This 1% figure is similar to the UK-wide findings of the National Diet and Nutrition Survey reported on the [NHS website](#), as well as those of a [2016 Ipsos MORI poll](#) of 9,933 people over the age of 15 in England, Scotland and Wales. However the number of vegans does seem to be increasing, at a UK-wide level at least. The 2016 Ipsos MORI study reported a figure of 542,000 people aged 15+ (1.05% of over 15s) following a vegan diet, an increase of 350% on the [2006 figure of 150,000](#).

A [similar petition](#) to this one ran for 6 months on the UK Parliament website, attracting 19,012 signatures by its closure on 3 April 2017. This was short of the 100,000 needed to be considered for debate in Parliament, but enough to warrant a response from the UK Government, which began by stating that:

Individual institutions are responsible for the nutrition of their members and being aware of health, religious, cultural and ethical choices: and doing all they can to facilitate that choice.

The response went on to outline the regulations surrounding the food provision in hospitals, prisons, schools, and universities, and concluded by stating that the Government recognises that the issue of diet is complex, with many influencing factors which the Government does not aim to undermine.

Portuguese Legislation

The Portuguese Parliament approved a new [law](#) on 3 March 2017 that will require all public canteens to provide a strict vegetarian option (‘strict’ meaning ‘containing no animal products’, i.e., vegan). This follows a petition by the Portuguese Vegetarian Society (Associação Vegetariana Portuguesa) in 2015 which attracted over 15,000 signatures and was discussed in the parliament in 2016. The law also includes a clause that allows an exemption for establishments in which there is insufficient demand for the vegan option. A spokesperson for the Portuguese Vegetarian Society [reported](#) that this is the first law in Portugal to explicitly mention vegetarianism.

Welsh Government action

The [Healthy Eating in Schools \(Nutritional Standards and Requirements\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2013](#) set out requirements for food and drink provided in schools by local authorities or schools. These Regulations do not make any specific requirement on the provision of vegan options, although the [statutory guidance](#) produced by Welsh Government does outline some “practical advice” on ensuring pupils following vegetarian or vegan diets receive adequate nutrients, such as ensuring vegan alternatives to milk are provided. It should also be noted that these Regulations do not apply in certain circumstances, such as when food is brought in by parents or pupils, or when food is provided as part of any medically prescribed dietary requirements.

The Welsh Government launched the [All Wales Nutrition and Catering Standards for Food and Fluid for Hospital Inpatients](#) in October 2011. These Standards require that a vegetarian option must be available at each meal, but do not require that a vegan option be provided. It is noted in Chapter 7, ‘Special and Personal Diets’, that the standard hospital menu provided will cater to the needs of vegetarians who eat cheese, eggs, and milk, but that variants of this diet will require planning for individual patient need.

National Assembly for Wales action

A [petition on Food in Welsh Hospitals](#) was initially considered by the Fourth Assembly Petitions Committee, and has been considered by the current Committee on several occasions (the most recent being on 17 January 2017). While not specifically concerning vegan options, this petition called on the Welsh Government to examine the standards of food in hospitals in Wales. The petitioner highlighted several areas in which they felt that improvements were needed, including the current level of provision for patients with dietary needs.

The Public Accounts Committee carried out a [short inquiry into Hospital Catering and Patient Nutrition](#) in late 2016, as a follow up to a [previous inquiry](#) by the Fourth Assembly Public Accounts Committee. The Committee’s report was published in March of this year, and included a recommendation that the Welsh Government develop a set of questions to be included in both standardised nursing documentation and future patient surveys to “monitor whether health boards are recording and meeting the cultural, religious and dietary needs of patients”. The Welsh Government accepted this recommendation in their response to the Committee in May 2017, but the Auditor General for Wales then wrote to the Committee expressing concern that the Welsh Government’s response may not be a guarantee that the Committee’s recommendation will be fully implemented.

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.

Agenda Item 2.3

P-05-767 A487 Trunk Road Through Tre-Taliesin: Urgent Need for Effective Speed-Calming Measures

This petition was submitted by Antony Foulkes, having collected 52 signatures online.

Petition text:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to introduce effective traffic speed-calming measures along the A487 Trunk Road which flows directly through the middle of the neighbouring villages of Tre-Taliesin and Tre-r-ddol, and to consult and seek the views of local residents living in these villages.

Additional information:

The A487 is the major North to South Wales Trunk road running along the breadth of the West Wales Coast. This Trunk Road carries high and increasing volume of speeding vehicles and heavy goods traffic into and through the narrow middle of the Ceredigion villages of Tre-Taliesin and Tre-r-ddol. In late 2016, villagers formed the A487 Taliesin Action Group. This local action group has met and communicated closely with the Llangynfelyn Community Council, Dyfed Powys Police, Ceredigion County Council and the local Member of Parliament to undertake an analysis of the issues and potential solutions. The group have also raised their concerns and offered to meet and share their views with the North West Wales Trunk Road Agency, but this invitation has not been accepted to date.

It is important that villagers who live day to day with the speeding traffic are listened to and their views fully taken into account by the Welsh Government, in order for effective speed calming measures which safeguards the villagers and road users, to be planned and implemented.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Ceredigion
- Mid and West Wales

Petition: P-05-767 A487 trunk road through Tre-Taliesin

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 11 Gorffennaf 2016
Petitions Committee | 11 July 2017

Research Briefing:

Petition number: [P-05-767](#)

Petition title: A487 Trunk Road Through Tre-Taliesin: Urgent Need for Effective Speed-Calming Measures

Text of petition:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to introduce effective traffic speed-calming measures along the A487 Trunk Road which flows directly through the middle of the neighbouring villages of Tre-Taliesin and Tre-r-ddol, and to consult and seek the views of local residents living in these villages.

The A487 is the major North to South Wales Trunk road running along the breadth of the West Wales Coast. This Trunk Road carries high and increasing volume of speeding vehicles and heavy goods traffic into and through the narrow middle of the Ceredigion villages of Tre-Taliesin and Tre-r-ddol. In late 2016, villagers formed the A487 Taliesin Action Group. This local action group has met and communicated closely with the LLangynfelyn Community Council, Dyfed Powys Police, Ceredigion County Council and the local Member of Parliament to undertake an analysis of the issues and potential solutions. The group have also raised their concerns and offered to meet and share their views with the North West Wales Trunk Road Agency, but this invitation has not been accepted to date.

It important that villagers who live day to day with the speeding traffic are listened to and their views fully taken into account by the Welsh Government, in order for effective speed calming measures which safeguards the villagers and road users, to be planned and implemented.

Background

Under the *Highways Act 1980*, the Welsh Government is the highway authority for the Welsh trunk road and motorway network in Wales. This includes the A487 which [it describes](#) as a,

risk maps provide risk ratings which indicate the, “statistical risk of death or serious injury” occurring on roads. On its risk calculation methodology, the Foundation states:

The risk is calculated by comparing the frequency of road crashes resulting in death and serious injury on every stretch of road with how much traffic each road is carrying. For example, if there are 20 crashes on a road carrying 10,000 vehicles a day, the risk is 10 times higher than if the road has the same number of collisions but carries 100,000 vehicles.

In 2013, the risk rating produced by the Foundation for the section of the A487 encompassing the Taliesin to Tre'r Ddol section was assessed as **medium risk** (based on 2007–2011 data). In 2014 the risk **increased to medium to high risk** (2010–2012 data) and the most recent rating in 2015 assessed the road as **medium risk** (2011–2013 data).

Welsh Government action

The [Welsh Government's Road Safety Framework](#), published in 2013, sets out the Government's road safety targets and actions. For all Welsh roads by 2020, the Welsh Government wants to see the following compared to the average for 2004–2008:

- 40% fewer people killed and seriously injured on Welsh roads;
- 25% fewer motorcyclists killed and seriously injured on Welsh roads; and
- 40% fewer young people (aged 16–24) killed and seriously injured on Welsh roads.

The Welsh Government's [National Transport Finance Plan](#) commits to, “deliver the actions set out in the Road Safety Framework for Wales” through to 2020 and beyond, and to deliver the [Safe Routes to Trunk Road Schools programme](#).

The Welsh Government has reviewed speed limits on the trunk road network, giving due consideration to the nature of the road, safety of the road and use of the road by the community. This was undertaken in line with its guidance on [Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales](#) (PDF 197KB), used for setting all local speed limits on trunk and county roads (excluding motorways) in urban and rural areas.

The outcome of this review are detailed on the [Trunk Road Safety Review website](#). The review website states that trunk road safety is continually monitored to identify potential road safety improvements, and that the review of speed limits is an ongoing process.

For the ‘A487 Taliesin Start 40mph to Tre'r Ddol End 40mph’ section, the review concluded that the existing speed limits of 30 and 40 mph should be retained, with the implementation of a prioritised programme of engineering work and Safe Routes to Trunk Road Schools works to commence in 2017/18 at the earliest.

In a [written update](#) (PDF 192 KB) to all Assembly Members on Safe Routes to Trunk Road Schools in October 2015, the then Minister for Economy, Science and Transport Edwina Hart

confirmed that the implementation of part-time 20mph speed limits at 41 additional schools had been identified as part of a three year, £4.5m rolling programme. Ysgol Gynradd Llangyfelyn in Taliesin was one of these schools and is listed as a priority for 2017/18.

The letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure to the Chair regarding this petition, notes that the Welsh Government has received correspondence on this matter from the local community expressing concerns which it has, “logged for consideration” as part of its ongoing work. The Cabinet Secretary goes on to state that the Welsh Government will be investigating possible safety measures for the A487 through Taliesin and Tre'r Ddol this financial year, via a speed survey and pedestrian crossing assessment.

National Assembly for Wales action

In response to a [question on trunk road safety](#) (PDF 931 KB) following an incident near Tre'r Ddol in 2009, the then Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport, Ieuan Wyn Jones stated:

I am not in a position to give you a direct answer about this specific location. I have listened carefully to the points that you raised and I will write to you with details about the situation, responding to your points on the accident. Generally speaking, the safety record of Welsh roads is particularly good. We met almost all of our 2010 targets, and that is a good position to be in, looking forward to the new safety target for 2020, but we will always try to improve on that.

Responding to a [question in Plenary](#) on improving road safety in mid and west Wales in March 2017, the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure, Ken Skates stated:

I'm keen to see more 20 mph zones introduced around schools [...] Other measures must be introduced and I do believe that we should look at reducing the speed of motorists passing places of education. For the next financial year, as the Member has highlighted, we'll be making available almost £4 million in road safety capital grants to fund 31 road casualty reduction schemes across 16 local authorities, and we're also delivering schemes that are benefiting 21 schools across Wales. But I do think that we need to continue to roll out our Safe Routes to Trunk Road Schools programme, which is seeing a huge number of schools in areas that are adjacent to trunk roads have 20 mph limits introduced. [...] I am looking this year— the Member may be interested to know—at the speed limit review, which is a review that examines whether speed limits should be reduced in congested areas, especially where there are schools. I'm looking to update that this very year because, as I said, I think it's imperative that we do reduce the speed at which vehicles are travelling outside and near schools.

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.



Ein cyf/Our ref KS/02011/17

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee

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21 June 2017

Dear

Thank you for your letter of 6 June in relation to Petition P-05-767 regarding safety concerns for the A487 trunk road through Tre-Taliesin and Tre'r Ddol.

We have received correspondence on this matter from the local community and those concerns have been logged for consideration as part of our ongoing work.

We have advised that we will be investigating possible safety measures for the A487 through Taliesin and Tre'r Ddol this financial year. This will include speed surveys and a pedestrian crossing assessment.

We have also received a request from residents for permission to install two white gates on the wide grass verges either side of the A487 shortly before entering the south end of Tre-Taliesin. We advised that we are satisfied that the enhanced village gateway signs and road markings that are already in place in Tre-Taliesin facilitate traffic calming and that the local community are not authorised to place any equipment on the trunk road network.

Yours sincerely,

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.

P-05-767 A487 Trunk Road Through Tre-Taliesin: Urgent Need for Effective Speed-Calming Measures – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 02.07.17

Thank you for your suggestion that our petition may be heard before the formal closing date, in order to be heard by the committee prior to the Assembly recess.

I can confirm on behalf of the A487 Taliesin Action Group and the petition signatories that we are happy for the petitions committee to now consider our petition on Wednesday 5th July.

You have also asked me to respond to the Welsh Government letter you have received on this matter, so that the committee may hear our views.

