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Ieuan Wyn Jones AC/AM
Dirprwy Brif Weinidog /Deputy First Minister



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref PET-03-099
Ein cyf/Our ref DFM/05967/09

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

21 October 2009

Dea Val

Thank you for your letter of the 2nd October on behalf of the petitions committee regarding the proposed multi-user path on the A40 Trunk Road at Talybont-on-Usk.

I will arrange for a copy of the report to be forwarded to you when it has been accepted by my transport officials.

In my previous correspondence with you, I said that a bid for funding would be made in competition with other schemes once the findings of the report had been accepted. There are a number of sites throughout Wales which warrant similar improvements to this one and at this stage I am unable to give you a firm commitment with regard to the scheme's inclusion in next year's budget.

Ieuan Wyn Jones
Gweinidog dros yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for the Economy and Transport

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Jane Hutt AC/AM

**Y Gweinidog dros Blant, Addysg, Dysgu Gydol Oes a Sgiliau
Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills**



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref JH/06708/09

Val Lloyd
Chair Petitions Committee,
National Assembly for Wales,
Cardiff Bay,
Cardiff,
CF99 1NA

20 October 2009

Dear Val,

PETITION - MENCAP CYMRU EMPLOYMENT

Thank you for your letter of the 2nd October 2009 regarding the Welsh Assembly Government's employment strategies and policies for people with learning disabilities.

The *Skills that Work for Wales* Strategy is, as you are aware, an inclusive approach and outlines a model of support which cuts across all client groups and all ages that require appropriate advice and guidance in securing employment.

Careers Ladder

On 14th October the Deputy Minister for Skills announced the implementation of a Careers Ladders Wales pilot project in Rhyl. The Pilot seeks to ensure everyone has skills essential to take up employment and maintain their employability within the labour market, delivered as part of a customer centred and integrated skills for employment service. We will work with Department for Work and Pensions and Local Partners to deliver this commitment. The project will follow the Careers Ladder Framework as set out in the *Skills that Work for Wales* strategy. This framework sets out an individual's journey from initial engagement with the labour market through a seamless offer of support from a range of key partners. The Rhyl Pilot will test the appropriateness of the Careers Ladders approach for all client group and report back on its effectiveness.

As we seek to improve learning and skills systems for Wales it is vital we set appropriate conditions related to our funding and the support we make available to different groups of learners. We are still progressing our plans on a publication that drives forward the commitments we made in our *Skills That Work for Wales* Strategy and Action Plan, namely a review of our funding policy.

NEETs Plan

In April 2009 the Assembly Government published the NEETs Plan to support and help reduce the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training in Wales. The Plan outlines the need to improve our systems to ensure young people remain engaged and their

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progress is monitored, to enhance advice and guidance to young people and provide appropriate support and provision tailored to individual need. This is aimed at young people aged between 16-18 and cuts across all client groups, including young people with learning disabilities. The NEETs Plan provides a number of actions to prevent disengagement and re-engage where necessary and the Welsh Assembly Government are working with key partners from across Wales to deliver this.

Free Bus Pass for people with learning disabilities

With regard to the problems that were experienced during the summer with the free bus passes, officials from the Department for the Economy and Transport have advised that once a disabled person has been issued a free bus pass by their Local Authority they can ask their Local Authority to also allow the disabled passenger to be accompanied on the journey with an escort, in such circumstances the escort will also travel for free while they are accompanying the passenger.

Valuing Employment Now

The Department of Work and Pension's 'Valuing Employment Now: Real Jobs for People with Learning Disabilities' Strategy is a UK Strategy and my officials are meeting Department for Work and Pension officials on 21st October to discuss how this Strategy can be implemented in Wales.

