



## Petitions Committee

### Members' Brief

Date: 2 April 2019

Time: 09.00 – 11.00

Venue: Committee Room 1

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### GENERAL BRIEFING (09.00 – 11:00)

#### 1. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS 09.00

#### 2. Evidence session – P-05-805 Fair Deal For Supply Teachers (09.00-09:40)

##### In attendance:

- Kirsty Williams AM, Minister for Education

#### P-05-805 Fair Deal For Supply Teachers

This petition was submitted by Sheila Jones and was first considered by the Committee in May 2018, having collected 1,425 signatures (997 online and 428 on paper).

##### **Text of Petition**

*We, the undersigned, request that all supply teachers be paid fairly and have full access to training opportunities and other terms and conditions. There should be a qualified teacher in every classroom and taxpayers' money should be going directly into education and not into the pockets of private agencies.*



*Supply teachers are being exploited and teachers are leaving the profession as they cannot afford to be supply teachers.  
Agencies reduce teachers' pay by forty to sixty percent and teachers lose their pensions, this is public money going into the private sector for profit.*

*Lessons are being covered by unqualified staff.*

#### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Caerphilly
- South Wales East

#### **Background**

- The Committee last considered the petition on 5 March and agreed to invite the Minister for Education to attend a Committee meeting in order to provide further evidence on this issue.
- A research briefing containing relevant background has been provided.

### **3. NEW PETITIONS (09:40 – 10:00)**

#### **3.1 P-05-868 Water Safety/Drowning Prevention and the effects of Cold Water Shock to be taught in all Schools in Wales**

This petition was submitted by Carmarthenshire Water Safety Partnership having collected 394 signatures online and 502 on paper – a total of 896 signatures.

#### **Text of Petition**

*We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to include Water Safety/Drowning Prevention and the effects of cold-water shock to be taught on the national curriculum in Wales.*

*In 2016 we saw the launch of the first ever water safety strategy in the UK, which aims to reduce water related fatalities by 50% by 2026. Collaboration, awareness, education and prevention are the main focuses. Wales needs to respond in support.*



*The families of Cameron Comey, Luke Somerfield, Kieran Bennett–Leefe, Robert Mansfield and Jem Pendragon all support this petition in memory of their sons lost to water.*

### **Additional Information**

*Several hundred adults and children drown accidentally every year in the UK & Ireland, and Wales – having a considerable number of rivers, lakes and a wild coastline is not immune. Education and prevention are key to safeguarding our communities from needless drowning.*

*This petition also has its aims focused on healthy, educated interactions with our many open waterways in Wales, by promoting events nationally and locally where young people and the public can access organized events where they engage with social, active and safe events with clubs/organisations concerned with water based activities.*

*We also recognise that local authority cuts to swimming accessibility for all pupils (through central government pressures) and a new Welsh Baccalaureate on water safety is too wide a gap to ensure a consistent education message for all. Wales has three broad strategies (our Healthy future, Building a brighter future and Well-being of Future Generations) and have links to injury prevention and, therefore, to reducing drowning.*

*This petition is supported by many partners including; five families of young men lost to drowning in West Wales, Ferryside Inshore Lifeboat, Jonathan Edwards MP, South Wales Fire & Rescue Service, Rebecca Ramsey (campaigner for England water safety education), All Wales Water Safety Group, Mid & West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Simon Hart MP, Carmarthen Town Council, The Coracle & Netsmans Association, Gwendraeth Valley Paddlers Canoe Club, Ammanford Police Station, Carmarthen Boat Club, Brecon Mountain Rescue Team, Llansteffan Coastguard, Angela Burns AM, Carmarthen Bay Ferries, Llandysul Paddlers Canoe Centre, to name a few.*

### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Carmarthen East and Dinefwr



- Mid and West Wales

### Background

- An initial response to the petition was received from the Minister for Education on 15 February.
- A research briefing on the petition and related issues has been provided.
- The petitioner has also provided further comments.

