

**RPP03 Gareth Watts, Director of Corporate Governance and Board Secretary,
Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board**

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | Petitions Committee

Adolygiad o'r Trefniadau ar gyfer Deisebau | Review of Petitions Arrangements

Ymateb gan: Gareth Watts, Cyfarwyddwr Llwydodraethu Corfforaethol & Ysgrifennydd y Bwrdd, Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Cwm Taf Morgannwg | Evidence from: Gareth Watts, Director of Corporate Governance and Board Secretary, Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

Prynhawn da/ Good afternoon

Please see below a response from Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board in response to the consultation from the Petitions Committee:

- How we seek your responses to petitioners' issues and concerns: Are the timescales right? What has worked well in the Sixth Senedd? What has not worked well or could be improved?

We view the role of the Petitions Committee as an important part of our democracy in Wales and are content with the way the Committee is operating and seeking views. We believe that timescales are broadly right, and the Committee should continually consider the ways in should consider as many different ways as possible of engaging with communities right across Wales including those who may be 'digitally excluded' at present and ensure that every part of the Welsh public has, the opportunity to have, their voice heard. The opportunity for our communities to engage directly with the Senedd in respect of issues they feel passionately and strongly about is very important. During this Senedd what is particularly useful for us as a public body in understanding people's concerns and the areas of Wales were those concerns emanate from are the interactive tools on your website such as the heatmaps.

- How should a future Petitions Committee best engage on recurrent policy issues which underpin the petitions we receive?

We think it is important the Petitions Committee works in tandem with areas of the Senedd to understand its role and how it inter-relates with the other committees, Government legislation and Members' bills to ensure it is joined up. It should also properly ensure that it manages the expectations of petitioners at an early stage to make sure they are aware of what is not possible as an output from the work of the Committee.

- Are there particular areas of accountability and decision-making in Welsh public life that the Committee could usefully focus its attention on?

No specific comments from us at this stage.

- Do you have any other general observations about the Senedd Petitions process or standards for petitions? For example, how we gather evidence, or the priorities chosen by Members for its in-depth inquiries, engagement or visits.

As mentioned, we think that the work of the Committee is an important and established plank of Welsh democratic life. We would encourage the Committee to always consider issues of accessibility in how it looks to engage and gather evidence and ensure that its evidence base is as inclusive as possible. Going forward the Committee may also want to consider how it presents its data and breakdown of area due to the new Senedd constituency boundaries and also consider reporting this data by Health Board boundary for those petitions relating to health and social care.

- Is there anything missing from the way the Committee has traditionally engaged, or the particular groups or individuals engaged with?

We do not have the extensive knowledge of all the petitions the Committee has been involved in but would reiterate our earlier points about ensuring that the approach to its work should always be as accessible and inclusive as possible.

- How might the rules around Senedd petitions need to change to support any improvements that you would recommend?

We do not have any specific suggestions at this point but as a public body would be interested in being consulted about any proposals to change the petitions process in place in the future and understand this would mean for the communities, we provide health services to.

Diolch/Thanks,

Gareth