JobCentre Plus Support

Jobcentre Plus have provided information on the range of support that is available through them to help people with learning disabilities get back into the labour market, some of these include:

- Disability Employment Advisers (DEA's) - work with disabled customers and deal with significant numbers of customers with a learning disability. These customers vary from those with low support needs to those whose needs are very significant. The DEA will work with the individual at a pace that suits them and complete an action plan that is agreed by the customer. The DEA will also liaise with specialist providers and referral agencies. They will also actively monitor customers with a learning disability after they have referred them to any additional provision.
- Work Preparation - Specialist providers use Job Coaches to work on a one to one basis with the customer. They use a process of 'systematic instruction'. In essence, the job coach learns the specific tasks first and then uses a step-by-step approach to train the customer. After a period of time, the job coach withdraws support and the customer is able to perform the full range of tasks un-aided. The Jobcentre Plus funds additional support for 'enhanced basic skills assessment' where this has been identified as beneficial for the individual to complete a programme effectively.
- Workstep - helps customers with more significant barriers obtain and keep work.
- Access to Work - There is a wide range of support available for this customer group from this programme. This could include assistance with 'travel to work' issues. It may take a considerable amount of time for a customer to learn the route into work – something we take for granted. A job coach will 'travel train' the customer but if the customer is not able to cope with this, they could apply for support with taxis to work.

As you are aware, moving forward from October 2010, a new programme called Work Choice will replace Work Preparation and Workstep. These programmes will be significantly enhanced and will benefit customers with a learning disability even more. For example:

- Module 1 of the new programme will be very focussed on obtaining a job and will last approximately six months. It could be extended to nine months if necessary. This will give a customer with a learning disability some real quality time to establish their strengths, job goals and aspirations. Additionally it will enable the identification of the on-going support the individual might need in a job before the person starts work and setting this up in advance of the person starting work.

- Module 2 will be a 'time-bound' period on 'supported employment'. The Jobcentre Plus contracted provider will support the individual over an eighteen month/two year period. Customers with a learning disability will benefit from this period and in many cases will be able to come off the 'supported element' and remain in the job unsupported.
- Module 3 will still be available for those customers who need longer term support beyond the two-year period. The emphasis will still be on developing the individual and providers will be using a meaningful measurement of the 'distance travelled' by the customer from the time they joined the programme.
- The above three modules will be underpinned by an Access to Work programme that will be robustly funded.

Skill Build

The Welsh Assembly Government's Skill Build Programme is accessible for people with Learning Disabilities. Skill Build is an all-age programme and is for learners who may require occupational skills learning, and/or who are vocationally uncertain – for this it offers work taster placements, as well as confidence building, motivational classes and help with Basic Skills. To support people on their training Work Based Learning Providers can claim 'Additional Learning Support' which is a fund specifically for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It is similar to support provided in Further Education and is designed to enable learners to access programmes in the same way and with similar opportunities as non-disabled learners. Funding can be applied for - human support such as notetakers, learning support assistants and tutorial support and technical support such as dyslexia software, laptops, Brailers.

Projects

A 'Coastal Project' has been established, which is sponsored by the City and County of Swansea and has secured ESF Priority 2 funding, to promote vocational guidance, employment, skills training and lifelong learning opportunities for individuals who are currently economically inactive as a result of illness, disability, (Mental Illness, Learning Disability, Physical Disability, Sensory Impairment) substance misuse problems and/or the serious social disadvantage associated with the transition from long-term care into adulthood. This project has accessed ESF money of £27million.

The Wellbeing Through Work project is a joint NHS, Welsh Assembly Government and Remploy initiative that aims to support employed participants who are at risk of losing their job due to a work limiting health condition. This will include changing perceptions about health and work, improving work and the workplace. It also includes dedicated case management support for people with a work limiting health condition and/or disability to remain in work.

The principal focus of the Fit For Work Services Pilots (FFWS) will be to provide personalised back-to-work support to sickness absentees - people off sick from work on health grounds - to assist them in their recovery and support them to return to sustained work more quickly than they otherwise would. FFWS Pilots will be selected from across Great Britain, including but not limited to areas with high levels of deprivation. In Wales, the pilot will take place in Rhyl.