### Points for discussion

- The research brief outlines the arrangements for the new curriculum which is currently being developed. This will be available to schools from April 2019 and implemented from 2022.
- The **Minister** states that these issues are included within both the current and new curriculums. For example, during Physical Education at Key Stage 2, learners should be taught to "develop skills of water safety and personal survival" and to "swim unaided for a sustained period of time". Personal safety is also covered during PSE and the Welsh Baccalaureate includes an 'Open Water Challenge' which develops learners' knowledge of the risks associated with open water.
- During scrutiny of the curriculum reforms by the CYPE Committee, Sport Wales raised 'minor concerns' over the prominence of water safety and swimming as life skills. The Government responded that these areas will be included and that the guidance and 'supporting information' with the curriculum will also support this.
- The **petitioners** are calling for a cohesive Water Safety Plan for Wales with contributions from a range of partners. They refer to a new Water Safety Wales group set up by South Wales Fire & Rescue Service, which they hope will help drive this agenda forward.
- The petitioners make a number of recommendations for actions they would like to see taken forward, including the development of common messages and community level water safety plans.



### **Potential actions**

- The Committee could write back to the Welsh Government to provide the further information submitted by the petitioners and ask for its views in response.

### **AND/OR**

- The Committee could write to South Wales Fire & Rescue Service to seek further information about the Water Safety Wales Group and to their work on water safety and drowning prevention.

### **3.2 P-05-870 Let's Get Every Young Heart Screened (Age 10-35)**

This petition was submitted by Sharon Owen having collected 3,444 signatures.

#### **Text of Petition**

*We call on the National Assembly for Wales to ask the Welsh Government to roll out a heart screening programme to all young people between 10 and 35 in Wales. Hundreds die each year in Wales from an undiagnosed heart condition and a simple ECG will identify most cardiac abnormalities so that conditions can be managed effectively.*

*Heart screening sessions involve a short 5-10-minute test which is quick and painless and able to detect most heart abnormalities and could save hundreds of lives in Wales. In the Veneto region of Italy, where heart screening programme has been undertaken for 25 years the number of young athletes, male and female, dying of sudden cardiac arrest fell from one in 28,000 each year to one in 250,000, according to a 2006 study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association.*

#### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff West
- South Wales Central



## Background

- An initial response to the petition was received from the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services on 6 March.
- A research briefing on the petition and related issues has been provided.
- The petitioner has also provided further comments.

## Points for discussion

- The Welsh Hearts charity and others offer heart screening to young people and adults. The aim of this is to detect an underlying cardiac condition.
- The **Minister's** response states that *"Population screening programmes should only be offered where there is robust, high-quality evidence that screening will do more good than harm."*
- The **UK National Screening Committee** (UKNSC) advises Ministers across the UK about all aspects of population screening. This has considered screening to prevent Sudden Cardiac Death (SCD) in 12 to 39 year olds and *"concluded the harms of screening for SCD currently outweigh the benefits."* Reasons for this include reliability of tests and uncertainties over the benefits of identifying people with risk factors.
- However, while the Government does not support whole-population screening, he states that "families of individuals with SCD should be offered individual clinical assessments" as a 'higher-risk population'.
- The **petitioners** argue that screening can save lives and that early diagnosis of problems is beneficial to patients and the NHS. They also state that the fact that some issues may never develop into severe conditions is not a reason not to do population screening.
- The charity provide details of their work in schools and in screening over 3000 young people since 2015, which they say has led to 'hundreds' being referred for further investigation.



### Potential actions

- The Committee could write back to the Minister for Health and Social Services to ask for details of current Welsh Government and NHS Wales policy and actions in relation to identifying undiagnosed heart conditions amongst young people.

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

This petition was submitted by Antony Esposti having collected 125 signatures online.

#### Text of Petition

*Within Wales there are many businesses, hospitals and council run parks/sites that don't have baby changing available for use by both men and women. Normally the facilities are only available in female toilets.*

*This means that men are often forced to hunt out facilities that they can use, or on many occasions, use makeshift measures like changing their child on the floor, on top of wheelie bin lids in toilets, balancing on their laps and on benches outside.*

*We would ask the Assembly to ensure that all future renovations and new builds within areas open to the public have an area that provides a safe and clean space to change babies/allow toddlers to go to the toilet safely and as a short term measure make a standalone or drop down changing unit available.*

#### Assembly Constituency and Region

- Cardiff Central
- South Wales Central

#### Background

- An initial response to the petition was received from the Deputy Minister and Chief Whip on 12 March.



- A research briefing on the petition and related issues has been provided.
- The petitioner has also provided further comments.

