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National Osteoporosis Society E-Petition Supporting Evidence

Osteoporosis causes fragile bones, which can lead to painful and disabling fractures. It is a long-term condition that is currently putting 150,000 people in Wales at risk of painful fractures, which are costly for the NHS to treat. Fragility fractures represent a major and growing public health problem.

230,000 fragility fractures occur in the UK annually, including 70,000 hip fractures. Each year, the UK spends £2 billion treating and caring for people with hip fractures. In the UK, 1 in 2 women and 1 in 5 men will suffer a fracture at some point after the age of 50, mainly because of poor bone health.

Hip fractures are debilitating, restrict the independence of the sufferer and may lead to admission to a care home. Mortality associated with hip fracture is very high. There are nearly 13,800 hip fracture related deaths a year in the UK. Many patients die within weeks of their fracture, but mortality remains high for some years after. Surveys have shown that 80% of older women would rather die than suffer the consequences of a serious hip fracture.

Much can be done to prevent fragility fractures, through the proper identification, treatment and care for people who have osteoporosis and/or are at risk of falls. A range of bone protecting treatments, many of which are available in Wales, have been shown to reduce a person's chances of fracture by up to 50%.

We also have the ability to predict which people are most likely to break a hip, often many years in advance - it is a fact that half of all hip fracture patients have suffered a prior fragility fracture. By identifying then treating all older people who have suffered a fragility fracture in any part of their skeleton, we can significantly reduce the number of people who suffer hip fractures later on in life.

The best way of ensuring that the number of fragility fractures is reduced is through Fracture Liaison Services (FLSs), either based in fracture units within a hospital, or linked to a number of GP surgeries within primary care.

The hub of each FLS is often a specialist nurse, who is specifically trained to identify and record every patient who has had a fragility fracture. The specialist nurse will also ensure that they are offered osteoporosis and falls prevention treatment where necessary. A similar model is used to co-ordinate stroke services. The principle is simple - it should not be up to the patient to manage all the different parts of the NHS; the NHS should do that on behalf of the patient.

The Aberystwyth FLS provides an excellent example of a highly effective service developed in the NHS in Wales.

Despite this compelling evidence, the proportion of hospitals in Wales with access to an FLS is shockingly low. An organisational audit of falls and fracture services by The Royal College of Physicians and the Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership (HQIP), published in 2009, found that of the 26 hospitals and NHS Trusts which took part in the audit in Wales, only four reported as employing a Fracture Liaison Nurse.

Matched with survey data which shows that many GPs and clinicians are simply not recognising the majority of fragility fractures, we know that many readily identifiable people who are likely to suffer a hip fracture later on in life are simply slipping through the net.

We believe that the current postcode lottery for fracture services represents an unacceptable inequity of service provision.

We want an FLS linked to every hospital that receives fragility fractures in the UK, to ensure that every fragility fracture patient gets the treatment and care they need. In Wales, this will rely on the newly reorganised Local Health Boards implementing the Falls and Fractures Standard of the National Service Framework (NSF) for Older People in Wales. Although we accept the need for flexibility in how the service should be provided, we do want the Welsh Assembly Government to insist on the FLS being a universal service, available everywhere.

Widespread provision of FLSs would significantly reduce the number of unnecessary, painful and debilitating fragility fractures suffered by patients every year. It would also offer significant cost savings to the NHS in Wales by reducing the resources needed to treat and care for broken bones.

ATODIAD 3.

30 Ebrill 2009

Ian Lucas AS
Vernon House
41 Rhosddu Road
Wreccsam
LL11 2NS

Annwyl Mr Lucas

Deallaf bod etholwr i chi, Mr Arfon Jones, wedi ysgrifennu atoch ar yr 8fed o Ebrill i gwyno nad yw eich taflen gyfathrebu 'Parliamentary News' yn ddwyieithog. Mae Mr Jones wedi cysylltu â ni yn honni nad yw wedi derbyn ymateb gennyh ac yn cyfeirio'i gwyn atom ni.

Mae Deddf yr Iaith Gymraeg 1993 yn rhoi dyletswydd ar gyrff cyhoeddus i baratoi cynllun iaith Gymraeg sy'n egluro sut y byddant yn trin y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg yn gyfartal wrth gynnal busnes cyhoeddus yng Nghymru. Mae Adran 18 y Ddeddf yn rhoi'r hawl i aelodau'r cyhoedd gwyno wrth Fwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg am fethiant gan gorff cyhoeddus i weithredu'n unol â'i gynllun iaith. Gall y Bwrdd ddefnyddio'i bwerau dan Adran 17 y Deddf i ymchwilio i gwynion o'r fath.