Therefore, on behalf of those who have signed the petition and the many other members of our local community:

1. For the past 9 months we have all been engaged in constructive discussion, including meeting with the police, local and national politicians, and together have established a coherent and cost-effective plan for speed calming measures. The community council have also enabled and supported participants to contribute to this democratic process. Our process is valid, reasonable and worthy of due consideration by Welsh Government officials.
2. We had already understood that the Welsh Government is to investigate possible safety measures during this financial year.
3. We have been alarmed that officials have not accepted our invitation to meet with them at the point at which they undertake their assessment, so that they can also consider our well thought-out suggestions, as part of their assessment process. After all, it is we who experience speeding traffic every hour of every day, and not welsh government officials. We would be very grateful therefore if the petitions committee could ensure that the welsh government arrange to meet with us to listen to our evidenced-based proposals and take these into account before establishing their own plans for safety measures.
4. Based upon our research findings and the views of our local community we cannot agree with the officials' comment that the existing village signage at the south-end facilitates traffic-calming.
5. A various points along the A487 from south to north wales there are already examples of white gates being used to signify to drivers that they are

entering areas where caution is needed. We had simply made a written suggestion to the welsh government that as a village we could fund the cost of constructing and installing these gates ourselves and sought their permission to do so. Our generous offer was declined.

6. In partnership with Dyfed Powys Police and the local community council we are about to commence a community speed watch campaign which will provide further empirical evidence of vehicle speeds into Tre-Taliesin and Tre'r Ddol.

I would therefore be grateful if you could place these additional comments in front of the committee.

Agenda Item 2.4

P-05-768 A call for the return of 24 hour Consultant led Obstetrics, Paediatrics and SCBU to Withybush DGH

This petition was submitted by SWAT (Save Withybush Action Team), having collected 759 signatures online and 2,773 on paper – a total of 3,532 signatures.

Petition text:

SWAT has fought for the retention of safe, effective and accessible secondary health care services for the people of Pembrokeshire since 2005. A previous petition failed to retain Consultant led Obstetrics, Paediatrics & SCBU at Withybush DGH. The Health Minister and Hywel Dda Health Board unjustly removed 24 hour Emergency Consultant led Obstetrics, Paediatrics & SCBU from Withybush DGH in 2014 and left the people of Pembrokeshire with an unsafe, inequitable and poorly accessible third class health option for, in particular, mothers, babies and children.

On behalf of SWAT and the people of Pembrokeshire I call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure that Consultant Obstetrics, Paediatrics & SCBU provision be immediately returned to pre 2014 levels. SWAT and the people of Pembrokeshire do not agree with the centralization of services onto the Glangwili site.

The Health Board was obliged to carry out Equality Impact assessments and these have clearly shown that a whole swathe of the most vulnerable in our society have been and are being put at risk by these changes. In particular the most vulnerable, the very young, pregnant women, the economically challenged and those with disabilities have been profoundly affected and continue to be. The Health Board have all this documented in their assessments but they seem to be unable or unwilling to find remedies for these issues.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire
- Mid and West Wales

Briefing for the Petitions Committee

Petition number: [P-05-0768](#)

Petition title: **A call for the return of 24 hour Consultant led Obstetrics, Paediatrics and SCBU (Special Care Baby Unit) to Withybush DGH.**

SWAT has fought for the retention of safe, effective and accessible secondary health care services for the people of Pembrokeshire since 2005. A previous petition failed to retain Consultant led Obstetrics, Paediatrics & SCBU at Withybush DGH. The Health Minister and Hywel Dda Health Board unjustly removed 24 hour Emergency Consultant led Obstetrics, Paediatrics & SCBU from Withybush DGH in 2014 and left the people of Pembrokeshire with an unsafe, inequitable and poorly accessible third class health option for, in particular, mothers, babies and children.

On behalf of SWAT and the people of Pembrokeshire I call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure that Consultant Obstetrics, Paediatrics & SCBU provision be immediately returned to pre 2014 levels. SWAT and the people of Pembrokeshire do not agree with the centralization of services onto the Glangwili site.

The Health Board was obliged to carry out Equality Impact assessments and these have clearly shown that a whole swathe of the most vulnerable in our society have been and are being put at risk by these changes. In particular the most vulnerable, the very young, pregnant women, the economically challenged and those with disabilities have been profoundly affected and continue to be. The Health Board have all this documented in their assessments but they seem to be unable or unwilling to find remedies for these issues.

I ask you to return services to the first class services they used to be. This would re-provide equitable, accessible, safe and sustainable services instead of the current arrangement which seriously disadvantages the most vulnerable people in Pembrokeshire.

NB: SWAT stands for the [Save Withybush Action Team](#).

The campaign group submitted a similar petition previously [P-04-431 : Against Health Cuts from the Residents of Pembrokeshire](#). The previous petition was first considered by the Assembly Petitions Committee on 6 November 2012, and was closed on 4 April 2017.

Policy background

In 2012 Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) released a [consultation on potential service change across the region](#), which included plans to centralise neonatal services at Glangwili Hospital in Carmarthen. There was considerable opposition to the proposals, which were subject to legal challenge, as outlined below:

- The issue of centralisation of neonatal services in Hywel Dda UHB was subject to judicial review in summer 2014; but in July 2014 Hywel Dda UHB's consultation to improve and sustain healthcare across Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire was upheld as fair and lawful by a High Court Judge;
- The UHB was party to two other Judicial Review applications brought against the then Minister for Health and Social Services in the same hearing. The second related to neonatal care at Withybush Hospital in Haverfordwest. Both cases were similarly refused.

Subsequent developments

The planned changes to services were implemented from August 2014, and in November 2015 the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health published a [review report](#) into women and children's services in Hywel Dda UHB.

The report states that the review group found 'no clinical sense in reversing the major decisions of reconfiguration made one year ago'. The report also set out that:

Despite a strong public lobby which expressed concern about the changes, we see no clinical case for reverting to stand alone hospital provision. We acknowledge that some families have reported harrowing experiences due to additional travelling time and uncertainty about the need for transfers but we did not see evidence of any worsened outcomes in maternity or paediatric care as a direct result of the reconfiguration. There had been improved compliance with national and professional service standards and although more work is needed to consolidate the staffing and systems we see a strong future for a single service increasingly integrated across two sites.

The UHB supported the recommendations of the report at its [meeting in November 2015](#) and agreed an action plan at its [January 2016 meeting](#). The Cabinet Secretary for Health, Wellbeing and Sport in January 2017 approved £1.209 million for Hywel Dda University Health Board to develop a full business case for the [second phase](#) of improvements to maternity and neonatal services at Glangwili hospital, which is currently being developed.

Temporary changes to Paediatric Ambulatory Care Unit at Withybush hospital

In November 2016 Hywel Dda UHB announced a [temporary reduction](#) of the opening hours of the Paediatric Ambulatory Care Unit at Withybush Hospital due to staff shortages, which was reported in the [media](#).

On [13 June 2017](#) the issue of the temporary removal of overnight paediatric care in Withybush was raised in Plenary. The First Minister stated:

We know that the health board will be going out to consultation before long with specialists in the area in order to secure sustainable services. But it's true to say that this is temporary, and not permanent.

Additional background information

[Independent scrutiny panel reports on the proposals for service change](#) (2013/14)

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd, Llesiant a Chwaraeon
Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-768
Ein cyf/Our ref VG/01383/17

David John Rowlands AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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

6 July 2017

Dear David,

I am writing following the letter of 22 May regarding Petition P-05-764 from the Save Withybush Action Team (SWAT) regarding reinstating 24-hour Consultant-led Obstetrics, Paediatrics and SCBU (Special Care Baby Unit) at Withybush Hospital.

I note the issues raised in the petition. These are matters that have been raised in the chamber with me on a number of occasions.

The Welsh Government and Hywel Dda University Health Board are fully committed to the future of Withybush Hospital and have made it clear that it will continue to play an important role in the provision of services for people in Pembrokeshire.

I am assured that obstetric and maternity services across the health board area are safe, and this is reflected by nationally recognised studies.

In 2014, the health board concentrated consultant-led obstetric and paediatric services at Glangwili Hospital in Carmarthen. The changes were made to improve compliance with national clinical standards for maternity and neonatal care, ensure that clinicians handled enough cases to maintain their skills and to maintain its status as a training provider in obstetrics, paediatrics and gynaecology. In preparation for the changes the health board undertook a comprehensive Equality Impact Assessment. This is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains appropriate.

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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.

The changes have been independently reviewed by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) on two occasions. These have confirmed that the services are safe and sustainable, and have led to improved patient outcomes. There is also better compliance with national clinical standards.

In its 2015 review of the impact of changes to maternity, neonatal and paediatric services in Hywel Dda, the RCPCH stated “we did not see evidence of any worsened outcomes in maternity or paediatric care as a direct result of the reconfiguration”.

The changes to neonatal services were also challenged by means of Judicial Review in 2014 when the Court ruled that all aspects of the decision taking procedures adopted by both the health board and Welsh Ministers were fair and lawful.

Hywel Dda University Health Board routinely monitors data on rates of perinatal mortality and stillbirth for both local review and submission to a number of Wales and UK-wide audits. The latest available data demonstrates perinatal mortality rates in the health board area are comparable with other UK units of comparable birth numbers.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Vaughan Gething'.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd, Llesiant a Chwaraeon
Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport

Agenda Item 3.1

P-04-526 Please make Senedd TV accessible to deaf people

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to provide subtitling and signed language access to televised debates and proceedings, to enable the 300,000 with hearing loss and deafness in Wales to follow the democratic processes hearing people already enjoy.

Petition raised by: Mervyn James

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 21 January 2014

Number of signatures: 25



Elin Jones AC, Llywydd

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru

Elin Jones AM, Presiding Officer

National Assembly for Wales

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

Your ref:
Our ref: PO189/EJ/HP

15 June 2017

Dear Mike

P-04-526 Please make Senedd TV accessible to deaf people

Thank you for your letter with regards to the above petition.

Accuracy and Quality of British Sign Language (BSL) Interpreted Proceedings of First Minister's Questions (FMQs)

As you refer to in your letter of 19 May 2017, there were concerns raised by both deaf members of the public and BSL interpreters regarding the accuracy and quality of the interpretation of plenary proceedings, due to the pace and complexity of subject matter and the technical language used. These constraints have not changed and it remains an immense challenge to provide a live and accurate interpretation; however, we have been working on a number of improvements which I'm happy to update you on.

Following a period of research work we procured and installed a new digital broadcasting archive system. A benefit of the new system is that we can record the BSL interpretation immediately after First Minister's Questions has finished, giving the interpreter time to watch the session and prepare notes. This has improved the accuracy and quality of the broadcast interpreted proceeding and has been warmly welcomed by the interpreters.

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg / We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru

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Elin Jones AC, Llywydd

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru

Elin Jones AM, Presiding Officer

National Assembly for Wales

In September 2014, the interpretation service was reinstated using this new technology, with S4C broadcasting BSL interpretation of First Minister's Questions on their 'Y Dydd yn y Cynulliad' programme. S4C took the decision to bring Y Dydd yn y Cynulliad to an end in April 2016, and the Assembly, recognizing the need for this service, has taken on the responsibility for running it since then.

We currently show signed and subtitled First Minister's Questions on the Assembly's YouTube channel, and the signed version of FMQ on Senedd.tv. A new section dedicated to signed proceedings will be set up on the Senedd Extra section of Senedd.tv in the next few weeks, making it easier for users to find these recordings.

You may also be interested to note that the National Assembly for Wales won the Service Excellence category at the recent Action on Hearing Loss (AHL) Cymru. The awards are organised to recognise success in providing deaf-friendly services to the half a million people in Wales who are deaf or have hearing loss.

The Assembly achieved the AHL Louder than Words accreditation in 2013, retaining it in 2014 and 2015. Also, for the past two years, the Assembly was presented with an Action on Hearing Loss Cymru's Silver Excellence Wales Award.

If we can provide any further information, do let me know.

Yours sincerely

Elin Jones AM, Llywydd

Agenda Item 3.2

P-04-408 Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder Service

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to fund the Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder Service in Wales to the same degree as the Adult Eating Disorder Service in Wales.

It has come to my attention that there is a disparity in funding between Adult Services and Child and Adolescent Services as regards funding for Eating Disorder Treatment. At the present time Adult Eating Disorder Services receive £1 million per year from the Welsh Assembly, as well as 4 specialist trained provider groups.

Sadly research points to the fact that Eating Disorders, especially Anorexia Nervosa, are predominantly first experienced around puberty. Historically puberty was around 12–15, however, puberty is becoming younger and therefore statistics are beginning to show the prevalence of Anorexia Nervosa starting at younger ages is apparent. Bulimia Nervosa is generally a disease with an onset age of 18–25, however as with Anorexia this may differ from person to person. The fact that in both disorders, and indeed all diagnosable Eating Disorders, early intervention is the key to a quick recovery, therefore preventing long term financial implications for the WAG, makes this plea more pertinent.

I therefore implore the Assembly to consider this a priority for debate and to mend this disparity by giving equal finances and services to the Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder service in Wales as already given to Adult EDS.'

Petition raised by: Helen Missen

Date petition first considered by Committee: 17 July 2012

Number of signatures: 246



Ein cyf/Our ref VG/01351/17

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

20 June 2017

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your further letter of 2 June on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding petition P-04-408 Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder services.

I note the comments made by Mrs Missen and appreciate her concerns about the need for early diagnosis and intervention in treating this debilitating condition. The need for early identification and intervention in order to stop more serious problems developing is a key theme in the NHS-led Together for Children and Young People Programme. The programme is examining the way in which CAMHS services work with partners to deliver an appropriate response to the needs of children and young people, including those with an eating disorder. One of the early products of the programme was to develop an eating disorder pathway for adoption across CAMHS to promote consistent high quality provision.