#### Points for discussion

- The Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 requires every local authority to develop a local toilet strategy by 31 May 2019. This must include an assessment of their community's need for toilets (including changing facilities for babies), and must set out how the local authority proposes to meet this need.
- Welsh Government statutory guidance on the development of strategies includes consideration of the needs of parents of young children. Local authorities are also required to consult on their draft strategies.
- Building Regulations currently set no requirements for toilet or baby changing facilities. However, design guidance (applicable where these are to be provided) recommend that baby changing provision should be accessible and not in unisex toilets.
- The **petitioner** has provided further background on his experiences of trying to access baby changing facilities.
- He questions the meaning of the Government's statement that baby changing provision should not be "*in unisex toilets*" and refers to recent legislation in New York which ensures that any new or refurbished toilets had baby changing facilities available to both men and women.

#### Potential actions

- The Committee could write back to the Deputy Minister and Chief Whip to share the petitioner's comments and:
  - seek clarification about the reference made within design standards to baby changing provisions not being provided in 'unisex' toilets; and
  - ask what analysis the Welsh Government intends to do of the local toilet strategies produced by local authorities.





### **3.4 P-05-872 Protect school funding or admit to the weakening of service provision**

This petition was submitted by James Wilkinson having collected a total of 5,784 signatures.

#### **Text of Petition**

*We call upon the Welsh Government to protect funding to schools and, if they cannot, to acknowledge the impact of cuts on educational provision, particularly for our most vulnerable learners.*

*As cuts continue to council budgets, and these cuts are passed on to schools, governing bodies are being asked to make impossible decisions about which vital educational services should be removed from our schools.*

*This will mean reduced provision for pupils with additional learning needs, less support for vulnerable learners, a narrowed curriculum choice, insufficient learning resources and dilapidated buildings.*

*These are not the foundations on which schools can be expected to construct and implement a world leading educational curriculum.*

#### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Clwyd West
- North Wales

#### **Background**

- An initial response to the petition was received from the Minister for Education on 27 February.
- A research briefing on the petition and related issues has been provided.
- The petitioner was informed that the petition would be discussed but has not provided further comments.



### Points for discussion

- The large majority of funding for schools comes from local authorities. An outline of the budget setting process is contained within the research brief.
- The **Children, Young People and Education (CYPE) Committee** is currently undertaking an [inquiry into School Funding](#) and considering:
  - the sufficiency of the level of funding available;
  - the way in which funding is distributed; and
  - whether school budgets complement or inhibit delivery of the Welsh Government's policy objectives.
- Having gathered external evidence, the Committee will hold a session with the Minister for Education and the Minister for Housing and Local Government on 3 April.
- The **Minister's** letter recognises *"the pressures that local authorities are facing and our budgets reflect our continued priorities for local services, schools and social care. We have taken action to safeguard local authorities and front line school services."*
- In addition to core funding for local authorities, the Minister draws attention to *"significant grant funding"* for learners, such as £100m to raise school standards.
- £20m is also being allocated to support the introduction of the new Additional Learning Needs system and money is also being invested through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme.

### Potential actions

- As the petition has collected over 5000 signatures, the Committee may wish to consider requesting time for a Plenary debate on this subject.

### However:

- The CYPE Committee's current inquiry into School Funding is currently exploring these issues in detail and the intention is to publish a report prior to the summer recess.
- The Petitions Committee may therefore wish to write to the CYPE to share details of the petition and keep a watching brief during the course of that Committee's inquiry.



## 4. UPDATES TO PREVIOUS PETITIONS 10:00 – 10.30

### Health

#### **4.1 P-05-732 Unacceptable Waiting Times for NHS patients in A & E Wrexam/Wrexham Maelor Hospital**

This petition was submitted by Charles Dodman and was first considered by the Committee in January 2017 having collected 14 signatures.

##### **Text of the Petition**

*I am petitioning the Welsh Assembly to debate and discuss and implement measures to resolve unacceptable waiting times for the Welsh people at A & E Wrexam/Wrexham Maelor Hospital. Welsh people look undermined and demoralised by this unacceptable situation.*

##### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Wrexham
- North Wales

##### **Background**

- The Committee last considered the petition on 25 September 2018 and agreed to write to Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to ask for an update on the subject matter of the petition since previous correspondence, and for details of their response to the findings and recommendations of the Wales CHC review into patient experience in A&E and recent figures relating to waiting times at Wrexham Maelor.
- A response was received from Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board on 11 March.
- The petitioner was informed that the petition would be discussed but has not provided further comments.

##### **Points for discussion**

- The Health Board has made changes to management structure to create a dedicated team focusing on emergency care. These new structures are currently being monitored and the Board suggests



updating the Committee further about performance in six months' time.