Diffinnir 'corff cyhoeddus' o fewn Adran 6 y Ddeddf ac nid yw aelodau seneddol na phleidiau gwleidyddol wedi eu cynnwys o fewn y diffiniad hwnnw. Ni all y Bwrdd ymchwilio i gwynion yn erbyn aelodau seneddol na'u pleidiau.

Serch hynny credwn bod cais Mr Jones i dderbyn gohebiaeth gan ei aelod seneddol lleol yn ddwyieithog yn un rhesymol. Rwy'n siŵr eich bod yn cytuno bod cyfathrebu effeithiol rhwng aelodau seneddol a'u hetholwyr yn bwysig. Yng Nghymru mae cyflwyno gwybodaeth i aelodau'r cyhoedd yn eu dewis iaith yn rhan annatod o gyfathrebu'n effeithiol â hwy.

Efallai y bydd o ddiddordeb i chi gael gwybod bod 'Green Book' Tŷ'r Cyffredin yn caniatáu i aelodau seneddol hawlio costau cyfieithu fel 'lwfans achlysurol'. Mae lwfansau aelodau seneddol wedi eu hariannu gan arian cyhoeddus ac mae'n ymddangos yn rhesymol felly i ddefnyddio rhan o'r lwfansau hynny i dalu am gyfieithu gwybodaeth i'w gyflwyno i'r cyhoedd.

O ystyried yr uchod, a fydech yn fodlon dosbarthu'r daflen wybodaeth yn ddwyieithog yn y dyfodol, gan ddefnyddio rhan o'r lwfans sydd ar gael er mwyn gwneud hynny?

Edrychaf ymlaen at dderbyn eich ymateb. Byddwn yn ddiolchgar pe byddech yn gyrru copi o'ch ymateb at Mr Jones hefyd.

Croeso i chi gysylltu â ni os hoffech gyngor neu wybodaeth gan y Bwrdd.

Yn gywir

Meirion Prys Jones
Prif Weithredwr

30 April 2009

Ian Lucas MP
Vernon House
41 Rhosddu Road
Wrexham
LL11 2NS

Dear Mr Lucas

I understand that a constituent, Mr Arfon Jones, has written to you on the 8th April to complain that your information leaflet 'Parliamentary News' is not bilingual. Mr Jones has contacted us claiming that he has not received a response and referring his complaint to the Board.

The Welsh Language Act 1993 places a duty on public bodies to prepare Welsh language schemes which explain how they will treat the Welsh and English languages on the basis of equality when conducting public business in Wales. Section 18 of the Act gives members of the public the right to complain to the Board about failure on behalf of a public body to act in accordance with it's scheme. The Board may use powers assumed under Section 17 of the Act to investigate such complaints.

'Public bodies' are defined within Section 6 of the Act and Members of Parliament and political parties are not included. The Board cannot therefore investigate complaints against MPs or their parties.

At the same time we feel that Mr Jones' request to receive bilingual information from his local MP is reasonable. I'm sure you agree that effective communication between MPs and their constituents is important. In Wales providing information to the public in their language of choice is integral to effective communication.

It may be of interest for you to know that the House of Commons 'Green Book' allows MPs to claim translation costs as 'Incidental Expense'. MPs allowances are funded by the public and as such it seems reasonable for some of this to be used for the purpose of translating information to be sent to the public.

In light of the above, would you be willing to produce the information leaflet bilingually in future, using part of the allowance available to do so?

I look forward to receiving your response. Please would you send a copy of your response to Mr Jones?

Please contact us should you require advice or information from the Board.

Yours sincerely

Meirion Prys Jones
Chief Executive



ATTACHED 6.

DEPUTY LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

26 Whitehall
LONDON SW1A 2WH
Tel: 020 7276 1005 Fax: 020 7276 1006

Our Ref: MP264969

12 May 2009

Dr Arfon Jones

PARLIAMENTARY PUBLICATIONS

Thank you for your letter of 25 April to Harriet Harman regarding Welsh Members' publications. I have been asked to reply.

Neither an individual MP, nor the House of Commons itself, is a public body for the purpose of the Welsh Language Act 1993. The decision as to whether to publish an annual report in English, Welsh, or both is therefore entirely a matter for the individual MP concerned, provided that the other rules of the House have been complied with.

I am copying this letter to Ian Lucas MP.