In relation to how the additional £500,000 funding for eating disorders is to be utilised, the focus will be on strengthening services around transition. The differences between how CAMHS and adult services support their clients with eating disorders are considerable. CAMHS commonly delivers a family-based treatment approach up to the age of 18, whereas adult services deliver an individualised model of treatment from the 18th birthday, with varying degrees of involvement of family members in the treatment. This arrangement causes anxiety and uncertainty, which is compounded by weak links between CAMHS and adult services and a lack of information about the respective services that would aid communication and preparation to manage the transition effectively.

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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.

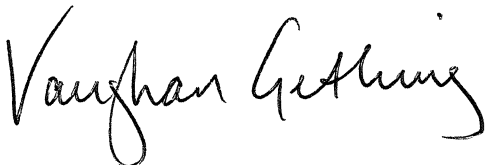
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

As a result, the new funding is being used to develop unified services that work across service boundaries and benefit from each other's skills and expertise, with transition from CAMHS to adult services being clinically-led rather than solely age-driven. Among other things, in order to improve skills and knowledge of staff working with young people of transitional age, training currently offered to deliver the Maudsley model of family-based treatment for eating disorders will be extended to staff in adult eating disorders services. CAMHS will also offer consultation to staff based in adult eating disorders services, as well as undertaking assessments as required.

CAMHS will also assist in the setting up of joint treatment interventions, including Multi-Family Group Therapy Programmes, Cognitive Remediation Therapy and Family Support. CAMHS and adult services will work collaboratively to collate, analyse and report audit data and outcome measures to evaluate interventions. Evaluation of outcomes will incorporate goals-based outcomes and feedback regarding satisfaction and service user experiences.

I hope this information is helpful to the Committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Vaughan Gething'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Vaughan' being larger and more prominent than the last name 'Gething'.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd, Llesiant a Chwaraeon
Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport

Agenda Item 3.3

P-05-749 Reinstate Corwen's Mobile Dental Service

This petition was submitted by Ysgol Caer Drewyn having collected 157 signatures – 152 on paper and 5 on-line.

Text of the Petition

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to make sure that money is made available for the mobile dentist service in the Bala– Wrexham area to be re-instated and to continue as a service which is important for the future health of children in the area.

Additional Information

We want to start a petition in the hope of getting a replacement dental van to come to our school and help us look after our teeth, like it used too. We have already lost our school bus and we feel like we are losing lots of things from the community which will greatly affect our future.

Assembly Constituency and Region.

- Clwyd West
- North Wales

**P-05-749 Mobile Dental Service Reinstated Corwen – Correspondence from the
Petitioner to the Committee, 27.06.17**

Dear Kathryn,

Sorry for the late reply, its been a hectic term ! The last the children and myself in reference to their petition was that the van was being reinstated within the next financial year, which obviously runs from April until April, but they have no indication of when and they understand this can be difficult. The fact that their petition has been discussed and that they personally delivered it to Cardiff made a huge impact of them and their lives, with all the pupils feeling that their voice was heard. I hope this helps. If we can be of any further assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me. Sorry again for the late reply.

kind Regards,

Emma

Agenda Item 3.4

P-04-564 The Restoration of Inpatient Beds, Minor Injuries Cover and X-Ray Unit to the Ffestiniog Memorial Hospital

Petition wording:

Until the Health Minister has had time to consider Prof Marcus Longley's recommendations on rural healthcare in Wales – a study that was commissioned by the Minister himself in January of this year – we, the undersigned, call on the National Assembly of Wales to urge the Welsh Labour Government to delay decision on Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board's Business Case aimed at downgrading our Memorial Hospital to a mere 'Memorial Centre'.

Petition raised by: Geraint Vaughn Jones

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 17 June 2014

Number of signatures : 2,754

David Rowlands AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
Tŷ Hywel
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

6 July 2017

Dear David,

Petition P-04-564 Restoration of Inpatient Beds, Minor Injuries Cover and X-Ray Unit to the Ffestiniog Memorial Hospital

I am writing to update you on the Committee's forward work programme meeting which included consideration of the letter from Mike Hedges, in his role as former Chair of the Petitions Committee, dated 19 May 2017.

We note the detailed work that your Committee has undertaken to date in respect of this petition. Whilst the issues raised in this petition are clearly of interest to this Committee, you will be aware that our remit is to scrutinise Welsh Government policy and strategy. We are not in a position therefore to take forward the issue raised in this specific individual case.

We recognise that there are clear concerns about this specific example in respect of the Ffestiniog Memorial Hospital. The Committee also recognises the broader issues it raises about the configuration and delivery of health services in rural areas and other areas where there are difficulties in accessing health services.

These important policy issues are therefore matters that this Committee intends to closely monitor. In terms of timing, it is our intention to consider the broad matters raised in the petition within the context of the findings of the final report of the Parliamentary Review of Health and Social Care in Wales, due to be



published later this year. The Committee anticipates the Parliamentary Review will consider matters of rural primary care and community hospitals in its report.

This Committee will then decide what approach it wishes to take and whether it will undertake any specific work in this regard.

I will keep you updated on our work programme.

I hope you find this update helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David Lloyd". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr Dai Lloyd AM
Chair, Health, Social Care and Sport Committee



P-04-481 Close the Gap for deaf pupils in Wales

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to develop a national strategy to Close the Gap in educational attainment between deaf pupils and their peers.

The National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) Cymru presents this petition today as it is both Deaf Awareness Week and two years since 55 AMs pledged to take action to Close the Gap for deaf pupils.

Still, Welsh Government statistics demonstrate significant attainment gaps between deaf pupils and their peers. In 2012, deaf pupils were 26% less likely to achieve 5 GCSEs at A*-C, and 41% less likely to achieve A*-C passes in core subjects English/Welsh, Maths and Science.

Our video petition asks the experts (deaf pupils themselves) what matters most. They told us:

- We need appropriate support in school and college
- We need all classrooms to have good acoustics
- Some of us use sign language. Help us encourage our hearing peers and teachers to learn sign.
- We need more teachers and pupils to be deaf aware.

Too many deaf pupils are facing barriers in these areas. A national strategy is needed to address the barriers and Close the Gap!

Additional Information

Our video petition and an accompanying report can be downloaded at www.ndcs.org.uk/ClosetheGapWales

The video petition was produced with the help of eight deaf young people outlines the four things that they feel are most important to deaf pupils at school and college.

The accompanying report outlines the barriers that many deaf pupils in Wales are facing in these areas. It also makes suggestions on how a strategy could help to overcome these barriers.

Petition raised by: NDCS

Date petition first considered by Committee: 14 May 2013



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref ARD/00369/17

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

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

 June 2017



Thank you for your letter of 23 May providing further evidence from the petitioner, NDCS Cymru, regarding their petition 'Close the Gap for Deaf Pupils in Wales' (ref: P-04-481). I have provided some further information below in response to the issues raised by NDCS Cymru.

Teacher training

As I previously explained, the accreditation criteria set out the high level requirements and expectations including the requirement to develop future teachers to meet the needs of **all** learners including those with ALN such as hearing impairment.

The professional standards for teaching and leadership, recently out for public consultation, also make clear the responsibility on all teachers and leaders to ensure the needs of **all** learners are met; this includes those with hearing impairment. These responsibilities are career-long and are intended to be an integral part of the evidence required for the award of Qualified Teacher Status.

ALNCo training

The specification for the ALNCo qualification is currently being considered. However it is not intended to be a qualification in ALN. The qualification is intended to focus on leadership and management skills, collaboration and partnership working, evidence based practice and of course creating an environment that is supportive of learners with ALN which includes those with a hearing impairment.

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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.

Pack Page 89

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.

Workforce planning

Currently the WLG Data Unit and Welsh Government are collating data on specialist services working in local authorities, including advisory and specialist teachers. A range of specialisms have been included in that data collection, including hearing impairment and multi-sensory impairment. The collection is also specifically collating information on skills in British Sign Language. The data collection is still on-going and once available these data will assist local government in planning their workforce and help identify training needs.

ALN Transformation programme funding

We recognise the importance of raising awareness among education professionals on a range of ALN. Much of the implementation funding will be targeted at workforce development, which is fundamental to the transformation. However, at this time, we do not intend to develop deaf specific training or other ALN specific training.

As part of the ALN implementation programme, we have commissioned rapid evidence assessments (REAs) for a range of SEN. We have commissioned the University of Birmingham to undertake REAs on the effectiveness of interventions to support young people with hearing impairment, sensory impairment and multi-sensory impairment. As part of this contract, the University of Birmingham will use the findings of the REAs to develop guidance written in a style which is accessible to practitioners and parents. I understand the NDCS Cymru have offered to engage with the University of Birmingham on the deafness component of this work.

Acoustics and 21st Century Schools Programme

NDCS Cymru approached Welsh Government recently with respect to the contractual clause for compliance with acoustic standards and we continue to welcome their input.

We strive to ensure that excellent facilities are available to pupils. Whilst Building Bulletin 93 applies only to schools we will explore the feasibility of its application to other sectors.

At present the Welsh Government does not intend to amend legislation in regard to acoustics in schools. However, our commitment to improvement of the educational estate continues with the second wave of investment in the 21st Century Schools and Education Programme, which begins in April 2019 and is anticipated to run over a five year period.

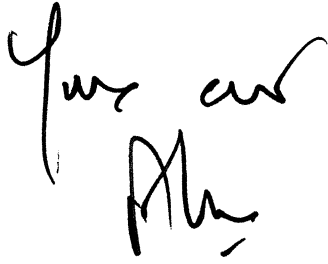
As always, we welcome discussions with NDCS with regard to raising awareness of potential improvements to acoustics within the existing schools estate.

Ongoing monitoring of attainment gap

We are currently in the process of a large scale education reform. As part of this, we are reviewing how we collect and use data. We are mindful of how any changes could impact on the data for specific groups of learners, and we will ensure that we continue to monitor all groups. In light of any changes, we will continue to review the impact of small groups of learners.

I would be happy to meet with NDCS to further discuss these issues and I would be grateful if you would contact my diary secretary at DS.MinLLandWL@gov.wales to arrange a suitable date.

My officials will continue to engage with NDCS Cymru, via a number of groups, including through their membership of the Third Sector Additional Needs Alliance (TSANA).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alun Davies'.

Alun Davies AC/AM

Gweinidog y Gymraeg a Dysgu Gydol Oes
Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language

**P-04-481 Close the Gap for deaf pupils in Wales – Correspondence from the
Petitioner to the Committee, 04.07.17**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Petitions Committee for its persistence in taking forward key issues raised within NDCS Cymru's *Close the Gap* petition.

The recent response to the Petitions Committee from the Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language re our petition demonstrates that there is still significant work to be done in effecting positive change for deaf children and young people in Wales. I would, therefore, be grateful if you would liaise with his diary secretary, as he suggests, to arrange a meeting for us to progress discussion of the issues raised.

With thanks,

Jayne

Jayne Dulson

Director, Wales

The National Deaf Children's Society

Agenda Item 3.6

P-04-522 Asbestos in Schools

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to put measures in place to ensure that parents and guardians of children across Wales can easily access information about the presence and management of asbestos in all school buildings.

Given the health risks associated with the presence of asbestos in public buildings, we believe parents and guardians across Wales have the right;

- to know if asbestos is located in their school;
- to know whether, where asbestos is present, it is being managed in line with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012;
- to access that information easily online

Petition raised by: Cenric Clement-Evans

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 10 December 2013

Number of signatures: 448



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-522
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/00885/17

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

16 June 2017

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your letter of 2 June to which you attached comments from Mr Cenic Clement-Evans discussed at Petition Committee meeting in May, and also correspondence from the former Minister for Education and Skills in April 2016.

I will address the issues raised by Mr Clement-Evans in the order they appear in his letter.

1. Response to the Petitions Committee 1st March 201

Mr Clement-Evans asked for my views on the former Minister for Education and Skills letter of 2016 in response to points raised by the Petitions Committee. Four points were raised; detailed below are my responses to these issues.

Accessing Asbestos Information Online

As I explained to Mr Clement-Evans when I met him on 6 October 2016, I do not intend to require local authorities to make information about asbestos management available online, as this information is already available on request.

Asbestos Management in School Working Group in Wales and DfE Steering Group

My officials continue to liaise with colleagues in England, so that the Welsh Government is kept informed of developments in this area. The latest meeting of the Department for Education (DfE) Asbestos in Schools Steering Group was on 3 April 2017.

I reiterate the point made by my predecessor. Any differences between the terms of reference of the Welsh Asbestos Management in Schools Working Group and those of the DfE Asbestos in Schools Steering Group reflect the complementary role of the two groups.

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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.

As asbestos in schools presents similar problems in both England and Wales, we are satisfied that the work carried out in England will provide Wales with enough information to take any appropriate action.

