

Concise Minutes – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: Tuesday, 10 March 2020

Meeting time: 09.19 – 10.25

This meeting can be viewed
on [Senedd TV](#) at:

<http://senedd.tv/en/5911>

Attendance

Category	Names
Assembly Members:	Janet Finch-Saunders AM (Chair) Neil McEvoy AM Jack Sargeant AM Leanne Wood AM
Witnesses:	
Committee Staff:	Graeme Francis (Clerk) Mared Llwyd (Second Clerk) Ross Davies (Deputy Clerk) Samiwel Davies (Legal Adviser)

1 Introduction, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

Apologies were received from Michelle Brown AM.

2 New petitions

2.1 P-05-940 Reduce cancelled operations

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to await the views of the petitioner on the information provided by the Minister for Health and Social



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Services and contained within the research brief before considering further action on the petition.

2.2 P-05-942 The Golden Hour when Suffering a Stroke – Ambulance Response Times to be recategorised from Amber back to Red Status

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to:

- await the views of the petitioner on the information provided by the Minister for Health and Social Services;
- write to the Stroke Association to seek their views on the issues raised by the petition; and
- write back to the Minister for an update in due course.

2.3 P-05-943 We call on the Welsh Government to take urgent action to secure improvements to the A487 between Gellilydan and Maentwrog

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to:

- write to Cllr Elfed P Roberts and Liz Saville Roberts MP for their views on the road improvements and any further safety measures required, prior to writing to the Minister for a response to the suggested actions; and
- write to Gwynedd County Council to seek their views about this section of road and the current improvements and future work proposed.

2.4 P-05-944 Reverse the cuts to commuter train services in North East Wales

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to Transport for Wales to share the petition and the further information provided by the petitioners, and ask for a detailed response to the issues raised. The Committee also agreed to ask for a breakdown of the relevant service changes from and the journey time benefits achieved through the introduction of the 'express north-south Wales service'.

2.5 P-05-945 The Climate Emergency and a National Forest for Wales

The Committee considered the petition for the first time agreed to provide detailed comments and further questions provided by the petitioners to the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs and seek a further response to the issues and

questions raised by Coed Cadw in relation to tree and woodland policies, and short and medium term targets for tree planting.

3 Updates to previous petitions

3.1 P-04-667 Roundabout for the A477/ A4075 Junction

The Committee considered further information and agreed to provide the detailed comments from Cosheston Town Council about the wider stretch of the A477 and close the petition, given that the junction is currently being actively reviewed, with a view to the results of this informing decisions over any further work required.

3.2 P-05-907 Change the speed limit in Cemaes to 30mph

The Committee considered further comments from the petitioners and agreed to close the petition on the basis that the Welsh Government is conducting a review of speed limits on trunk roads in Wales and the Minister has committed to considering data, as well as correspondence received, during this process.

3.3 P-05-750 For single use items: introduce a Deposit Return System for drink containers and make fast food containers and utensils compostable

In light of the fact that detailed work is underway to develop a Deposit Return Scheme in Wales, England and Northern Ireland, with a further consultation on scheme design anticipated later in 2020, the Committee agreed to close the petition. In doing so, the Committee also agreed to provide the petitioners' further comments about scheme design to the Welsh Government.

3.4 P-05-864 Ban the use of 'Hostile Architecture

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to write back to the Minister for Housing and Local Government to share the evidence received from charities and to ask whether she has been able to give further consideration to whether "appropriate reference to the use of hostile architecture" can be made within advice and guidance on implementing the Government's 'placemaking agenda', as previously referred to.

3.5 P-05-927 Changing Places toilet facilities

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to await the outcome of the Welsh Government's proposed consultation on changes to Building Regulations which will make the provision of Changing Places Toilet facilities expected in certain new buildings.

3.6 P-05-871 Make baby and toddler changing available in both male/female toilets

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to await further information from the Minister for Housing and Local Government about the inclusion of proposals to strengthen the provision to expect baby-changing facilities in both male and female toilets, before considering further action on the petition.

3.7 P-05-890 Second Home Tax

Given that the Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee considered this issue as part of its inquiry into Empty Properties, and the Welsh Government has accepted in principle their recommendation to investigate the scale of the issue, there is little further that the Petitions Committee could achieve at this time. The Committee therefore agreed to close the petition.

3.8 P-05-806 We call for all premises in Wales to be awarded an Access Certificate number similar to the Food Hygiene Certificate.

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to keep a watching brief on this matter and to revisit the petition and progress made in the autumn, or on receipt of a further update.

3.9 P-05-863 Call on the Welsh Government to provide free sanitary products to all women in low income households

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to continue to keep a watching brief and request an update from the Deputy Minister and Chief Whip in six months as to how effectively these initiatives have been delivered.

3.10 P-05-771 Reconsider the closure of the Welsh Independent Living Grant and support disabled people to live independently

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to request a further update from the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Care once the process of independent assessments has been completed.

3.11 P-05-857 Create a national task force for children's mental health

In light of the work of the Welsh Youth Parliament on this subject, and the detailed scrutiny applied to this issue by the Children, Young People and Education Committee over recent years, the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioners.

3.12 P-05-914 Equal Access to Health Care for the Disabled

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to:

- seek information from the Equalities and Human Rights Commission about the issues raised in the petition; and
- write back to the Minister to ask what the Welsh Government would potentially be able to do in order to ensure the availability of appropriate equipment and facilities in GP practices.

3.13 P-05-926 To Provide a Chronic Fatigue Department in Wales

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to seek the views of the Welsh Association of ME and CFS Support, and Action for ME on the sufficiency of current services in Wales and the approach outlined by Welsh Government, including whether their role on the Advisory Group will continue.

3.14 P-05-877 Children's used uniform scheme

In light of the evidence received by the Committee and the publication of new Statutory Guidance on school uniform policies, the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioners for raising this issue through the petitions process.

3.15 P-05-884 Amendment to Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 to include UK institutions with operations overseas

Given that only the University of London Institution in Paris can decide whether to apply for its courses to be specifically designated to be eligible for student support, there is little else that the Committee can achieve at this stage. The Committee therefore agreed to close the petition and write to the University and the petitioner to explain the decision taken and propose that the University applies for designation.

3.16 P-05-909 Promoting the use of Makaton sign language in all Welsh schools

In light of the responses received from the Minister for Education in relation to this and other petitions about subjects taught in schools, particularly in relation to the flexibility and school-led nature of the new curriculum, the Committee agreed that there is little further that the Petitions Committee could achieve at this time. It therefore agreed to close the petition and congratulate the petitioner on the example she sets in promoting Makaton to support children with communication difficulties and to encourage the petitioner to lobby local schools

3.17 P-05-932 Education On Food Allergies In Schools & Mandatory EPI PEN Training

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to:

- explore the sufficiency of current sources of advice by writing to Allergy UK and Anaphylaxis UK to ask for their views on the current situation and any evidence they have about the sufficiency of current advice and guidance for schools;
- write to Public Health Wales to seek their view in relation to schools' role in relation to allergies and the advice that this available to support them; and
- write to the Association of Directors of Education to seek their perspective on how schools support and ensure all children with allergies are adequately safeguarded and supported, and for a view on the sufficiency of existing duties and advice.

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

The motion was agreed.

5 Discussion of the Welsh Government's response to the Committee's report on CCTV in Slaughterhouses

5.1 P-04-433: CCTV in Slaughterhouses

The Committee agreed to request a debate.

5.2 P-05-916 Adequate funding to protect the welfare of farm animals in Welsh slaughterhouses

The Committee agreed to request a debate.