*Yours sincerely
Chris Bryant*

CHRIS BRYANT

Councillor Arfon Jones
Guildhall
Wrexham
LL11 1AY

EDWINA HART AM
National Assembly Member for Gower

A.211
Bee Caerdydd
Caerdydd
CF99 1NA

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Cardiff Bay
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CF99 1NA

Ms Jane Hutt AM
Minister for Children, Education,
Lifelong Learning and Skills
Welsh Assembly Government
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Our Ref:gorseinoncollege.04.09JH

21 April 2009

Dear Jane

Re: Gorseinon college - FE Funding settlement

Further to my letter dated 1 April 2009 (copy attached for ease of reference), I am writing again following on from the announcement on 15 April 2009 of £8.9 m for further education in Wales. Staff and students alike have expressed their great concern that the funding settlement for Gorseinon College will impact on jobs and service provision.

You will be aware that Gorseinon College has an excellent reputation. Given that the Welsh Assembly Government actively encourages post 16 education and retraining and given the current economic downturn my constituents and I are very concerned that a first class educational and vocational training provider will be impeded from assisting those in need.

I look forward to receiving your response in due course.

Yours sincerely

Edwina Hart A.M.

I will keep your name and address on file and may send you information on matters that might be of interest to you. However, please contact my office if you would prefer me not to do so.

Contact: Rosemary Jones Personal Assistant to Edwina Hart
Tel: (029) 2089 5400 Fax: (029) 2089 6524 Minicom 029 2089 0971
WebSite at www.edwinahart.com e-mail: Rosemary.Jones@Wales.gov.uk



Our ref: MB1ed

5th May 2009

Ms Tracy Bates

Dear Ms Bates

Thank you for your letter dated 22nd April 2009. Please be assured that I take seriously the feelings you describe arising from the loss of this provision. All of us here are equally dismayed that we have been forced to cut provision because of inadequate funding from both the Department of Children, Education and Lifelong Learning and from the European Social Fund.

However, we have been left with no choice in this matter but to close classes and our outreach centre in Pontardulais.

Please accept our sincere apologies that your learning has been potentially disrupted by the proposed cuts; we are working hard to find alternative sources of income to support this provision and should this be forthcoming, I will review our decisions to date.

Yours sincerely

NICK BENNETT
Principal & Chief Executive



EDWINA HART AM
National Assembly Member for Gower

A.211
Bae Caerdydd
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Ms Jane Hutt AM
Minister for Children, Education,
Lifelong Learning and Skills,
Welsh Assembly Government
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Our Ref:gorseinoncollege.04.09JH

23 April 2009

Dear Jane

Re: Gorseinon college - FE Funding settlement

Further to my letter dated 21 April 2009 staff, students and local residents have been in contact to update me on the situation at Gorseinon College. I am given to understand that there will be some 13 compulsory redundancies mainly from the Department of Lifelong Learning. Some staff will have reduced hours and income. As an additional consequence two outreach centres will also be affected; Alexandra Road. Gorseinon will remain open but with reduced provision and the Canolfan y Bont centre will be closed outright. In the words of one of my constituents -

"As a mother with two young children, Gorseinon College local branch (Canolfan y Bont) has given me a lifeline. I am able to learn and look after my children. Without the support of the staff there I would still only have basic qualifications."

Of course, as well as offering those of working age a chance to upgrade their skills and acquire new ones, for older residents the outreach centres provide a way to stay mentally active and remain involved in the community. It has been noted that the WAG Education and Skills website bears the following headline:-

"The Welsh Assembly Government aims to raise the levels of achievement of the people of Wales through its education and training policies. Through those policies it aims to achieve a social and economic well being that is vital to developing a prosperous economy."

I will keep your name and address on file and may send you information on matters that might be of interest to you. However, please contact my office if you would prefer me not to do so.

Contact: Rosemary Jones Personal Assistant to Edwina Hart
Tel: (029) 2088 8400 Fax: (029) 2088 8524 Minicom 029 2088 8571
Website at www.edwinahart.com e-mail: Rosemary.Jones@Wales.gov.uk

EDWINA HART AM
National Assembly Member for Gower

As I wrote in my letter of the 21 April 2009, my constituents and I are very concerned that a first class educational and vocational training provider will be impeded from assisting those in need.

I look forward to receiving your response in due course.

Yours sincerely

Edwina Hart A.M.

I will keep your name and address on file and may send you information on matters that might be of interest to you. However, please contact my office if you would prefer me not to do so.