- They have provided details of their responses to the recommendations arising from the CHC review and data on patient waits which indicate an improvement to date in 2019.

#### **Potential actions**

- The Committee could accept Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board's offer for a further update on developments in six months.

#### **4.2 P-05-797 Ensure access to the cystic fibrosis medicine, Orkambi, as a matter of urgency**

This petition was submitted by Rhian Barrance and was first considered by the Committee in January 2018, having collected 5,717 signatures.

#### **Text of Petition**

*We call on the National Assembly for Wales to call for a resolution to ongoing negotiations between NHS Wales, the All Wales Medicines Strategy Group, the Welsh Health and Specialised Services Committee and Vertex Pharmaceuticals regarding access to the cystic fibrosis medicine, Orkambi, as a matter of the utmost urgency.*

**Additional Information** on the petition is available on the [website](#).

#### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff West
- South Wales Central

#### **Background**

- The petition was last considered on 29 January when the Committee agreed to write to the Minister for Health and Social Services to ask him to consider whether there is an appropriate method for providing interim access to patients who would benefit from Orkambi, in light of the resumption of discussions with the



company over the long-term availability of the medicine on the NHS.

- A response from the Minister was received on 8 March.
- A [Written Statement](#) on access to Orkambi was also published on 1 March.
- The petitioner was informed that the petition would be discussed but has not provided further comments.

#### Points for discussion

- The **Minister** has provided an update on the current situation. Vertex has agreed to submit Orkambi for re-appraisal by the Scottish Medicines Consortium and, whilst this is underway, will provide the drug at a discount. Patients will need to need to apply through the equivalent of the Individual Patient Funding Request (IPFR) process.
- The Minister states that “*the IPFR process is an appropriate method for providing interim access to patients who would benefit from Orkambi in Wales, whilst discussions over a full appraisal of the treatment continue.*”
- Any commercial arrangement with the Welsh NHS “*would require a clear and binding commitment to engage in a future health technology appraisal by NICE or AWMSC within a specified time (normally 12 months).*”
- The same issues over access to Orkambi exist across the UK. The **Westminster Health and Social Care Committee** recently held evidence sessions over access to Orkambi on the NHS for patients in England.
- On 8 March 2019, the Chair of the Committee wrote to the Health Secretary to outline the evidence that Committee received (a copy of this paper is included in the meeting pack). This including urging the parties involved to work urgently to reach a solution or, if the pharmaceutical company does not engage meaningfully with this process, to consider referring them to the Competition and Markets Authority.



### Potential actions

- The Committee could agree to keep a watching brief on developments in Wales and across the UK, or further information from the petitioners, the Welsh Government or Vertex Pharmaceuticals before considering what further action it could take on this issue.

### 4.3 P-05-804 We need Welsh Government funding for play!!

This petition was submitted by RAY Ceredigion and was first considered in March 2018 having collected 328 signatures online.

#### Text of Petition

*We call on the National Assembly for Wales to provide annual designated funding to provide financial support to all Local Authorities in fulfilling their duty in line with their Play Sufficiency Assessments in order to avoid further closure of open access play provision such as RAY Ceredigion.*

#### Assembly Constituency and Region

- Ceredigion
- Mid and West Wales

#### Background

- The Committee last considered the petition on 15 January and agreed to write to:
  - the Minister for Health and Social Services to ask for an update on the funding for play in the context of the budget for 2019/20; and
  - Play Wales to seek their views on the issue raised by the petition, information about their reviews of Play Sufficiency Assessments and Action Plans, and for their response to the comments made by the petitioners over their social campaign.
- A response from the Deputy Minister was received on 20 February.
- A response from Play Wales was received on 13 March.
- The petitioner was informed that the petition would be discussed but has not provided further comments.



### Points for discussion

- The **Deputy Minister** states that £6.7m has been allocated to local authorities to support the duty to secure sufficient play opportunities over the last six years. This financial year an additional £2m funding has been made available via the All Wales Play Opportunities Grant, including an allocation to Ceredigion Council.
- **Play Wales** suggests that additional guidance could be produced to support Welsh Government funding to ensure that local voluntary organisations can *“receive the most effective benefit.”*
- Play Wales’ analysis of the implementation of the Play Sufficiency Duty appears largely positive. However, they note that progress is “largely due” to additional Welsh Government grants.
- The cost of officer time appears to be the most significant barrier to progressing actions within Play Sufficiency Action Plans. They also reference the closure of the Communities First programme and ongoing financial pressures on local authorities.