Best wishes,

Jane

Ieuan Wyn Jones AC/AM
Dirprwy Brif Weinidog /Deputy First Minister



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref PET-03-172
Ein cyf/Our ref

Val Lloyd AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly For Wales
Cardiff Bay
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21 October 2009

Dea Val

I am writing with an update on progress to re-introduce the Swansea to Cork Ferry service as I understand the Petitions Committee is still giving active consideration to the relevant petition.

There has been some significant progress since I last wrote to you. My officials met with representatives of the West Cork Tourism Co-operative on 2nd October and the Co-Op confirmed they have purchased a ferry and that the service is due to re-launch on Saint David's Day 2010. The ferry will be run by their subsidiary company, Fastnet Line Ltd, and a new CEO is to be appointed shortly.

The Co-Op indicated that there is still a pre-launch funding gap of approximately 3 million Euros and have asked both the Assembly Government and the Irish Government to consider whether there is any scope for support. A relationship manager has been appointed to work with the Co-op and consider this proposal in more detail and I will keep you informed of progress as this develops.

Ieuan Wyn Jones
Gweinidog dros yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for the Economy and Transport

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AM

Edwina Hart AM OStJ MBE

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

Our ref: EH/06553/09

Your ref: PET-03-181

Val Lloyd AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

18 OCT 2009

Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

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13 October 2009

Reur Val

Thank you for your letter dated 2 October on behalf of the Petitions Committee asking for an update from the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer on the licensing of drugs used in treatment for sub-cutaneous use, including Hydroxocobalamin and Methylcobalamin, in connection with the Pernicious Anaemia Society's petition.

You will be aware that medicines licensing is not a devolved matter to the Assembly Government and is the responsibility of the licensing authority, the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). It would not therefore be appropriate for the Assembly Government to support this procedure being licensed. Any submission for licensing of this treatment would have to come direct from pharmaceutical manufacturers to MHRA who would ultimately make this decision.

The Chief Pharmaceutical Advisor informs me that as far as it has been possible to establish, no pharmaceutical companies have submitted or intend to submit an application to MHRA to license Methylcobalamin in the UK.

It would be for the Pernicious Anaemia Society to decide whether they wish to lobby manufacturers to encourage them to pursue licensing for this type of treatment for anaemia sufferers, including the use of Hydroxocobalamin and Methylcobalamin.

[Handwritten signature]

[Handwritten notes and signature]

Edwina Hart AM OStJ MBE

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

Our ref: EH/06700/09
Your ref: PET-03-188

Val Lloyd AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
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15 October 2009

Dear Val

Thank you for your letter dated 13 October on behalf of the Petitions Committee in which you raise the committee's concerns about the recent changes to immigration rules affecting the recruitment of middle grade doctors.

Immigration rules are set by the UK Borders Agency which is a function of Westminster and has not been devolved to the National Assembly for Wales. The Petition's Committee can access further information about immigration rules by visiting the Home Office UK Border Agency web site at:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/workingintheuk/>

As you are aware, the changes have made it a much more difficult process for doctors outside the EU to gain entry into the UK. There will be a review of the immigration rules this year and I will ensure that evidence is provided to the Home Office by my officials showing the impact of the restrictions on NHS Wales.

[Handwritten signature]

[Faint handwritten notes and signature]

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Ms Val Lloyd
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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15th October 2009

Dear Ms Lloyd,

Thank you for your invitation to reply and for all the work so far with our petition.

The Community Affairs Committee is pleased to give its views on the letters you received from the District Manager of jobcentre Plus S.E. Wales and the Deputy Minister for Skills. We certainly would wish you to '*discuss the matter further*', as suggested by Mr Ian H Williams.

Jobcentre Plus's priority '*to provide the full range of services in a proper environment*', is admirable. Unfortunately, the intention is not materialising as far as Monmouth is concerned.