Contact: Rosemary Jones Personal Assistant to Edwina Hart
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Eich cyf/
Ein cyf/AT/02358/09

Tracey Bates

03 June 2009

Dear Ms Bates

Thank you for your letter addressed to the Minister for Children, Lifelong Learning and Skills, Jane Hutt AM regarding the closure of courses at Gorseinon College. The Minister has asked me to respond on her behalf as post-16 funding falls within my area of responsibility. Please accept my apologies for the delay in getting back to you.

The Assembly Government allocates funding for post-16 learning using its National Planning and Funding System (NPFS). The NPFS uses volume of learning activity to inform funding allocations which are based on the data submitted by schools and colleges. For the 2009/10 academic year, Gorseinon College has received an allocation of £9.128 million, which represents a small increase of nearly 1 percent when compared to its 2008/09 allocation.

We allocate funds to colleges who have the authority to plan and deliver learning provision which they judge as appropriate to meet local needs and the Assembly Government's priorities. In doing so, there are many demands which colleges need to prioritise and take into account when developing their curriculum offer, and sometimes difficult decisions have to be made.

The Welsh Assembly Government does not wish to be unduly restrictive in its guidance to providers but we do need to ensure value for money and the best curriculum offer possible for the public funding available for further education. Each college is, therefore, expected to offer learning that is relevant to, and based on local need, and is within their budget allocation.

You refer in your letter to contracts which exist between learners and the Assembly Government and I am assuming that, by this, you are referring to Individual Learning Accounts (ILA). I have spoken with colleagues who administer the Scheme, who inform me that any agreement relates to the allocation of funding towards meeting the cost of your chosen course and not the provision of the course per se. I am also informed that, should you wish to continue with your ECDL course next year (either with Gorseinon College or with another provider) or indeed should you wish to pursue

a different course with an approved provider, you may be able to reapply for an ILA to help towards any course costs.

I understand that this is a difficult situation for learners at the College. However, as an autonomous body, decisions on running costs, including staffing and the running of certain courses, rests with the Gorseinon College's Management Team and Governing Body. I regret, therefore, that we are not able to intervene in this particular situation.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Clark
Head of Provider Policy Team

Ffynone and Cilgwyn Woodlands

The beautiful, tranquil and historic Ffynone & Cilgwyn Woodlands, with their river system, waterfall and lake, have long been enjoyed by local people and visitors alike, for walking, riding, cycling, picnicking and nature appreciation.

Two years ago, the woodlands were bought by Calon yn Tyfu Cyf/Growing Heart Ltd, a private forestry contracting and firewood company, registered as a cooperative with only three members, two of whom are domestic partners (and thus effectively hold the majority). The woodland was bought with over £500,000 of public funds by Calon yn Tyfu Cyf/Growing Heart Ltd, through Forestry Commission Wales (FCW) Cydcoed Programme, to create a '*community woodland*', which was meant to meet the aspirations of local residents for their community and create '*high capacity community groups able to take part in decision making in their locality*'. FCW provided over £150,000 additional funding for work in the woodland, including track building and clear felling which will, in turn, enable the extraction of approximately £700,000 worth of timber. Already they have installed a permanent network of wide forest roads and clear-felled a large area right up to the riverbanks, destroying native trees and damaging wildlife habitat, against environmental best-practice guidelines.

The concerns of the local community are:

- The complete lack of public transparency and community consultation.
- The FCW's complete lack of proper formal independent verification, or even a common sense simple checking procedure, of the accuracy of the statements made during the bid process and especially in the bid document.
- The choice of Calon yn Tyfu Cyf/Growing Heart Ltd both as an appropriate community entity to receive a grant of public funds intended to benefit the whole community, and over its ability to deliver the project.
- FCW has publicly admitted that it has little, if any, control over the way the woodland is used or disposed of by Calon yn Tyfu Cyf/Growing Heart Ltd because it made the mistake of failing to insist upon a legal charge over the woodland which could be enforced in the event of inadequate, unsatisfactory or non performance; but FCW has not indicated how it plans to remedy such negligence.
- Disproportionate, inappropriate and damaging woodland management strategies, which ignore best ecological and forestry practice.