### Potential actions

- The Committee could consider whether or not it is likely that petition’s call for ring-fenced annual funding for play is likely to be successful. If not, there may be little further which can be achieved at this stage and therefore the Committee may wish to close the petition.

OR

- The Committee could write back to the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services to ask her to consider adding to guidance accompanying future grants to ensure that local voluntary organisations receive sufficient benefit from such funding.

#### **4.4 P-05-857 Create a National Task Force for Children's Mental Health**

This petition was submitted by The National Organisation for Children's Mental Health and was first considered in January 2019 having collected 91 signatures.



### **Text of Petition**

*We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to create a National Task Force to investigate which cultural, societal, and political factors may be contributing to the number of children in Wales experiencing poor mental health; and that this National Task Force:*

- 1) Include in its membership: children; representatives from organisations working with children; representatives from all political parties represented in the National Assembly for Wales; academics involved in researching social policy, political science, culture, society, and economics;*
- 2) Is chaired by the Children's Commissioner for Wales in post when this task force is created and that they should remain the Chair of the task force for its duration, should they agree to do so (regardless of whether they remain the Children's Commissioner for Wales for the duration of the life of the task force – except in exceptional circumstances);*
- 3) Should be tasked with producing a report based upon its investigations that includes recommendations for the Welsh Government based upon its findings;*
- 4) Should have all of its recommendations examined by the Welsh Government in consultation with this National Task Force, the National Assembly for Wales, and the residents of Wales (including children).*

### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Vale of Glamorgan
- South Wales Central

### **Background**

- The Committee last considered the petition on 29 January and agreed to:
  - write back to the Minister for Health and Social Services to provide the additional comments received from the petitioners and to ask for his response, in particular to the observations and proposals made in relation to the role of the Ministerial Task and Finish Group;





- write to the Children, Young People and Education Committee to make them aware of the petition in the context of their ongoing work on this subject following the *Mind over Matter* report, and to ask for any reflections that the Committee has in relation to the role and scope of the Ministerial Task and Finish Group; and
- request a Research Brief on the existing requirements in relation to mental health plans for children and its effectiveness.
- Responses have been received from the Minister and the Chair of the CYPE Committee.
- A further research brief has been provided.
- The petitioner has also provided further comments.

### Points for discussion

- The **Minister's** letter contains more detail about the Joint Ministerial Task and Finish Group on the Whole School Approach. A detailed programme of work has been developed up to Spring 2021.
- It is supported by a stakeholder reference group and a youth stakeholder group.
- The Minister is "*assured the groups already in place will enable us to move this agenda forward at pace, knitting the various strands of activity together; highlighting gaps in provision; and ensuring energy and resources are targeted to have the maximum benefit.*"
- The **Chair of the CYPE Committee** has outlined the range of the Committee's work on this subject. She is an observer with full rights of participation on the Ministerial Task & Finish Group, and the Committee intends to follow up on the recommendations in the Mind Over Matter report in June 2019.
- The CYPE report covered all aspects of care and circumstances faced by children, and took detailed evidence from stakeholders. The Committee is "*confident that delivery of our recommendations would address the breadth of needs and services required to support our children and young people.*"
- The Minister has also referred to an update being provided imminently to the CYPE on Government activity in this area.
- The research brief provides an overview of some of the legislation and services in this area. It also refers back to the detailed



consideration of these matters recently carried out by the CYPE Committee.

#### **Potential actions**

- In light of the detailed work being carried out by the CYPE Committee into the mental health of children and young people, there may be little added value which can be provided by the Petitions Committee at this time. Therefore:
  - The Committee could agree to close the petition and ask the CYPE Committee to include the petitioners on their list of stakeholders and keep them informed about their ongoing work on this subject.
- OR
  - The Committee could keep a watching brief on this subject for a set period of time and seek further views from the petitioners at a later date *[though the CYPE Committee has indicated that it will retain a focus on this subject-matter throughout the remainder of this Assembly]*.

## **Environment**

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

This petition was submitted by The Friends of Cwmcarn Forest Drive and was first considered in June 2017 having collected 1450 signatures.

#### **Text of petition**

*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 2018.*

**Additional information** is available on the [website](#).

#### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Islwyn



- South Wales East

### **Background**

- The Committee last considered the petition on 17 April 2018 and agreed to maintain a watching brief on developments and request an update from the petitioners and Natural Resources Wales in six months' time.
- An update from the petitioner was received on 19 February.
- An update from Natural Resources Wales was received on 27 February.
- The petitioner has provided a further response following NRW's update.