At Abergavenny, for instance, the increasing pressure on facilities seems to be hampering the most basic support of jobseekers who may have used much of the day trying to reach them. For example a middle-aged lady, attempting to 'sign-on' for the first time in her life, a stranger to Abergavenny and in urgent need of the toilet because of an illness that was becoming acute, was refused the use of the lavatory! A young man who was doing his best to apply for a job and get his paperwork sorted in time to catch the post after his interview, asked to photocopy his CV. He was refused.

The environment at the centralised Jobcentres may be intended to safeguard the '*Health and Safety requirements of the staff and customers*', but there are consequent problems for Monmouth's One Stop Shop staff. The '*free customer access phone*' is very well used. Callers are often stressed and frustrated, and staff are sometimes faced with accusations and questions that they have no power to deal with. (One Stop Shop Staff are keen to say they think the service is better than nothing, but they feel unhappy to be put in the position of being unable to help.) They specify that anxiety levels are raised due to the completely public space where Jobseekers have to discuss their personal issues over the phone.

These are the people who need face to face help from trained experts.

To state that Abergavenny, Ross and Coleford are '*easily accessible*' is very hard for Monmouth jobseekers to accept. The bus service is very sparse indeed.

This committee feels obliged to persist with reporting the distress of local jobseekers, particularly because, the problems seem relatively solvable in these very difficult times: manning the fully serviced interview room once a week, with trained personnel (backed by local volunteers who still offer their service, if required)

Since the closure decision, £1.7 billion extra funding has been allocated across the UK. Meanwhile the Minister for Work and Pensions has called for longer opening hours, maximising space, taking certain services out to customers in the community and promises **a flexible approach**.

Although we understand that this is not a devolved issue, your help in discovering if any of these are actually happening would be truly appreciated by Monmouth jobseekers.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Mrs Anthea Dewhurst
Chair, Community Affairs Committee Monmouth Town Council

Brian Gibbons AC/AM
Y Gweinidog dros Gyfiawnder Cymdeithasol a Llywodraeth
Leol
Minister for Social Justice and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-03-208
Ein cyf/Our ref BG/05646/09

27 OCT 2009

Val Lloyd AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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CF99 1NA

26 October 2009

Dear Val

Petition: Historic Counties

Thank you for your letter of 15 October 2009.

The Local Government Boundary Commission has a duty to keep under review boundaries of local government areas in Wales, which includes the boundaries of the preserved counties.

As a consequence of a boundary review they can submit proposals to Welsh Minister to amend the boundaries of preserved counties which appear in the interest of effective and convenient local government.

The Commission conducted a review of the preserved counties in 2002 and I have no plans to instruct the Commission to review them in the foreseeable future.

Yours sincerely

Brian Gibbons AM

Elin Jones AM/AC
Y Gweinidog dros Faterion Gwledig
Minister for Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref EJ/05516/09

Val Lloyd AM
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22 October 2009

Dear Val,

Thank you for your letter of 5 October which enclosed a copy of the RSPCA petition against the culling of badgers. I am aware of this petition and have noted its content.

I understand that the Petitions Committee will consider the petitions from Secret World Wildlife Rescue and the RSPCA together. As I explained in my letter of 28 July 2009, I am not in a position to make a decision on the timescales involved in the implementation or evaluation of the Intensive Action Pilot Area (IAPA); however, I will keep the National Assembly for Wales informed of progress with the TB Eradication Programme.

You may be aware that I have recently made a statement at Plenary providing an update on the Programme including announcing the laying of the Tuberculosis Eradication (Wales) Order 2009 before the National Assembly for Wales. This Order provides the legislative powers for a government managed wildlife strategy, which includes culling and vaccination. The responses to the consultation which closed in late July, along with a summary are available on the Welsh Assembly Government bovine TB website (www.wales.gov.uk/bovinetb).