2. Phased Removal of Asbestos from Schools in Wales

Welsh Government policy on school investment is set out in Taking Wales Forward, our Programme for Government. This document includes a commitment to “Invest nearly £2 billion in new and refurbished schools, community schools and college buildings by 2024.”

Through our current 21st Century Schools Programme there will be an investment of £1.4 billion over the five year period ending in 2019. This investment will support the rebuild and refurbishment of more than 150 schools and colleges. Our second wave of investment (Band B) under this Programme is scheduled to run over the period 2019 - 2024, and will continue to ensure the provision of new and refurbished learning environments for teachers and pupils.

As you can see, this is a big and ambitious Programme which will tackle some of the poorest condition schools in Wales and works include the removal or treatment of asbestos in schools where appropriate.

Local authorities can also use funds contained in the Welsh Government’s Revenue Support Grant to keep their schools buildings maintained and in a good state of repair.

3. Responsibility for Policy on Asbestos in Schools in Wales

I note the views of the Minister of State for Schools. Health and Safety legislation applies equally to both Wales and England.. Responsibility for the management of asbestos lies with the duty holder. In the school premises context, this can either be the local authority or the school governing body.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is responsible for enforcement of health and safety law in all educational establishments across Great Britain under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. Our policy is that we will support duty holders to adhere to the legislation in respect of management of asbestos in schools. We are keeping a watching brief on the work done in England on this issue for this reason.

While the remit of the English steering group remains English schools, the issues are substantially the same as for those in Wales, so the findings of the group will be very relevant to us. With regard to the draft “Proposals for an Asbestos Management Assurance Process”, I can confirm that my officials are considering the content and I will watch progress on this draft process with interest.

In Wales we are also keen to ensure that our schools are safe for children and teachers, in relation to asbestos as well as to other environmental hazards, and this is why we are investing heavily in our school estate through the 21st Century Schools and Education Programme. We provide support in the form of clear guidance to assist with this responsibility, giving clarity around the roles of duty holders and their responsibilities around the management of asbestos.

Local authorities are also making use of their own resources to address asbestos and other environmental hazards where appropriate.

This year as part of our annual collection of data on school condition and suitability we will be reminding local authorities of their duties with respect to careful management of asbestos in their schools. In addition we will be asking them to indicate whether an asbestos plan is in place for each school. Where plans are not in place we will ask for reasons why and what plans there are to address this. We will reserve the right to notify the Health and Safety Executive, as the enforcement body for the legislation, where appropriate.

4. Working Group on Asbestos

As I indicated in my meeting with Mr Clement-Evans and Dr Joseph Carter in October, it has always been our intention that the Asbestos Management in Schools Working Group could call upon additional stakeholders if required.

The Asbestos Management in Schools Working Group last met in November 2016. During this meeting, it was agreed that when there were significant developments in England the Working Group would seek views from key stakeholder groups in discussions for Wales.

In the meantime, members of the group have continued to monitor developments in England, most recently at the April DfE Steering Group meeting. Attending this meeting provides my officials with the opportunity to listen to views from key stakeholders and groups within this field.

As a result of liaising with UK colleagues through meetings and discussions, it has become apparent that key decisions have recently been made for England. My officials are now in the process of organising a Working Group meeting in Wales to consider these developments in England and their relevance to schools in Wales. Key stakeholder groups will be invited to this meeting.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams', written in a cursive style.

Kirsty Williams AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education

Agenda Item 3.7

P-05-722 Protect Special Educational Needs.

This petition was submitted by Nicola Butterfield, having collected 553 signatures.

Text of the Petition

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure that spending on the provision of special educational needs is ringfenced, recognising that this is an investment in the children of Wales, and that local authorities should be directed to ensure that adequate levels of funding are available so that those children who require such services are able to go on and live happy and fulfilled lives, while their families are not left to contend with the fear of competing with one another for placements.

Assembly Constituency and Region:

Aberavon

South Wales West

Mr. David Rowlands AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA (**By Email**)

Dear Chair,

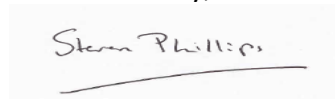
P-05-722 PROTECT SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

I refer to your predecessor's letter of 21 March, which was not sent to me based upon the email distribution list attached to the most recent correspondence. Might I suggest that future correspondence is addressed directly to me in the interests of providing a swift reply?

Turning to the substance, I can add little to my letter of 20 January. Attached to that correspondence was a detailed framework that the Council utilises in these cases based upon the recognised Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice for Wales. With great respect to the petitioner (and whilst she is entitled to her opinion), I see no basis for her observations that the "system is open to abuse" and "not fit for purpose". I do not understand the basis for these assertions and I am left to guess at what specific concerns she may have, beyond her opinion on the inadequacy of funding here and elsewhere. Moreover, in my previous letter I offered the petitioner the opportunity to meet with Council officers to discuss her concerns. However, having checked with the relevant staff here, I discover that there has been no contact from the petitioner since before Christmas last year.

As previously, I also find myself handicapped by the fact that the correspondence from the Minister (to which she refers) has not been shared with us, so I am unable to comment on those aspects. Indeed, it would appear that the majority of the issues raised by the petitioner in her latest correspondence are again directed at the Welsh Government. However, the offer from this Council to engage with her still stands.

Yours sincerely,



Steven Phillips
Chief Executive

Chief Executive's Office
Swyddfa'r Prif Weithredwr

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Pack Page 99

Agenda Item 3.8

P-04-683 Trees in Towns

This petition was submitted by Coed Cadw Woodland Trust, having collected 2,258 signatures.

Text of the Petition

- *I support the aspiration that every city, town and village in Wales should benefit from at least 20% tree canopy cover, matching the leafy suburbs of the best places to live*
- *I call on the Welsh Government to support this by establishing a challenge fund for tree planting to improve the environment where people live*
- *This should particularly support the planting of native trees, that can provide a habitat and nectar source for pollinators, and also fruit trees, that will provide a sustainable source of food.*

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Cardiff South and Penarth
- South Wales Central



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-683
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/01043/17

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

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

21 June 2017

Dear Mike

Thank you for your letter of 2 June, regarding tree cover in towns and cities.

With Welsh Government support, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) has recently published an update to their 'Tree Cover in Towns and Cities' study. This is a desk-based mapping analysis of aerial photographs for 220 urban areas. It allows comparison of urban tree cover in Wales between 2013 and previous tree cover studies based on images from 2009 and 2006.

The results show an overall trend of a decrease in the percentage of tree canopy in urban areas in Wales. An average of 16.3% canopy cover was found in 2013, down from 17.0% in 2009. Total cover varies dramatically across the country, for example from just 6% in Rhyl and 8% in Port Talbot to 30% in Treharris and 27% in Abertillery. Natural Resources Wales has made their analysis available to local authorities to inform local management of canopy cover, including for example where protection of trees from loss which may be considered.

This study captured data on tree canopy only and not the other plant species or wider green spaces that exist in towns and cities.

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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.

Information about the survey is published on the NRW website and reported in the Woodlands for Wales Indicators which are published annually by Welsh Government.

Regards
Lesley

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs

Trees in Cities Review and Evidence (Petitions Committee 1.11.16 – Woodland trust / Coed Cadw)

In response to the petitions committee call for evidence we have identified some key points.

The committee wanted to know *what evidence there was for tree coverage changes across Wales in the past 5 years*. According to NRW data, there has been 12,700ha woodland creation in the period from 2011–2016, of which 10,000ha is restocking. This is below the WG ambition set in 2010 of 5,000ha increase per annum in order to meet the ambition of 100,000ha increase by 2030. This ambition was then reduced in 2015 to a 10,000ha objective by 2020. In the past two years the planting and restocking levels in Wales have reached their lowest rates in 30 years, data for 2016–17 shows only 400ha replanting across Wales, none of which was on the publicly owned estate managed by NRW.

In answer to the *query about the role of urban trees – and greening urban environment* urban tree coverage is going backwards, 159 of 220 towns across Wales have seen a decrease in tree cover between 2009 and 2013; with the average cover falling from 17.0% to 16.3% this period.

Wrexham council have collaborated with the Woodland Trust to deliver a ‘*Tree and woodland strategy 2016–2026*’ which details a 10-year management plan to achieve a minimum 20% canopy cover. They have built this strategy on the back of the compelling benefits of trees in cities to deliver a variety of health, economic, environmental and wellbeing objectives.

We ask the Welsh Government to stand by the following asks of the petition:

- To aim for every city, town and village in Wales to benefit from at least 20% tree canopy cover, matching the leafy suburbs of the best places to live.
- To support this by establishing a challenge fund for tree planting to improve the environment where people live
- This should particularly support the planting of native trees, that can provide a habitat and nectar source for pollinators, and also fruit trees, that will provide a sustainable source of food.
- Provide meaningful support for the planting of more native trees in our towns and cities, and in particular that this issue will be addressed when Natural Resources Wales produce Area Statements, as they are required to do under the Environment Act.

Notes

The benefits of trees in the urban environment are well understood in terms of carbon capture, managing urban heat islands and health benefits such as reducing asthma in children. The benefits of controlling water flow are of particular significance, the Pitt Review identified that 2/3rds all flooding in 2007 events was caused surface water runoff. Evidence suggests increasing tree cover across an urban area by 5% can reduce surface water runoff by 2% – and that by comparison to asphalt, trees provide an 80% increase in water infiltration rates.

Forestry Commission – National Statistics on woodland area, planting and publicly funded restocking <https://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/inf-d-7aqknx>

National Assembly for Wales Research Service, May 2017 – Woodlands in Wales: a Quick Guide – www.assembly.wales/.../Woodlands%20in%20Wales/17-008-Web-English2.pdf

NHS Forest – Health and Wellbeing evidence of trees in towns and cities:
<http://www.nhsforest.org/evidence>

NRW review – Tree cover in Towns and Cities, 2014:
<https://naturalresources.wales/media/4123/tree-cover-in-wales-towns-and-cities-2014-study.pdf>

Wrexham – Tree and Woodland Strategy 2016–2026:
http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/assets/pdfs/env_services/trees/tree_and_woodland_strategy.pdf

Woodland Trust – Trees in Towns report, 2012:
<file:///wtfs01/folderredirection/spa/Downloads/trees-in-our-towns.pdf>

Dear Kathryn,

Thanks for this response, please could you pass on the following response to the Cabinet Secretary along with our previous letter to the Petitions Committee:

‘We welcome the fact that the Cabinet Secretary has highlighted how the tree cover in towns and cities has declined from 2009 to 2013, failing under the direction of Welsh Government rhetoric to improve the public realm, environment and manage greenhouse gas emissions.

Considering the evidence has been accepted, Coed Cadw / The Woodland Trust would like to suggest that the Cabinet Secretary considers increasing tree canopy coverage in Wales’ towns and cities a priority for the Area Statement process that will be contributed to by Natural Resources Wales.’

Best Wishes,

Sam Packer

Agenda Item 3.9

P-05-747 TB Testing of Cattle

This petition was submitted by Nigel Bowyer, having collected 309 signatures.

Text of the Petition

We, the undersigned, object to the proposal by the Welsh Assembly, to reduce the interval for routine TB testing of cattle in designated areas of Wales from 12 months to 6 months.

Action petitioned for: withdrawal of this proposal, and maintain the status quo.

Assembly Constituency and Region.

- Monmouth
- South Wales East

STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE Bovine Tuberculosis – Next Steps

DATE 20 June 2017

BY Lesley Griffiths, Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs

I would like to begin by thanking the members of the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee for their report on our TB Eradication Programme. I formally responded to the report this morning and was particularly pleased to see the Committee's recommendations were in line with our proposals which were consulted on late last year.

Building on progress made over the last nine years, many of you know the significant financial and social impact bovine TB has on farming families, their businesses and the rural economy. It is important we continue to tackle this disease to safeguard the future of the industry and to protect public and animal health. The consultation attracted almost a thousand representations and I want to thank all those who responded. Many agreed with the need to take a more regional approach and so later this year I will establish Low, Intermediate and High TB Areas.

Over the last few years real progress has been made. The number of new incidents has fallen by over 40% since its peak in 2009 and is now the lowest it has been in 12 years. Through increased testing, we are finding infected cattle at an earlier stage and now around 5% of herds have TB. The regional approach will build on what we have already achieved and accelerate progress towards a TB free Wales.

Today I have published the Wales TB Eradication Programme document and first Delivery Plan which provides the details of evidence based controls to be applied to each region.

The low TB area in North Wales is where the disease has not become established. Here, becoming TB free is within our grasp in the short to medium term. TB free status will boost trade opportunities and mean herds require less regular TB testing, reducing costs for farmers and Government.

Our evidence shows cattle movements into the area are the main driver of disease which does occur and so, from 1 October, post-movement testing will be introduced. This will help protect the area by identifying infected animals at the earliest opportunity, before they go on to infect others. The evidence shows movement of cattle from neighbouring higher TB areas is one of the main drivers of disease in the intermediate areas. Post-movement testing will, therefore, be introduced to the intermediate areas late next year.