### **Points for discussion**

- NRW advises that £1m funding has been allocated from within their budget for the work required to re-open the Forest Drive, with the aim of achieving this in Spring 2020.
- Recruitment for a Project Manager was underway at the time of their letter.
- The petitioner's latest comments indicate that he is satisfied with the commitments made by NRW and the planned timetable for completing works and reopening the Forest Drive. The petitioner has held direct discussions with NRW.

### **Potential actions**

- In light of the commitments made by NRW, the Committee may conclude that there is little which could be gained from further scrutiny at this time and could close the petition.

OR

- The Committee could continue to keep a watching brief on this issue and seek a further update in six months' time.



#### **4.6 P-05-801 Save the trees and ground in Roath Mill and Roath Brook Gardens before it's too late**

This petition was submitted by Tamsin Davies and was first considered in February 2018, having collected 8,700 signatures on paper and another petition website.

##### **Text of Petition**

*As local residents, we believe that the planned flood works in Roath Mill Gardens and Roath Brook Gardens in Penylan, Cardiff are unnecessarily destructive.*

*We have seen the devastation of Waterloo Gardens and oppose Phase 3 of Natural Resources Wales' Roath Flood Scheme, which will widen the brook in Roath Mill and Roath Brook Gardens and see the felling of over 30 trees in an area where there has never been any flooding in the past.*

*We want to save the trees and ground in Roath Mill Gardens and Roath Brook Gardens in order to preserve the character of the area, minimise ecological damage and protect the habitats of our local wildlife.*

*We believe that Natural Resources Wales have not properly considered all options available, have misled the public with inaccurate figures during their consultation period and that it is, in fact unnecessary to bulldoze park grounds in order to widen the channel of the brook and remove mature trees in the process.*

*We call on the Welsh Government to urge National Resources Wales to stop work at Roath Mill and Roath Brook Gardens and consider the other viable options available to mitigate the perceived flood risk to this area.*

##### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff Central
- South Wales Central



### **Background**

- The Committee last considered the petition on 12 February and agreed to:
  - seek the views of the campaign group on the latest developments before considering whether it can take any further action on the petition; and
  - write to Natural Resources Wales to ask them to provide indicative timescales for undertaking the reassessment.
- A response from Natural Resources Wales was received on 13 March.
- The petitioner was informed that the petition would be discussed but has not provided further comments.

### **Points for discussion**

- NRW has confirmed that it is reconsidering the delivery options for Phase 3 as a stand-alone scheme. This may require a new business case that will need the approval of the Welsh Government.
- A stakeholder meeting is planned for late March or early April, and the current indicative timescale for completing a draft business case is November 2019.

### **Potential actions**

- The Committee could keep a watching brief on the issue and request an update in six months' time.

OR

- The petition calls on the work to be paused and consideration given to 'other viable options'. The Committee may therefore conclude that the petitioners have been successful on both counts and could consider it appropriate to close the petition at this point.



#### **4.7 P-05-815 Control Rapidly Expanding Intensive Poultry Industry in Wales**

This petition was submitted by the Brecon and Radnor Branch of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales and was first considered in June 2018, having collected 4,567 signatures.

##### **Text of Petition**

*We the undersigned call on the Welsh Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to take long-term strategic action to ensure that the poultry product industry is environmentally sustainable through effective delivery of the Environment (Wales) Act, Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, the Well-Being of Future Generations Act and the Water Framework Directive (WFD).*

*Powerful agricultural drivers reinforced by BREXIT are increasing intensive egg & poultry production. The WG is ignoring the devastating environmental consequences for biodiversity, soil and water quality and avian and human disease. The public is vocal about poultry welfare but largely ignorant of the environmental impact of intensive poultry farming units (IPUs). "Free-range" egg units with concentrations of up to 2,500 birds/Ha are a particular risk (NRW report 218: Powys Poultry Pilot Study & INI nitrogen alerts 6/17).*

*Steep-sided valleys, high rainfall causing heavy nutrient run-off and populations of rare natural species make much of rural Wales wholly unsuitable for the current explosion of IPUs. After a decline from 1990, ammonia emissions have been increasing since 2010 (NAEI 2017 report for DEFRA). Critical loads of ammonia and nitrogen deposition (estimated thresholds for unacceptable damage to plant diversity) are far exceeded at some European & UK protected sites, Local Nature Reserves and Ancient Woodland. Excess phosphates threaten our watercourses (Wye & Usk Foundation 2017).*