Elin Jones AC/AM
Y Gweinidog dros Faterion Gwledig
Minister for Rural Affairs

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Ieuan Wyn Jones AC/AM
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Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref PET-03-220
Ein cyf/Our ref DFM/05990/09
Val Lloyd AM
Chair
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Cardiff Bay
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CF99 1NA

21 October 2009

Dear Val

I am responding to your letter of 5th October 2009 addressing questions raised by Sandy Mewies AM who at that time was the Temporary Chair of the Petitions Committee. One of the issues addressed was the request for a copy of the guidelines for "*Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales*" to be sent to the Petitions Committee when they become available.

As stated in my letter of 30th July (copy enclosed) I have arranged for my officials to forward a copy of the guidelines to the Petitions Committee when they are published. Due in part to the summer recess, the launch date for these guidelines has been rescheduled for this autumn, not late summer as stated in my original letter.

The guidelines will also be made available for viewing on the Assembly Government website.

Ieuan Wyn Jones
Gweinidog dros yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for the Economy and Transport

Elin Jones AM/AC
Y Gweinidog dros Faterion Gwledig
Minister for Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref PET03-234
Ein cyf/Our ref EJ/05472/09

20 OCT 2009

Val Lloyd, AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales,
Cardiff Bay,
Cardiff,
CF99 1NA.

19 October 2009

Dear Val

CDZ

Thank you for your letter of the 25th September asking for an update on the progress being made to create 1,500 hectares of new woodland in Wales over the next three years.

This is a performance measure for Forestry Commission Wales (FCW) and is set out in their 2009 - 2012 Corporate Plan. However, this ambitious target will not be achieved at a regular rate of 500 hectares a year. The amount planted each year will vary in line with the availability of suitable land and other resources.

We are now just over six months into the three year period and in the forthcoming 2009/10 planting season (which occurs during the winter months when the young trees are dormant and therefore suitable for planting), I anticipate a total of 300 hectares of woodland being established.

Progress towards the target will be continually reviewed by the FCW Management Board who will redirect resources as necessary to achieve it. In addition to this the Better Woodlands for Wales (BWW) grant scheme is being reviewed to identify opportunities to encourage more new planting in order to contribute to achieving this target.

I believe that FC Wales has made a good start towards achieving this target and with three full planting seasons still to come and regular monitoring of its progress in place I am confident that they will be able to meet it in the timescale described.

Elin Jones AC/AM
Y Gweinidog dros Faterion Gwledig
Minister for Rural Affairs

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AM 12

Jane Davidson AC/AM
Y Gweinidog dros yr Amgylchedd, Cynaliadwyedd a Thai
Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref PET-03-237
Ein cyf/Our ref JD/05937/09

Val Lloyd AM
Petition Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

15 OCT 2009

15 October 2009

Dear Val,

AM

PETITION WELSH COUNTRYSIDE

Thank you for your letter of 25th September regarding the petition raised by Sion Gilbey about the Welsh Countryside. I share many of the sentiments which lie behind this petition about protecting the Welsh countryside from large industrial buildings, and I am determined to ensure that Welsh Assembly Government's planning policies continue to be robust in this regard.

In response to the specific points contained in your letter, I would say that the protection of the natural environment is one of the key objectives of Planning Policy Wales. Only last month we published a new Technical Advice Note 5 on nature and conservation which provides advice about how the land use planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing bio-diversity and geological conservation.

We already have in place strong policies in respect of brownfield land which makes it clear that wherever possible it should be used in preference to greenfield land, particularly those sites of high agricultural and ecological value. However, we also recognise that not all brownfield land is suitable for development by virtue, for example, of its location or the presence of protected species or valuable habitats. This policy is carried forward in Technical Advice Note 8, which, apart from identifying 7 Strategic Search Areas for large scale onshore wind developments, seeks to limit the construction of windfarms over 5MW to brownfield/urban sites.

Whilst some forms of industrial development may have specific locational requirements which mean that they require a countryside setting most major industrial developments are subject to Environmental Impact Assessment regulations. As such, these developments will require a full assessment of the

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likely environmental impacts prior to any consent being granted. The purpose of the regulations is to ensure that adverse environmental impacts of development are mitigated, or if this is not possible then it provides grounds for refusal.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JD', written over a circular stamp or mark.