The priority for the high TB areas is to continue to reduce the number of TB breakdowns and the severity of each case. In the consultation we asked for feedback on a proposal for herd testing to be carried out every six months instead of annually. Six monthly testing has been beneficial in the Intensive Action Area, where this more frequent testing finds 22% of all breakdowns. It has also been successfully used in eradication programmes in other countries. I know from my discussions with farmers, however, it can be inconvenient and practically difficult to gather cattle from pasture in the summer months. This is why I have decided six monthly testing will only be required for those herds which are the highest risk of becoming infected. We are gathering the evidence needed to identify these herds and so, for now, annual testing will remain for all Wales.

Farmers told us they want herd TB status information made available so they can make a judgement on the risk of the cattle they are buying. We know Risk Based Trading schemes have made a significant contribution to TB eradication in New Zealand and Australia.

Providing herd-level information will be one of the most important parts of the Programme going forward, complementing our regional policies. We have made a start by grant funding livestock markets to update their equipment to receive and display TB information. In the longer-term, only a mandatory system will make sure cattle sellers provide TB information at the point of sale and we will explore ways this can be introduced.

The Cattle Health Certification Standards TB voluntary health schemes, known as CHeCS, will also play a pivotal role by allowing herds to demonstrate they are a lower risk even if they are in a high TB area. This will help buyers minimise the risk of introducing the disease and participating

herds classified as the lowest risk will be exempt from some of our controls. I urge Members to help me encourage farmers to sign-up to a scheme and ask for TB information of the cattle they are buying, no matter where they come from.

A key element of our approach to disease eradication is to deal with TB in long standing and recurrent TB breakdowns. Some of these 'chronic' TB breakdowns have been under TB restrictions for many years. Eliminating disease in these herds will significantly reduce the costs and implications to the taxpayer, herd owners and neighbouring herds.

We are putting in place tailored action plans for chronic breakdowns with measures specifically aimed at clearing up infection. In some of these chronic breakdowns, badgers may be identified as part of the problem and, unless we accept these herds remaining persistently infected, we must find ways to break the cycle of infection between badgers and cattle. We are considering a range of options to do this, including where necessary cage-trapping and humanely killing infected badgers.

This is a new approach and is not a repeat of the reactive culling previously used in England. The trap, test and removal operations being planned will be restricted to those breakdowns where investigations indicate badger infection is a key driver of the disease persisting. We will also only remove test positive badgers.

In areas where it can be proved badgers are not contributing to the disease, we will continue with cattle specific measures, including increased biosecurity.

Along with these new measures we also need to be prudent with our budgets, especially with the future loss of European funding. It is important we prevent slaughtered animals being overvalued because it increases the cost to the taxpayer. I am concerned our average compensation payments are 60% higher than in England so I am reducing the compensation cap to £5,000 and reviewing our compensation system. I will look at those used in other countries to inform any changes.

I fully appreciate just how distressing and debilitating TB is for farmers. My message to them is things are getting better and through working together we can achieve our mutual aim of eradicating this disease.

P-05-747 TB Testing of Cattle – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 04.07.17

Dear Sir

Firstly my I thank the committee for considering my petition against the proposal to reduce the test interval for tb from 12 months to 6. I am pleased that the cabinet secretary has announced that the 12 month test period will be maintained. I am sure that the weight of consultation responses, including this petition, swayed the decision. Although not part of this petition, the agricultural industry will welcome the commitment to carry out a humane badger cull to attempt to help long term breakdowns return to tb free status. This is long overdue and only once this policy is implemented can Welsh Government claim to have a tb eradication policy rather than one of control of tb within the national herd, which is the case at the moment.

Regards

Nigel Bowyer

P-05-753 Strengthening the Legislative and Regulatory Framework Surrounding Waste Wood Processing Facilities

This petition was submitted by Alexander Williams having collected 232 signatures.

Text of the Petition

We, the undersigned, call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to:

Direct Natural Resources Wales, local authorities and other relevant public bodies to work together to use their existing powers and duties to take effective and efficient enforcement action within the recycling industry.

Strengthen the legislative and regulatory framework where required to enable relevant public bodies to undertake more efficient and effective enforcement action (including monitoring), and enable them to prosecute and impose stronger financial penalties on companies and individual company directors who breach their operational controls such as planning conditions or terms of their operational licences and environmental permits;

Review existing legislation to allow the public, Fire and Rescue Services and other public bodies to recoup the costs of dealing with incidents, such as the recent fire at South Wales Wood Recycling Ltd, if the cause of the fire is found to be as a result of the company's negligence, criminal action or breaches of other regulations, conditions or permissions.

Review environmental protection rules and provide guidance to local authorities to ensure that all waste wood processing facilities are not located in close proximity to residential premises, sites of special scientific interest or sites of importance for nature conservation.

Undertake a comprehensive assessment on the long-term health implications of the inhalation of wood dust caused by the processing of waste wood and undertake an ongoing assessment of the dust deposits at wood processing facilities.

Assembly Constituency and Region.

- Ogmere
- South Wales West



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-759
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/01042/17

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

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

June 2017

Dear Mike

Thank you for your letter of 2 June regarding Petition P-05-753 on strengthening the legislative and regulatory framework surrounding waste wood processing facilities.

I have responded to the follow up points in turn.

Point 1 – Natural Resources Wales (NRW) regulate and take enforcement action based on the risk posed by the operation. When a site is non-compliant they work to bring them back into compliance and can take action based on the risk in line with their Enforcement & Sanctions Guidance.

In my earlier response of 23 April, I referred to the need to consider all facts and implications when considering permit revocation because of the possible consequences of removing a permit. It goes without saying environmental legislation and guidance is there for a purpose and there was no suggestion consideration of all the facts and implications should compromise the ability to be an effective regulator.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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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.

Pack Page 113

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.

Regarding the specific point about the variation of the permit to incorporate the level of throughput, NRW have advised modern permits state a maximum allowable throughput. However this does not mean such a volume is permissible (in reality, it is usually much lower), permitted volumes are controlled in practice by permit conditions which require operations to be carried out in accordance with the operators Environmental Management System (EMS) and documents detailing their operational techniques. These documents are submitted by the operator and agreed by NRW, they set out the method of operation, what volume can be safely managed on site given the size of site, the infrastructure, type of waste, equipment/staff, the location of sensitive receptors etc. Enforcement action can be taken if NRW feel the operational documents are ineffective or do not reflect the site operation. In the case of the variation to throughput there was also an increase to the size of site which was taken into account as a part of the determination process. Discussion on the variation between NRW and South Wales Wood Recycling Ltd (SWWR) started in April 2016, some five months prior to the fire and the variation application went through the usual rigorous determination process prior to the variation being granted.

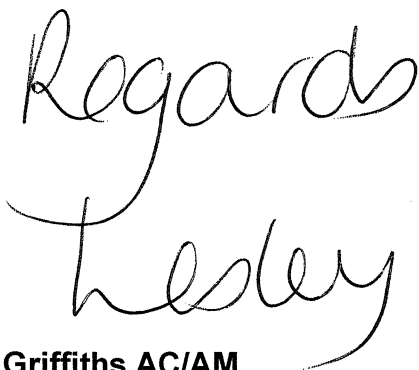
Point 2 – The environmental permit does not have a prescriptive condition stipulating the maximum height of stockpiled waste, control of stockpiled waste comes from enforcing the sites EMS which contains the limits set by the planning conditions. NRW have regulated the site through the operators' EMS and operational documents, they have also worked with the operator to put a drainage management plan in place and with the Fire and Rescue Service to improve the fire control measures including having a fire tender on site. Other action includes an enforcement notice to prevent pollution of a local watercourse and close working with Bridgend County Borough Council to control cross-cutting issues such as noise and dust.

Point 3 - I previously advised the Sentencing Council provided guidelines in 2014 to the criminal courts on the sentencing of environmental offences. The Office of the Sentencing Council recently assessed the impact of this guidance. It is difficult to conclude definitively, although, this initial assessment suggests the guidelines appear to have had the anticipated effect with some organisations having received higher fines since the guidelines came into force. The report is available at <http://www.sentencingcouncil.org.uk/publications/item/environmental-offences-assessment-of-guideline/>

Point 4 - As previously advised, waste offences can carry the possibility of an unlimited fine, however, specific fines and costs are determined by the Courts. NRW can also use other enforcement powers which serve as both a deterrent and punishment. For more serious cases of illegal activity, action can be brought under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 to recover money made illegally. The Anti-social, Crime and Policing Act 2014 also contain provisions in relation to environmental offenders. Furthermore, the Environmental Permitting regime contains provisions to refuse an environmental permit if the regulator considers the applicant would not operate the permit in accordance with the environmental permit. This also acts as a deterrent as it gives the regulator a power to prevent individuals and companies from holding a permit based on past performance. NRW have recently used these powers to refuse a permit application made by SWWR to run a site at Baglan Energy Park near Port Talbot.

Point 5 – No evidence of a link between recycling targets and operational difficulties at sites has been provided. Waste wood is not a crucial waste stream for Local Authorities (LA's) to meet their targets it currently contributes around 4% towards LA targets. The majority of waste wood produced in Wales and the majority of wood waste managed at reprocessing sites in Wales comes from a combination of the construction and demolition sectors and English LA's, which are not subject to Welsh Government's statutory targets. Furthermore, waste wood can only be counted towards LA targets if and when it is recycled. Stockpiled wood waste and wood wastes sent for incineration do not count towards the targets.

NRW has the duty to regulate sites in accordance with the law. If they believe a site is not able to come back into compliance and poses a risk to the environment or health, they will take appropriate enforcement action. Any waste producer, including LA's, using waste management facilities should actively manage their contracts to ensure compliance and have contingencies built into any contracts should a site cease operating.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Regards' on the top line and 'Lesley' on the bottom line. The script is cursive and fluid.

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs

P-05-753 Strengthening the Legislative and Regulatory Framework Surrounding Waste Wood Processing Facilities – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 04.04.17

Dear Kathryn,

Thank you for your email. Please find below my comments as requested.

Point 1 – in the second to last paragraph on the first page, the Cabinet Secretary states that *‘when a site is non-compliant, they work to bring them back into compliance’*.

In the case of South Wales Wood Recycling (SWWR), it would seem that the way in which they did this was to increase their permit conditions so that they were once again in compliance.

The first paragraph on the second page says that permits set out a maximum level of throughput and that in reality levels are much lower. They also state that the variation to the levels included in the permit at SWWR relate to the increase in site area.

However, NRW has confirmed that SWWR’s permit had been increased from 25,000 tonnes per annum of Grade B/C/D wood to 125,000 tonnes per annum as they were found to be in non-compliance as a result of them accepting well in excess of their permitted limits. This increase had no relationship whatsoever to the new site area and was only done due their infringement.

So with regard to NRW’s statements set out in the Minister’s letter:

- First, their way of bringing people back into compliance would appear to be to amend their permits so that they no longer have a problem.
- Second, it is not our experience that levels are generally well below permit levels (hence the breach / non-compliance).
- Third, the assertion by NRW that the amendment to the licence was due to the change in the site area (or as the letter states ‘in the case of the variation to throughput there was also an increase to the size of the site which was taken into account’) is in direct contravention to the information we have been provided by NRW.

Following an FOI request, a copy of the permits were obtained and from subsequently speaking with NRW, it is clear that the change had nothing to do with the site area change.

The environmental permit does not include any reference to stockpile heights. However, NRW's own guidance *"Fire Prevention and mitigation plan guidance – Waste" (Version 1, May 2016)* states on the inside cover; *'This guidance document represents the minimum appropriate measures required to be put in place by waste operators to ensure that fires are prevented'*.

The first line of the Summary section states: *'You must follow this guidance if you are storing combustible waste at permitted sites'*. This guidance clearly states that unprocessed wood should be stored at a maximum height of 5m and processes wood at a maximum of 3m (page 10).

So for NRW to say that the permit doesn't have a limit in it, as far as their guidance is concerned, it does need to have a limit.

This information is clearly available on their website under "Environmental Permits – Guidance to help you comply with your Environmental Permit".

With regards to point 5 (page 3), the problem is that once the Grade B/C/D wood has been processed, there is no use for it. This then sits on site (or gets dumped somewhere) resulting in a problem. From discussions with NRW, they have identified a correlation between uses for products and problems with sites such as SWWR but there seems to be a nervousness to do anything that might result in a shut down of a recycling site.

Finally, planning conditions note that *"opening hours for the receipt of waste wood shall only occur between: 08.00 hours and 18.00 hours Mondays to Saturdays and not at all on Sundays, Bank and Public Holidays to ensure that the Local Planning Authority retains effective control over operation of the premises."*

However, a body of evidence has been collected by concerned local residents that the site is dispatching/receiving lorries at all hours, sometimes in the middle of the night and on Sundays, causing disruption to local residents, and the local authority is seemingly unable to take action as it is unable to prove whether or not the lorries are laden or empty.

I am grateful to the Committee for considering these issues and I look forward to observing their further deliberations.