*In failing to act on the evidence, WG, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and Powys County Council (PCC) are neglecting the duty to "maintain and enhance biodiversity" (Environment Act Sec 6).*



*The WG must use its powers to control the industry:*

- *Provide proper resources for NRW to do urgent research, regulate and monitor IPU's and give better planning help to Local Planning Authorities (LPAs).*
- *Issue planning policy and guidance to LPAs to improve decisions, ensure cumulative impacts are considered and monitor and enforce planning conditions.*
- *Make the industry contribute towards the costs of regulation and monitoring and hold it to account for breach of environmental responsibility.*
- *Publish transparent public reports on progress.*

**Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Brecon and Radnorshire
- Mid and West Wales

**Background**

- The Committee last considered the petition on 29 January and agreed to:
  - write back to the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs to ask for:
    - further details of the work being taken forward on the cumulative impact of new development on sensitive habitats during 2019;
    - information over the stakeholders who will be engaged in this; and
    - a response to the request that the petitioners are invited to participate as part of this work.
  - write to the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee to share the evidence received to date in light of that Committee's current inquiry into Biodiversity;
  - provide the petitioner's analysis and the views expressed by Natural Resources Wales in their previous correspondence with committee members.
- A response from the Minister was received on 7 March.
- The petitioners have also provided further comments.



**Points for discussion:**

- The Chief Planner wrote to Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) last year and invited them to take part in work to consider how environmental impact can be better assessed. Several, including Powys County Council, will be involved in work going forward.
- A working group with a range of stakeholders is also being established and the evidence provided by the petitioners will be considered as part of this.
- The overall intention is to publish a new guidance note by the end of the year.
- The **petitioners** express a number of concerns over the make-up of the working group, including an apparent lack of environmental organisations or scientific representation.
- They are calling for measures to be taken to oblige LPAs to improve their consideration of these issues.

**Potential actions:**

- The Committee could write back to the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs to:
  - ask for a list of the membership of the working group and confirmation of its title and final terms of reference;
  - propose that the group's membership should include representation from environmental organisations and/or independent scientist(s); and
  - for further information about the interaction between this strand of work and the Intensive Agriculture Health Working Group.

**4.8 P-05-825 Protect children's lungs from harmful pollution whilst at school**

This petition was submitted by British Lung Foundation Cymru and was first considered in July 2018, having collected 159 signatures.





### **Text of Petition**

*People in towns and cities across Wales are breathing in levels of air pollution that are illegal and harmful for their health. Children are among those most vulnerable to air pollution. Their lungs are still growing, and polluted air can stunt the growth of their lungs and increase the likelihood of asthma and other health problems later on in life.*

*A freedom of information request by the BLF to local authorities in 2017 found that 68% of respondents (15 out of 22) were not monitoring air pollution within 10 metres of any of their schools.*

*We, the undersigned, call on the Welsh Government to require all Local Authorities to monitor the quality of the air children breathe whilst at school so decision-makers have the information they need to take action on air pollution.*

### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff South and Penarth
- South Wales Central

### **Background**

- The Committee last considered the petition on 15 January and agreed to:
  - write to the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs to seek a response to the suggestion that powers over anti-idling zones should be devolved to local authorities, and the concerns raised that local authorities have insufficient resources to carry out adequate monitoring and improvement of local air quality; and
  - write to the Future Generations Commissioner to seek her views on the issues raised by the petition and ask what powers she has in relation to addressing the effects of air pollution on children.
- A response was received from the Minister on 14 February.
- A joint response from the Future Generations Commissioner and the Children's Commissioner for Wales was received on 12 March.



- The petitioners have also provided further comments.