Jane Davidson AM

Y Gweinidog dros yr Amgylchedd, Cynaliadwyedd a Thai
Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing

Jane Davidson AC/AM
Y Gweinidog dros yr Amgylchedd, Cynaliadwyedd a Thai
Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref PET-03-238-241
Ein cyf/Our ref JD/06003/09

2 OCT 2009

Val Lloyd AM
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Handwritten signature and date: 20 OCT 2009

20 October 2009

Dear Val,

Thank you for your letter of 2 October 2009 regarding two petitions the Petitions Committee considered at its meeting on 22 September 2009, namely; P-03-238 Pollution of the Burry Inlet and Carmarthen Bay and P-03-241 'Save our Sewers' Llanelli.

The Committee agreed to ask for my assistance in its consideration of these petitions by requesting information relating to;

The agencies that are responsible for the sewerage system in Llanelli.

In Llanelli and the surrounding area, I can confirm that the water company, Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water is responsible for the sewerage system and the Environment Agency has an obligation in ensuring water company discharges are compliant with European Council Directives to protect the environment.

The level of responsibility that the Welsh Assembly Government has for preventing the pollution of the Burry Inlet and Carmarthen Bay.

The Assembly Government is responsible for the implementation of a number of key European obligations relating to the prevention of pollution or protection of water quality which are relevant in this area. These include the Shellfish Waters Directive, the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive and the Water Framework Directive.

The Environment Strategy for Wales and its Action Plan were launched in May 2006, and sets out the Welsh Assembly Government's vision for the environment over the next 20 years. The vision is of a Welsh environment that is clean, healthy, biologically diverse and valued by the people of Wales. Its outcomes will contribute to addressing climate change, promoting sustainable development, and improving our social and economic wellbeing.

On the 31 March 2009, I launched the Welsh Assembly Government's Strategic Policy Position Statement on Water which builds on this commitment by setting out my core principles which are ensuring access to safe drinking water, maintaining water and sewerage services at an affordable price and compliance with statutory obligations that

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drive all round water quality. As our Environmental Regulators the Environment Agency pursue these commitments on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government.

The actions that the Welsh Assembly Government is taking to prevent the pollution of the Burry Inlet and Carmarthen Bay and to improve the sewerage system in Llanelli.

The Welsh Assembly Government is closely monitoring the situation in the Burry Inlet and Llanelli area and is in discussion with the Environment Agency, Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water and other interested parties with regards to waste water discharges, the impact of proposed developments in the Llanelli area on sewer capacity, cockle mortalities in the Burry Inlet and water quality in the Lougher Estuary.

As part of the commitment outlined in the Environment Strategy for Wales and my Strategic Policy Position Statement on Water, I can confirm that I along with Elin Jones, Minister for Rural Affairs have asked the Environment Agency as the competent authority to lead an investigation into increased cockle mortalities with the Burry Inlet and Carmarthen Bay. The role of Welsh Assembly Government officials will be monitoring the programme and checking the progress of the investigation.

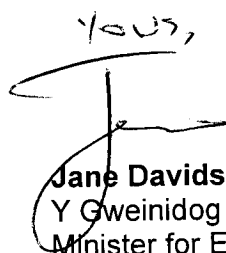
I can confirm that my officials will receive bi-monthly reports from the investigation team to monitor progress on the investigation and they have specifically reviewed the work packages that make up the overall programme that was agreed by the investigation team.

The Assembly Government has made it clear that it expects the regulator, the Environment Agency, to ensure that all regulations are being complied with and to investigate where problems appear to be occurring.

Finally, the Committee asked for details of the implications for the Welsh Assembly Government if breaches in EU law occur as a consequence of the sewerage spills. In particular, the Committee has asked whether any penalty imposed on the UK Government as a result of infraction proceedings would be passed on to the Welsh Assembly Government.