Kind regards

Alex Williams

County Borough Councillor for Penprysg

Agenda Item 3.11

P-05-759 Re-open the Cwmcarn Forest Drive at Easter 2018

This petition was submitted by The Friends of Cwmcarn Forest Drive having collected 1450 signatures – 353 on paper and 1097 on-line.

Petition text:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to provide the necessary means to allow Natural Resources Wales to fully re-open the Cwmcarn Forest Drive to private cars at Easter 2017.

Additional information:

In the summer of 2014 Natural Resources Wales stated that the Cwmcarn Forest Drive, also known as the Scenic Drive, would be closed for a minimum of two years from November 2014 and that this was necessary because of the infection of the Japanese larch in the Cwmcarn valley and surrounding hillsides. The removal of the larch is now almost complete and NRW are beginning to reinstate the cycle tracks and footpaths, however there does not appear to be a plan to reinstate the scenic drive, even though the vast majority of the route is undamaged. To single out private car users of the drive is unfair and unnecessary when other users will face only temporary disruption. Many of those who access the Drive via private car do so because they have limited mobility, some are families with small children, many are elderly, disabled or from our ethnic minority and immigrant communities. Failing to provide a facility for these people is discriminatory especially when there are plans, and funds available, to provide further facilities for other users. The lack of a fully accessible scenic drive deprives those people who are our most culturally and materially deprived of their main facility for health and well-being. Our organisation, the Friends of Cwmcarn Forest Drive wants equality of access for all users of the scenic drive and calls for the Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales to provide the means to make this possible.

Assembly Constituency and Region.

- Islwyn
- South Wales East



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-759
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/01389/17

David John Rowlands AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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

28 June 2017

Dear David,

Thank you for your letter of 19 June regarding the petition to re-open the Cwmcarn Forest Drive at Easter 2018. As I previously stated, the day to day management of the Forest Drive is the responsibility Natural Resources Wales (NRW).

Caerphilly County Borough Council and NRW are working together to explore opportunities to maximise the benefits from the existing recreational infrastructure, capital assets and natural resources in the Cwmcarn Valley. Options for the future management of the Forest Drive will be considered once the study into its commercial feasibility and management has been completed, the financial implications of these will be looked into by NRW at the same time. They will provide me with an update once this information is available together with their future proposals. No commitments in respect of funding support will be made until this process has been completed.

Yours sincerely,

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
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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.



24 Mount Pleasant Terrace, Pontywaun, Crosskeys, NP11 7GH

David AM
Chair – Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales,
Ty Hywel,
Cardiff Bay,
Cardiff,
CF99 1NA

robertsouthall@outlook.com

Sunday 2nd July 2017

Dear David

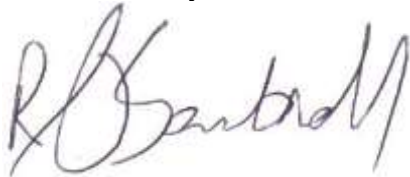
Thank you very much for instructing committee clerks to forward Lesley Griffith AM, the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs, letter of 28 June 2017. Naturally we are disappointed that the Welsh Government will make no commitment to provide the funding to allow for the re-opening of the Cwmcarn Forest Drive at this time. It would be sensible, as Lesley Griffiths suggests, to wait until the joint feasibility study commissioned by NRW and CCBC is published, however we would wish to issue the caveat that it is taking an inordinate time for this to be commissioned and there remains no date yet for this as far as we know. I will naturally enquire about this with NRW

I would also like to re-iterate that our society is concerned that while no Welsh Government resources have been provided to re-open the drive that yet another mountain bike track is being planned in the Cwmcarn valley and our group have assumed that funding must have been provided for the planning and construction of this. We have also learned in the last few days that the new cycle track will cross several public footpaths and takes in that area which was formerly the children's playground and sculpture trail which was previously one of the most popular features of the Cwmcarn Forest Drive. This obviously makes us think that NRW have no intention of ever restoring these facilities. We have to ask ourselves whether the needs of the majority, i.e. those who wish to access the drive in their cars perhaps because of limited mobility or those with young children, are being overlooked in favour of the needs of a relatively small number of mountain bikers who are usually young, fit and affluent males, often from outside of Wales. As a consequence of this concern we have now lodged a formal complain about NRW's lack of consideration

for the needs of users other than cyclists in their planning for the future of the Cwmcarn forest with the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

We understand that these issues take time to resolve but I strongly believe that when the Welsh government has a will they usually find a way. The fifteen hundred people who have signed our latest petition certainly think that this is the case and for this reason we would like to request that the Petitions Committee keep our petition active. We believe this will assist us in getting the much desired response from the Welsh Government that they will ensure that the drive is once again open to private cars.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'R Southall', written in a cursive style.

Robert Southall
Chair, Friends of Cwmcarn Forest Drive

Agenda Item 3.12

P-04-648 Amendment to Unconventional Oil and Gas Direction 2015

Petition wording:

We the undersigned call upon the Minister for Natural Resources to amend the THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (NOTIFICATION) (UNCONVENTIONAL OIL AND GAS) (WALES) DIRECTION 2015 to call in all Planning Applications for Unconventional Oil and Gas development including exploratory drilling for Shale Gas, Coal Bed Methane and Underground Coal Gasification, to the Minister

Additional Information

At present the Direction only relates to applications involving certain unconventional extraction techniques where the Local Planning Authority is inclined to approve the application.

The current Direction does not apply to Underground Coal Gasification, the impacts of which would be equally damaging to the environment and communities. Nor does it apply to exploratory drilling or test drilling. There are growing concerns about the impact of exploratory drilling, particularly around noise, traffic, disturbance of water courses, the potential for seismic disturbance, industrialisation of the countryside and the impact on house prices.

If there is an effective moratorium on extraction, then what is the purpose of exploration? Allowing exploration to proceed when, at present, extraction will be prohibited is perverse and illogical

Petition raised by: Councillor Arfon Jones

Date petition first considered by Committee: 22 September 2015

Number of signatures: 1,254 online signatures and 293 paper signatures. A further 415 signatures have been handed in after the petition was closed.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-648
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/01390/17

David John Rowlands AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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

28 June 2017

Dear David

Thank you for your letter of 19 June regarding the petition on unconventional oil and gas planning applications.

Planning Policy Wales is currently in the process of being revised and will be subject to consultation in early 2018. Planning policy in relation to onshore oil and gas will be updated as part of this review.

Welsh Government Officials and I are currently assessing the implications of the transfer of the oil & gas licensing system to Wales. As an area outside of our previous competence, we are in the process of developing an evidence base to inform thinking both in terms of the handling of existing licenses and future policy.

Regards
Lesley

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
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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.

Agenda Item 3.13

P-05-692 Build an International Mother Languages Monument at Cardiff Bay

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

Text of the Petition

We the undersigned call on the National Assembly of Wales to urge the Welsh Government to build an International Language monument at Cardiff Bay for all International mother languages lovers.

Additional information

A plaque has been laid by Cardiff Lord Mayor in 2012 at Grange moor Park, Cardiff Bay. But due to lack of funding not constructed..

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Cardiff West
- South Wales Central



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref KS/01864/17
Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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

17 June 2017

Dear

Thank you for your letter regarding a petition to build an International Mother Languages Monument at Cardiff Bay. I recall similar correspondence from Mohammed Sarul Islam last year and I am aware of the petition to build an International Mother Languages Monument in Cardiff Bay. We are, however, in a similar position to last year where there are currently no funding streams available which could accommodate this request. It is also unclear from the petition whether there is wider community support for the monument.

I know the Leader of the House and Chief Whip recently attended a Gala Dinner, hosted by the International Language Monument Project Committee. In his letter Mr Islam refers to a financial commitment from Welsh Labour to support the monument. Ms Hutt's Private office has confirmed that, while she indicated at the event that she was supportive of the initiative in principle, she did not commit to any financial support for it from the Welsh Government.

The Welsh Government is continuing to deliver against our Community Cohesion Programme, including through the work of eight Regional Community Cohesion Co-ordinators who are active and engaged at a local level with partners across communities. We recognise the importance of diversity and working with partners to increase engagement and break down any perceived barriers. Our approach is underpinned by the goals set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act around a Wales of cohesive communities and a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.

Ken Skates AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Seilwaith
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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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-05-692 Welsh Assembly to Build a International Mother languages Monument at Cardiff Bay – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 05.07.17

Dear Chairman,
Petition Committee
NAW

I refer to your recent correspondence from Mr Ken Skates AM. First of all, as I mentioned in my previous email that leader of the assembly did mention in her speech at City Hall on 21st February that the Welsh Government will support to build this project technically and financially. You may be aware that the International Language Monument represents International Mothers Language day. UNISCO has granted and recognised to celebrate this event internationally. Many countries in the world have been celebrating this occasion as well and it has become a part of the community world-wide. Wales is the communities of a community. I believe we have a wider range of support from all diverse communities in Cardiff. Many schools and local organisations also celebrate IMLD widely. It becomes a part of the educational aspect in Wales. However, in terms of financial support from the Welsh government, my project committee are asking for £65,000 funding from the Welsh Assembly. I will really appreciate it if the minister will come up with £50,000. The project committee will generate £15,000.

Look forward to hearing from you,
Many thanks

Mohammed Sarul Islam
Joint chair
International Language Monument project committee.

P-05-737 Save our Bus.

This petition was submitted by Patricia Threadgill, which collected 60 signatures.

Text of the Petition

Just learned today the bus I use regularly from Gilfach Goch-Pontypridd is being "wiped out". In Jan 2016 the Welsh Government said it was committed to improving the quality + accessibility of local bus services. In Gilfach Goch we have older + poorer people + people with disabilities who use this bus, which can be the difference between getting around or feeling trapped. So please save the 150 to PONTY !!!!

Assembly constituency and Region.

- Ogmore
- South Wales West

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

1 St David's Road
Cwmbrân
Torfaen
NP44 1PD

T 01633 838856
F 01633 865299

stagecoachbus.com



Our Ref: NW/arw MH/AM
16th June 2017

Dear Mr. Hedges,

Re: Petition P-05-737 Save our Bus

I refer to your letter of 5th June 2017 in which you refer to Bus Users Cymru and a customer survey undertaken by Stagecoach post the change of bus Service 150 of October 2016.

As you know the nature of the petition is with regard to curtailment of the 150 bus service in the Rhondda so that it ceased to serve Pontypridd, terminating at Porth instead. There are already 11 buses per hour between Porth and Pontypridd with excellent connectivity from the Service 150 onto other Services in Porth for Pontypridd.

The South Wales Metro project at its heart will feature connectivity from one mode to another providing connectivity across South East Wales. The change for Service 150 is no different in this regard than to the Metro connectivity principles.

The purpose of the customer survey post the change to service is to determine the customer reaction to the change, if it is in line with expectations from analysing usage data prior to the change and to assess customer experience in general.

When asked for what purpose is the customer using the bus, 27 out of 210 responses replied that they wanted the link to Pontypridd reinstating.

64% of respondents were accepting of the frequency change.

65% of respondents either were accepting of the onward connection arrangement or it did not concern them as Pontypridd is not their destination.

The survey results reflect the customer demand for Pontypridd prior to the changes in October 2016.

It is therefore the case that the original reasons for change remain valid;

- Bus Service 150 provides a direct contribution and is not profit making.
- Declining revenues place the Service 150 at risk.
- The level of patronage for Pontypridd is disproportionate to the level of resource required to serve Pontypridd.
- The focus of our alteration is to achieve a sustainable service between Gilfach Goch and Porth with excellent onward connections by bus and train.

I hope the foregoing is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

Nigel Winter
Managing Director

Agenda Item 3.15

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



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref KS/01870/17
Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee

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

21 June 2017

Dear

Thank you for your letter of 23 May following consideration of my response of 20 September 2016 regarding petition P-05-716.

I appreciate the concerns expressed by the petition organiser concerning the safety of pupils and can assure you that passenger safety is of paramount importance to both the Welsh Government and Arriva Trains Wales. The risk assessment to which Arriva Trains Wales refer too in their response to the petitioner have been undertaken to ensure the safety of passengers. My officials have discussed this issue with Arriva Trains Wales and they confirm that this is a matter they take extremely seriously and have committed to do everything in their power to ensure the safety of pupils using Treorchy Station.

I understand the concerns that free rail travel has been taken away. However I have been assured by Arriva Trains Wales that the arrangements now in place are the same as those for other schools with significant numbers of pupils using rail services. I have previously advised that 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.

Yours sincerely,

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
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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-05-716 Free School Transport for all Children in Wales – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 03.07.17

RE: Petitioners response

To whom it may concern,

Although safety measurements and implications are continuously mentioned in responses I once again do not see any safety aspects taking place, which goes against all what Arriva Train proposed what the charged train service would give to the pupils, although the act states that children living within 3 miles of their nearest suitable school is in place I have not seen any child living in this distance away from Treorchy comprehensive receive this free transport and I reiterate that pupils who live this distance away are not eligible for bus passes so the train is the only means of transport as for some families it is physically impossible to take their children back and forth to school all day. From personal experience I find the staff on the train station to be very rude and ill-mannered and it is disappointing to see that the money Arriva gain from the passes does not go towards making sure their staff treat pupils with respect, the staff are not very courteous to those who buy the tickets on the station placing barriers in front of them before they even have a chance to board the train which is particularly unfair as these pupils may not be able to afford the passes once again putting a strain on families as they may have to collect their children from the station as a result of them being disallowed to board the train

I hope you take into consideration my concerns expressed

Yours sincerely,

Elin Tuckwood

Agenda Item 3.16

P-04-688 TATA Steel Port Talbot Power Plant

This petition was submitted by Peter Bamsey, having collected 531 signatures.