Residents and holidaymakers alike have been dismayed by the scale of the works in the picturesque woods. The local community has been deliberately excluded from involvement in any decision making; Calon yn Tyfu Cyf/Growing Heart Ltd were meant to hold open meetings to discuss the proposed developments, but when they realised how unpopular their plans would be, they persuaded the FCW Woodland Officer responsible that the meetings would be 'overkill'. The FCW Officer then went on to falsely inform Pembrokeshire Council that there had been 2 public meetings and authorised the work to begin without them. Another FCW officer (the Cydcoed Project Officer), who assisted Calon yn Tyfu Cyf/Growing Heart Ltd throughout the bid process, was a close acquaintance of the members and had helped them with grant applications since 2001. His advocacy was instrumental in obtaining the grant on behalf of the company and his assurances regarding its capability and credentials were relied on without proper verification. The Director of FCW has since admitted that this officer's conduct has not met the standard required of FCW staff.

In the two years since Calon yn Tyfu Cyf/Growing Heart Ltd first acquired the woods, no one else has been permitted or invited to join the 'cooperative' as a full (voting) member. Other Cydcoed funded community woodlands, such as Troserch Woodlands in Llanelli, have open membership, regular open meetings and transparent accounts.

Ffynone Woodlands contain standing timber valued at around £700,000 and financial transparency is non-existent for this project. A large area has already been clear felled and

more felling is planned. FCW maintain that because the woods are now the private property of Calon yn Tyfu Cyf/Growing Heart Ltd, the income generated from timber sales from this 'community woodland' and how that money is used are entirely private matters. Commercial timber production was meant to be less important to Cydcoed funded projects than community involvement and one would expect that the substantial commercial value realised by Calon yn Tyfu Cyf/Growing Heart Ltd should be fully and openly accounted for to the local community, as this is supposedly a 'community woodland project'.

FCW paid an additional £8,000 last year to commission a Community Consultation Report from Ben Reynolds Consulting, which can be downloaded from FCW Cydcoed web page <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/forestry.nsf/byunique/infid-5pjejk>. The Report found that *'many of those living near to the woodland are unhappy about the works that have taken place; with several respondents expressing their dissatisfaction very strongly indeed'*.

Part of the consultancy brief was to develop a business plan for the woods that would be *'a clear and transparent statement of priorities and plans for an external audience'*. Last October, solicitors acting on behalf of Calon yn Tyfu Cyf/Growing Heart Ltd wrote to Ben Reynolds Consulting attempting to suppress publication of the Report until it met with their clients' approval. Now Calon yn Tyfu Cyf/Growing Heart Ltd refuse to make the business plan public and FCW claim transparency was never intended. FCW say that the business plan belongs to Calon yn Tyfu Cyf/Growing Heart Ltd, but apparently it was paid for with Cydcoed funds. There is no obligation on Calon yn Tyfu Cyf/Growing Heart Ltd to implement any of the recommendations in the Community Consultation Report, and indeed they seem to be largely ignoring them. FCW have admitted that a legal charge should have been taken over the woodlands to ensure the project was properly conducted. This was suggested during the grant approval process, but not acted upon.

Lack of transparency has also been apparent in the planning procedure. On planning notices, clear fell was described as 'tree felling and tree surgery' and 5 metre wide forestry tracks and car parks as 'footpaths'. Pembrokeshire Council's Landscape Officer was successful in persuading the local FCW officer that the existing scenic path to the waterfall should be preserved, after being alerted to the plan to widen it, which had not been made clear from the outset. Cllr. John Davies expressed the concerns of Manordeifi Community Council regarding the scale of proposed works, but these were not heeded.

The complete lack of transparency during the purchase and grant process, the concerns in the community over the accuracy of the statements made in the bid application document, together with the absence of any proper checking procedure by FCW led to a call by constituents of Paul Davies AM to the Minister for Rural Affairs, Elin Jones, to instigate an independent public enquiry as the only mechanism to get to the truth. Correspondence had already taken place between individuals, the Minister and FCW; the results from which indicated that no meaningful progress could be made through those channels. The Minister for Rural Affairs has dismissed the request for an enquiry without good reason but, instead, suggested that the community should meet with FCW *'in order to discuss the whole process and to address any ongoing concerns ...regarding the project.'* A dossier of seventy questions, collected and collated by the local community, was presented to FCW but their answers to those questions were wholly inadequate and raised even more concerns. The Minister has continued to reject calls for an enquiry. Thus, having reached an impasse with the Minister and FCW, the community have decided to petition the Assembly so that the issue can be raised and adjudicated by an independent body.

We do this with the support and assistance of the following representatives:

- Paul Davies (AM, Pembs)
- J T Davies (County Councillor, Manordeifi)
- Rod Bowen (County Councillor, Clydau)