The position is set out in the Concordat on the Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues which is annexed to the Memorandum of Understanding drawn up between the UK Government and the devolved Governments in 2001. Paragraph 4.25 of the Concordat states that to the extent that financial costs and penalties imposed on the UK arise from a failure of implementation or enforcement by a devolved administration on a matter falling within its responsibility, responsibility for meeting these will be borne by the devolved administration.

In summary, I want all the bodies in the area to work together to find a way forward which respects the shared responsibility to protect the environment and meet our obligations under various European Directives. I hope this explains the position; I will continue to monitor the situation very closely but in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours,


Jane Davidson AM

Y Gweinidog dros yr Amgylchedd, Cynaliadwyedd a Thai
Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing

Jane Hutt AC/AM
Y Gweinidog dros Blant, Addysg, Dysgu Gydol Oes a Sgiliau
Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref PET-03-239
Ein cyf/Our ref JH/06636/09

Val Lloyd
National Assembly For Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

14⁶ October 2009

Dear Val,

Thank you for your letter on 25th September on behalf of the Petitions Committee concerning the provision of lifelong learning programmes at Welsh universities.

You have specifically requested details of any requirements to provide lifelong learning programmes imposed on Welsh higher education institutions by the Welsh Assembly Government.

The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) has responsibility for administering the public funding allocated by the Welsh Assembly Government for higher education in Wales in accordance with Section 65 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. The Welsh Ministers do not have the power to fund higher education institutions directly and are prevented by section 68(3) of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 from framing terms and conditions of funding to HEFCW by reference to particular courses of study, including the contents of such courses and the manner in which they are taught, supervised or assessed. Consequently the Welsh Assembly Government cannot set terms and conditions of grant which require HEFCW to spend a specific proportion of the grant which the Council administers on 'lifelong learning' programmes.

Lifelong learning provision spans a wide range of programmes and achievement levels and it is important that such provision is accessible to people from all backgrounds throughout Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government's Transformation Agenda encourages the higher education community to work in partnership with schools, FE colleges, employers and third sector organisations to ensure that the greatest number of people benefit from the wide range of learning opportunities available. This will build on HE institutions' current work through the Reaching Wider initiative, which aims to widen access to and participation in higher education.

Best wishes,

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

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Dirprwy Brif Weinidog /Deputy First Minister



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref PET-03-240
Eln cyf/Our ref DFM/05925/09

Val Lloyd AM
97 Pleasant Street,
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Swansea,
SA6 6HJ.



16 October 2009

Dea Val

I am responding to your letter of 25 September about road safety in Llanddewi Velfrey.

You will be aware that our consultants are looking at the possibility of widening the footway by acquiring strips of land at the end of gardens by agreement with the landowners.

My officials believe acquiring strips of land by Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) would not be appropriate. It is an expensive and time consuming approach. Any objections to a draft CPO could result in a public inquiry. An inspector at an inquiry would take into account the fact that within a very few years a new trunk road could be in place to the north (the NTP Llanddewi Velfrey to Penblewin scheme) and that this section would be de-trunked. Once de-trunked, the local highway authority would not need to consider any strategic transport function and the possibility exists that as a local road, the council would enhance pedestrian provision by reducing the width of the trafficked carriageway.

If the land is made available by the frontages to the scheme, acquisition could take months, rather than potentially years if a CPO is pursued. However, obtaining unanimous agreement to acquiring land by agreement may not be a simple task, and some other way of easing concerns is required.

In the interim, we have decided to erect speed activated warning signs on the trunk road approaches to the village. Such signs have been proved to have a significant traffic calming effect, and should help in reducing the speeds of vehicles, which the speed surveys have shown to be above desirable levels. We will investigate whether we can reasonably adjust the threshold speed at which the signs trigger to be lower at busier times of the day. We intend to install these signs within the next few months. I hope you will find that the traffic calming they will provide will assist in allaying local concerns.

Ieuan Wyn Jones
Gweinidog dros yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for the Economy and Transport

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