Text of the Petition

We the undersigned call upon the Welsh Government to use all levers at its disposal, including financial levers, to support the completion of a new power plant planned for Port Talbot steels works. The construction of this plant will create jobs and when it is operational it will reduce emissions, reduce Tata's running costs and help to safeguard vital jobs in the area.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Aberavon
- South Wales West

P-04-688 TATA Steel Port Talbot Power Plant – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 05.07.17

Dear Kathryn,

I would certainly recommend that the petition be pursued, it is as relevant [today](#) as it was when first presented to the petitions committee.

With the current situation of uncertainty in the steel industry every consideration on securing the future of the Port Talbot plant has to be of paramount importance. I am very concerned at Tata's reluctance to invest in the plant, it does not bode well for the long term future. Rather than 'fire fight' with the current aging power plant, it has to be a better option to invest in a new modern environmentally efficient plant. Whilst the main object of the power plant is to supply 'blast' to the furnaces, the electricity produced is a bonus supplying the site and any surplus being exported to the national grid. What a win, win situation that would be.

I am alarmed and dismayed that Tata has shown little faith in the loyal workforce and fear that without this investment the works only has a short term future! Only last year Tata announced that if the Port Talbot works made £200m profit that they would invest in the works, [today](#) I haven't heard of any large investment! Tata stated that they would look at the two furnace operation on site after five years, why such a short term? Does Tata intend to close the 'heavy end' after the five years has expired? This would probably explain the lack of investment at present. Again I say, the investment of a power plant has to be pursued for the immediate and long term future of Tata Port Talbot.

Regards

Mr Bamsey

Correspondence from Bethan Jenkins, AM to the Petitions Committee, 05.07.17

Dear Petitions Committee members,

I would second the content of this email from the petitioner Peter Bamsey, and say that this issue is still very much relevant and important.

I would be more than happy to come in to the committee alongside Peter Bamsey to provide the committee with evidence on this matter.

We cannot let the issue of investment fall down the political agenda. The plans for the power plant were drawn up years ago now, and this is a much needed project for the long term future progress of the steel works in my region,

Regards,

Bethan Jenkins, AM

P-05-690 Resurfacing of the A40 Raglan–Abergavenny Road

This petition was submitted by Sara Jones, having collected 22 signatures. The petition also collected 142 signatures on an alternative e-petition website

Text of the Petition

This petition calls on the Welsh Government to replace the old concrete surface on the A40 road from Raglan to Abergavenny with whispering tarmac.

The Noise Action Plan (2013–18) states that this road is a priority, after the consultation responses received and the measurements taken. Yet no progress has been made despite repeated calls from residents, the local County Councillor, Assembly Member and Member of Parliament.

We, the undersigned, state that this road should be given immediate priority, given the numerous concerns raised from both public and representatives and that it has been identified under the existing Welsh Government Noise Action Plan.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Monmouth
- South Wales East



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref KS/01977/17

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee

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

21 June 2017

Dear

Thank you for your letter of 2 June regarding Petition P-05-690 Resurfacing of the A40 Raglan-Abergavenny Road. I appreciate you forwarding the latest comments made by the petitioners and Nick Ramsay AM.

As explained in previous responses, the A40 at this location is not life expired and there are currently no plans to resurface it. However, work will commence in the current financial year to design suitable noise mitigation measures for the current Priority 1 section of the A40/Usk Road roundabout. Implementation is anticipated from 2018/19, depending on available funding and the relative priority of other schemes in the programme. Alternative measures to new surfacing such as noise fences are typically better at mitigating noise in the long term than new surfacing which can reduce in effectiveness over time.

The current priority list will also be reviewed this financial year following a new noise survey of the motorway and trunk road network. It is important to note therefore that priorities could change and new sections of trunk road may enter the programme.

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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Correspondence.Ken.Skates@gov.wales

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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-05-740 Petition to Protect our High Street.

This petition was submitted by Sally Stephenson, which collected 939 online signatures and 729 paper signatures.

Text of the Petition

- We, the undersigned, believe that the Welsh Government's transitional rate-relief scheme is inadequate to meet the needs of businesses affected by the most recent re-valuation of premises and call on the Welsh Government to develop a package of permanent rate-relief measures to alleviate the financial pressure on small businesses..

Assembly constituency and Region.

- Vale of Glamorgan
- South Wales Central

Mark Drakeford AM/AC
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a Llywodraeth Leol
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-740
Ein cyf/Our ref MD-00144-17

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 March 2017

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your letter of 23 February regarding the High Street Rates Relief Scheme.

With reference to how the High Street Relief will be allocated, my officials have worked closely with Local Authorities to develop this scheme, the details of which I announced in my statement on 17 February. Funding will be allocated to Local Authorities based on the estimated number of eligible ratepayers per authority area. Local Authorities will then administer the scheme and provide relief to eligible ratepayers. Ratepayers can contact their individual Local Authorities to find out what support they may be entitled to.

In relation to the non-domestic rates statistics requested, the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) produces statistics on the number of businesses in different rateable value bands for both England and Wales. Attached is a link to where these statistics can be found:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/non-domestic-rating-stock-of-properties>

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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.

Please note that the information for 2017 is not yet available. However, your petitioner may wish to contact the VOA at statistics@voa.gsi.gov.uk to see what information the organisation is able to provide.

Best wishes,

Mark

Mark Drakeford AM/AC

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a Llywodraeth Leol
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government

David J. Rowlands AM
Chair of The Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

4 July 2017

Dear Mr Rowlands,

Petition to Protect Our High Street - Business Rates

I have received the letter from Mark Drakeford, dated 11 March 2017, in response to the above petition. Apologies it has taken me a while to reply.

As you know, this petition is part of a wider campaign calling on the Welsh Government to

- 1) help SMEs facing astronomical increases in their business rates bills following the introduction of the new rateable values in April 2017;
- 2) develop a package of permanent rate-relief measures from April 2018 to alleviate the financial pressure on small businesses in Wales.

Alongside the covering letter which I presented when I formally handed over the petition on Wednesday 18 January, and my letter to the Petitions Committee on 8 February 2017, I would be grateful if the following points would also be considered by the Committee when you meet on Tuesday 11 July.

1) Rateable values have been increased dramatically

Following the revaluation of the rateable value of commercial properties across the UK, many Welsh businesses have been hit with an astronomical increase in their rateable value. Rural market towns, such as Cowbridge and Monmouth, appear to have been hardest hit and this could seriously threaten the long term viability of many businesses.

2) The Welsh Government has not increased the threshold for SBRR

Business rates is a tax which has been fully devolved from Westminster to the Welsh Government. Until recently, business rates in Wales were calculated in broadly the same way as they were in England. However from 1 April the situation changed, and not in Wales' favour.

From 1 April 2017, the UK Government **doubled** the threshold below which small businesses are exempt from business rates from £6k to £12k, and introduced tapered relief for those valued between £12k and £15k.

Unfortunately the Welsh Government has chosen not to implement this policy, meaning that all small businesses in Wales valued between £6k and £12k **are still paying rates whilst their counterparts in England are rates-free.**

Those businesses valued between £12k and £15k are paying the full amount since, unlike in England, they do not benefit from any tapered rates relief at all.

To put it simply, from 1 April 2017 small businesses are worse off in Wales under the devolved Welsh Government than they would be if they were under Westminster. The situation is even worse when compared to Scotland, where the SBRR threshold has been raised to £15k. SMEs in Wales are being left behind.

3) Welsh Labour's broken manifesto promise

During the Welsh Assembly elections last year, one of Welsh Labour's six manifesto pledges was "to cut taxes for ALL small businesses". Now they are in government, they are doing the exact opposite. Business rates is the only tax which the Welsh Government has the power to change, yet for many it is being increased dramatically. This is wholly unacceptable.

4) Analysis of business rates bands in Wales compared to England

Mark Drakeford claims that three-quarters of businesses in Wales will receive some form of relief. I have previously requested (and am still waiting for) the data to back up this claim. We would like to know, for 2016/17 and from 2017 onwards, how many businesses in Wales fall into the different rate bands - less than £6k, £6k-£12k, £12k-£15k, £15k-£51k, more than £51k - and how that compares to England.

The minister's last letter directed us to statistics on the VOA website to answer these questions, but he advised that the information for 2017 is not yet available. If this is the case, how can he possibly know that three-quarters of rate payers in Wales will receive some form of relief?

5) High Street Rates Relief Scheme for 2017/18

Following significant lobbying last autumn from towns and businesses across Wales, Mark Drakeford agreed to support high street businesses facing increased business rates bills with a one-off £10m 'High Streets Rates Relief' scheme for 2017/18.

Whilst we welcome this additional support, it was incredibly frustrating and disappointing that having announced the new scheme in mid-December, it took the Welsh Government far too long to decide how to actually allocate the money and provide the necessary implementation guidance to the Local Authorities. Rates bills therefore had to be issued in March without any mention of the funding, with many businesses having to pay massively increased bills whilst they waited for the details of the new scheme to be announced. The relief was finally allocated three months later when bills had to be re-issued. This was a waste of taxpayers' money and placed unnecessary financial stress on small businesses. The funding should have been ready for the new financial year.

6) Additional financial support announced for business rates

Responding to pressure from businesses across the UK, the Chancellor announced in the Spring Budget significant additional support for business rates. Wales will have received a share of this through the Barnett Formula, as well as the additional £200m. Please can you advise how this money will be used to support business rates in Wales this year?

7) Business rates from 1 April 2018 onwards

The High Street Rates Relief scheme is only in place for this financial year (2017/18). We do not know what will happen next year. As it currently stands, the HSRR scheme will

disappear, leaving just the transitional relief scheme which will see rates bills increasing significantly every year for the next three years.

Mark Drakeford has committed to reviewing the business rates scheme in Wales from 1 April 2018, however we have not yet seen any proposals. Businesses cannot plan properly or make investment decisions whilst there is such uncertainty hanging over us, especially in the current economic climate. Business rates must be resolved as a matter of urgency.

8) Small businesses are the backbone of the Welsh economy

In 2015, SMEs in Wales accounted for 99.4% of private sector business and 61% of employment – equating to 673,600 employees. The vast majority are ‘micro-businesses’ like mine (with nine employees or fewer), which qualify for SBRR. If every small business in Wales employed just one more member of staff, it would wipe out unemployment across Wales. Imposing a significant and unfair additional regional tax burden has the real potential to put many of us out of business and create further unemployment.

9) Involving businesses to shape future direction

There are many small business owners and representatives, particularly in Cowbridge and Monmouth, who have been fully engaged in this campaign and thoroughly understand the issues facing SMEs. Myself, David Cummings (Chairman of Monmouth and District Chamber of Trade and Commerce) and Ben Cottam (FSB Wales) have all offered our help, advice and experience to the Welsh Government to shape the development of a new permanent Small Business Rates Relief scheme which will benefit all small businesses across Wales. As yet that offer has not been taken up.

We are concerned that a new SBRR scheme is being developed without input from the business community and, just like with the transitional relief scheme and the High Street Rates Relief scheme, it will be presented later this year as a “done deal” with no real opportunity for consultation.

We do hope that you will listen to our concerns and encourage the Welsh Government to take us up on our offer in order to help support, protect and encourage business in Wales.

Yours sincerely,

Sally Stephenson
Director

Agenda Item 3.19

P-05-726 Give rate relief to Local Authorities for Leisure and Cultural facilities.

This petition was submitted by Ryan Dansie, which collected 17 signatures.

Text of the Petition

Due to ever increasing budget pressures, Local Authorities in Wales are looking at creating charitable trusts to take over the running of public services like libraries and leisure centres.

The main benefit of such an arrangement is the rate relief which a charity would be entitled to. This amounts to moving money from the central pot of non-domestic rates and into the authorities budget. No public money is saved overall, although there are overheads involved in setting up such arrangements which can involve payments being made to specialist private consultants.

Pembrokeshire County Council is about to begin the process of creating a charity to take over the running of all leisure and cultural services in the whole county. It's almost inevitable that other local authorities in Wales will follow suit in order to deal with their own impossible budget pressures.

I call on the Welsh government to change the rules of rate relief so that all Local Authority run leisure and cultural facilities are covered on an equivalent basis to that which a charity would be entitled to. If this is not done then the end result of losing this business rate income will still happen through the creation of these charitable trusts, but we will be unnecessarily losing control of our public services in the process.

Please take away this unnecessary incentive to outsource our important leisure and cultural services.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Preseli Pembrokeshire
- Mid and West Wales

Mark Drakeford AM/AC
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a Llywodraeth Leol
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MD/00388/17

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

11 June 2017

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your letter of 24 May, enclosing further correspondence from Ryan Dansie regarding local authority funding and the petition proposing that the Welsh Government should give rates relief to local authorities for leisure and cultural facilities.

I appreciate the concerns raised regarding the challenges faced by local authorities in Wales, who are supported through a range of funding sources including specific grants, council tax, reserves and income from fees and charges, in addition to Welsh Government funding provided through the local government settlement. Financial planning within each individual local authority needs to take account of all of these and the needs and priorities of the local area.

The Welsh Government will also continue to work with local government to ensure that each authority makes the most effective and efficient use of all the resources available to it. There is clear evidence of the scope for local authorities to deliver administrative efficiencies and redirect the savings towards front-line services. The proposals set out in the White Paper on Local Government Reform are designed to build resilience and to support renewal in local government and equip local authorities with the tools they need to:

- address the ongoing financial challenges faced by public services;
- build a model of prudent public service delivery, which recasts the role and relationship between services and citizens; and
- support the delivery of better outcomes for citizens and enable the improvement of local areas.

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Pack Page 147

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.

Following the White Paper consultation on local government reform, I am continuing to work with local government to develop proposals for a resilient and renewed local government. Enhanced regional working will provide resilience in staffing and finance and enable the design of services at the scale necessary for them to face financial challenges. Local government does not need to wait to pursue these opportunities.

I recognise that leisure centres provide a vital service to local communities and I am aware that some local authorities have, or are considering, outsourcing these services this is in the remit of each individual local authority. The potential reduction in non-domestic rates is only one of a number of factors and drivers taken into account when considering adopting such an approach. Alternative forms of service delivery can have many potential benefits, such as reduced running costs and the provision of better or more community focussed services.

It is also important to recognise that whilst non-domestic rates liabilities for local authority owned leisure centres and cultural facilities are payable by individual local authorities, these authorities are in turn funded by the non-domestic rates raised in Wales. As non-domestic rates collected are redistributed in full to authorities via the local government settlement on an adult population basis, any relief scheme considered would not result in the simple netting-off of the rates liability for each premise in question. There would be complex issues relating to the even distribution of funding to local authorities, particularly given the variable approach taken to alternative forms of service delivery. In addition, if reduced non-domestic rates revenue was collected as a result of any such relief, there would be a commensurate reduction in the funding available to local authorities for the provision of local services.

As I mentioned in my previous correspondence, I am keen to explore how the non-domestic system could operate in future years and I am considering the potential mechanisms for improvement whilst also ensuring that the system is fair and meets the needs of the people in Wales I welcome the views of all interested parties in relation to this .

Best wishes,

Mark

Mark Drakeford AM/AC

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a Llywodraeth Leol
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government

P-05-734 Ban Letting Agent Fees to Tenants

This petition was submitted by Shelter Cymru, which collected 328 online signatures.

Text of the Petition

We, the undersigned, call on the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to end the unfair practice of charging letting agent fees to tenants.

Earlier this year Shelter Cymru campaign supporters mystery-shopped letting agents across Wales and found that more than half (55%) are not advertising fees on their websites as required by law. The study found that a tenant could pay between £39.99 and £480 for the same service depending which agent their landlord had chosen to go with.

The reality is that there is no such thing as consumer choice in tenants' fees, and a real risk that tenants and landlords are being double-charged for the same service. We believe that Wales should follow Scotland's example and ban fees to tenants. The private rented sector in Scotland is still going strong and three-quarters of Scottish agents say the ban has had no impact, or a positive impact, on their business.

Welsh letting agents are enjoying a business boom thanks to Rent Smart Wales which is encouraging smaller landlords to sign up with agents. However, extortionate letting fees are pushing tenants into debt and making it harder for local authorities to prevent homelessness. Please act now to give a fair deal to Wales' growing numbers.

Assembly constituency and Region.

- Swansea West
- South Wales West

Carl Sargeant AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gymunedau a Phlant
Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref CS/00765/17

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
97 Pleasant Street
Morriston
Swansea
SA6 6HJ

Mike.Hedges@assembly.wales

20 June 2017

Dear

Thank you for your email of 23 May asking if there is there an update on government action regarding letting agent fees.

I am considering this issue in the round to include all fees on tenants: letting agent fees, landlord fees and fees charged by any third party to tenants. My officials have already commissioned research to further inform us about the practice of charging fees to tenants and the impact it currently has. The findings of this research are expected by September. We will shortly be launching a consultation exercise aimed at landlords, letting agents, tenants and other stakeholders.

The findings of this research and consultation will inform our actions, including legislative proposals.

Yours sincerely

Carl Sargeant AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gymunedau a Phlant
Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children

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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-05-751 Recognition of Parental Alienation

This petition was submitted by Families Need Fathers Both Parents Matter Cymru having collected 2,058 signatures – 752 on paper and 1,306 online.

Text of the Petition

We call upon the Welsh Assembly to persuade the Welsh Government to protect children and young people in Wales by formally recognising 'Parental Alienation' as a form of emotional abuse of children. We further call upon the Welsh Government to take specific actions to reduce the impact of Parental Alienation on children and their families.

Additional Information

We propose the following action by Welsh Government

- Recognise 'Parental Alienation' as emotional abuse of children with a definition incorporating the one given by the Ministry of Justice (paragraph 1) here <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/164983>)
- Commission and fund mandatory training for professionals including but not Social Work and Cafcass Cymru staff, in recognising Parental Alienation including pathways to protect children from harm.
- Establish and fund a national campaign to inform children and families about Parental Alienation and the harm that it causes.
- Place a duty on Welsh Ministers to act to protect children from abuse and harm where Parental Alienation has been identified.

Parental Alienation has been defined by the Ministry of Justice as:

‘In cases where parents are separated, parental alienation refers to a situation in which one parent (usually the parent with whom the child lives) behaves in a way which creates anxiety in the child, so that it appears the child is opposed to living or spending time with the other parent.’

This definition is taken from the first paragraph of the Government's response to Mr. Darren Towill's petition. <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/164983>

CAFCASS in England have already recognised Parental Alienation as an abuse of children. CAFCASS CEO Anthony Douglas stated in an article in the Telegraph online dated 12th Feb 2017 about Parental Alienation that "It's undoubtedly a form of neglect or child abuse in terms of the impact it can have".

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/02/12/divorced-parents-pit-children-against-former-partners-guilty/>

Assembly Constituency and Region.

- West Cardiff
- South Wales Central

Carl Sargeant AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gymunedau a Phlant
Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-751
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/00733/17

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
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23 June 2017

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your letter of 18 May following the Petition Committee's consideration of my response to the 'Recognition of Parental Alienation' petition at its meeting of 9 May. I have noted the dissatisfaction with my response raised by Committee members and the petition sponsor, Families Need Fathers Both Parents Matter Cymru, in the enclosed letter.

CAFCASS Cymru and its practitioner staff fully understand that children can be subject to emotional harm when one parent alienates the child against another parent. I am sure you will be fully aware that safeguarding and the protection of children are fundamental features of social workers' training and the Continuing Professional Education and Learning (CPEL) framework equips practitioners with the knowledge and skills they need to work in complex situations. Private law cases often involve disputes between parents over child arrangements; social workers and practitioners, as professionals, are experienced in handling disputes of varying levels of severity. Social workers are supervised by senior staff in their organisations, this provides an additional level of scrutiny to support safe and robust practice.

CAFCASS Cymru practitioners have a range of tools they can use to support their work. One of these is the Child and Adolescent Welfare Assessment Checklist (CAWAC); this is an academically validated tool in which all CAFCASS Cymru practitioner staff receive accredited training. The CAWAC has been developed to assess the psychological impact on the child living in a context of inter-parental conflict (i.e. where the conflict is frequent, intense and poorly resolved). The CAWAC also helps to identify situations where a child as evidenced through their responses, has been negatively influenced against a parent.

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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.

In recognition of the importance of this issue, 'implacable hostility' as a practice area has been incorporated into CAFCASS Cymru's learning and development plan. The learning and development plan is reviewed and refreshed on an annual basis.

Data collected by CAFCASS Cymru does not identify specific themes or behaviours; therefore information on the number of cases where implacable hostility features is not available.

My view and that of the Family Justice Network in Wales remains that the existing regulatory and legal framework contains provisions to deal appropriately and effectively with these behaviours. The family court's primary concern when making decisions is always focussed on the welfare of the child.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in grey ink, reading 'Carl Sargeant'.

Carl Sargeant AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gymunedau a Phlant
Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children

Agenda Item 3.22

P-05-711 Ensure Disabled People's Housing Adaption Needs Are Adequately Met.

This petition was submitted by the Whizz-Kidz Cardiff Ambassador Club, having collected 30 online signatures and 95 paper signatures – a total of 125 signatures.

Text of the Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to commit to ensuring that disabled people in Wales do not have to wait for more than three years to receive the essential housing adaptations/houses they need and to work with local authorities to ensure staff dealing with adapted housing cases are adequately trained and accountable to ensure individual needs are met.

Additional information

Some of the Young Ambassadors at the Whizz-Kidz Cardiff club have had long struggles to get their housing needs met. There is a lot of inconsistency in dealing with cases and one young person in the group has not been able to live with their parents for over 7 years while they wait for a suitable house. We believe this is unacceptable and with more consistency and accountability when dealing with cases and better staff training the situation can be improved.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- N/A

P-05-711 Ensure Disabled People's Housing Adaption Needs Are Adequately Met – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 06.07.17

Dear Kathryn,

Thank you for your follow-up correspondence.

We are delighted that the new framework *ENABLE – Support for independent living*, which simplifies the processes for adaptations in the home, is being rolled out for a better home environment for disabled people. We are also pleased that your frontline staff and delivery team will be trained to serve the best possible care and support to help meet the needs of individuals.

As it stands, we are satisfied with the relevant actions and policies implemented by the Cabinet.

In the meantime, we will pass this on to our service users and ask for their feedback on the new framework, and we are confident the Cabinet will welcome their feedback too.

Many thanks for receiving our petition and informing us of changes to meet the needs of disabled people at home.

Regards

Jo

David Rowlands AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales

23 June 2017

Dear David

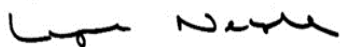
Petitions currently under consideration by the Petitions Committee

I refer to the letter dated 25 May from the former Chair of the Petitions Committee, relating to the petitions currently being considered that concern subjects within the remit of the Children, Young People and Education Committee.

The CYPE Committee has considered this list of petitions, and while some of these relate generally to areas of work being considered by our Committee, the specific issues raised in the petitions do not fall within any of the areas of work we have in our current work programme.

The Committee was grateful to the Petitions Committee for sharing this information on current petitions. This is a very useful way to support joint working between Committees.

Yours sincerely



Lynne Neagle AC / AM
Cadeirydd / Chair



Agenda Item 5

P-04-682 Routine Screening for Type 1 Diabetes in Children and Young People

This petition was submitted by Anthony Cook, having collected 2,570 signatures. An associated petition collected 3,670 signatures

Text of the Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to introduce routine screening for Type 1 Diabetes in children and young people.

In January of this year we tragically lost our beloved 13-year-old grandson, Peter Baldwin, to Type 1 diabetes that had been undetected until it was too late to save him. Peter was a well-loved and highly respected pupil at Whitchurch High School in Cardiff where he is greatly missed but for his family the hurt is unimaginable.

Our daughter Beth was recently presented with an award from The Pride of Britain for her fundraising efforts and for raising awareness of this terrible illness but with your help, and that of your friends and family we can really make a difference.

Please spare a couple of minutes to sign our petition calling on the Welsh Government to introduce a screening programme and to raise the profile of the need to check for Type 1 Diabetes in anyone presented to a health care professional with unexplained flu-like symptoms or general feeling of being unwell. The test involved is merely a finger prick or urine sample and takes less

time than you have spent reading this paragraph; it also only costs pennies. It is our intention to make this test as routine within GP surgeries and clinics as temperature and blood pressure checks presently are.

Your signature on this petition really could help save lives and prevent further terrible loss within families.

Additional Information:

The ideal standard would be for screening of all youngsters in order to catch this stealthy condition in the early stages. Many parts of the world are seeing the benefit of this screening and are now introducing it, the most recent being North Carolina in the U.S. Below is a link to the North Carolina implementation.

<http://insulinnation.com/living/reegans-rule-passes-north-carolina/>

The devolved Scottish Parliament is ahead of the rest of the U.K. and is already committed to debate the issue and appear very likely to implement screening. We want this for our children in Wales and are calling on the Welsh Government to introduce screening at the earliest opportunity.

PLEASE SIGN THE PETITION AND SHARE IT FAR AND WIDE

(now give yourself a pat on the back, you may have saved a child's life)

A petition campaigning for this change across the UK is currently collecting signatures on Change.org:

<https://www.change.org/p/craig-williams-mp-screen-children-for-type-1-diabetes>

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Cardiff North
- South Wales Central

By virtue of paragraph(s) ix of Standing Order 17.42

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