**Points for discussion:**

- The **Minister** reiterates that local authorities have duties to review, report and take action to improve air quality. In response to the petitioners' concerns over resources, the Minister refers to their core funding and other sources of revenue.
- Local authorities have powers to enforce anti-idling and issue fixed penalty notices, either in the whole of their area or in certain zones.
- The Minister reiterates that the Government will consult on a Clear Air Plan for Wales later this year. She states that anti-idling zones and existing regulations will form part of this.
- The **Future Generations Commissioner and Children's Commissioner** state that they do not *currently* have legal powers to enforce policy or legislation around air quality. However, if air quality assessments (near schools or elsewhere) became a requirement for local authorities, the Children's Commissioner could review the exercise of those functions.
- The FG Commissioner is focusing on transport as one of six priority areas, including air quality.
- The Commissioners support the petition in raising the importance of air quality around schools and urge the Committee to act in this regard. They suggest that the Committee could take further evidence from Natural Resources Wales, Public Health Wales and the Health & Safety Executive.
- The **petitioners** reiterate that belief *"that Welsh Government should adopt a proactive health-focussed approach to monitoring, recognising that there is no safe level of pollution."* They want increased monitoring to lead to better informed, ambitious measures such as Clean Air Zones.

**Potential actions:**

- The Committee could write to other groups such as NRW, Public Health Wales and the Health & Safety Executive to seek their views on the petition, as suggested by the Future Generations and Children's Commissioners.

OR



- If the Committee wished to explore the issue of air quality around schools further, in advance of the Government's Clean Air Plan for Wales, it could consider taking further evidence on the petition after the Easter recess.

The following three items are grouped together for consideration

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

This petition was submitted by the Marine Conservation Society and was first considered by the Committee in May 2017, having collected 1,993 signatures.

**Text of Petition**

*The Marine Conservation Society calls on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to act upon the globally responsible Wales goal within the Well Being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015. Build on the excellent results achieved by the carrier bag charge, by implementing two further actions that would help Wales to achieve a zero waste, circular economy. Namely:*

- 1. Introduce a deposit return system in Wales for all single use beverage containers such as glass and plastic bottles and aluminum cans.*
- 2. Legislate that all fast food containers and utensils, as well as take-away cups and lids, if not reusable or refillable or collected for recycling in store, are fully compostable.*

*Deposit return systems are already in operation in over 40 countries around the world and have been proven to reduce litter, increase recycling by creating a more certain supply of affordable, high-quality materials, reduce costs for Local Authorities and create jobs.*

*Fast food wrappers and takeaway cups are a common litter item on our streets and making them refillable/reusable, easily recyclable or compostable would reduce litter.*



*Manufacturing new drinks containers and fast food containers and cups use up huge amounts of energy, which contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. The more we recycle, and the less we litter, the better for our environment and our economy.*

**Assembly Constituency and Region.**

- Ross-on-Wye
- Herefordshire

**4.10 P-05-803 Our natural world is being poisoned by single use plastics...it's time to introduce a tax!**

This petition was submitted by the Friends of Barry Beaches and was first considered by the Committee in March 2018, having collected 102 signatures.

**Text of Petition**

*The evidence is there for those who want to see...our addiction to single use "throw away" plastic is poisoning our natural world.*

*Sea birds are eating plastics, fish are eating plastics, shell fish are eating plastics and we, therefore, are eating plastics.*

*The production of single use plastics are increasing year upon year, yet only 9% of plastics are recycled in the world.*

*Since large scale production of plastics began in the 1950's, we have produced 8.3 billion tonnes...equivalent to the weight of one billion African elephants! And that figure is expected to reach 34 billion tonnes by 2050!!*

*None of this plastic has biodegraded over this time, its just got smaller and smaller, making it nearly impossible to remove!*

*We urge the Welsh Government to introduce a tax on all single use plastics similar to the very successful 5p charge on single use carrier bags.*



*It's time to take action.*

#### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Vale of Glamorgan
- South Wales Central

#### **4.11 P-05-829 Ban Single Use Plastic Items in Wales**

This petition was submitted by Ban Plastic Straws Wales and was first considered in September 2018, having collected 161 signatures.

#### **Text of Petition**

*We call on the Welsh Assembly to ban all single use plastic items within Wales; It is estimated that the UK and US alone throw away around 550 million plastic straws every day. Although each one is used for an average of just 20 minutes, they take centuries to break down. During a clean-up organised by the Marine Conservation Society last year, an average of 138 pieces of food and drink-related waste were found on every 100m of UK beaches.*

*This needs to stop and the environment needs to become a priority.*

#### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Montgomeryshire
- Mid and West Wales

#### **Background**

- The Committee previously considered the three petitions in summer and autumn 2019 and agreed to group the petitions for consideration in future and keep a watching brief on developments in Wales and the UK in relation to single use plastics.
- A [Ministerial Statement was published on 18 February](#) about single use plastics and a deposit return scheme.
- All three petitioners were invited to submit further information in relation to this. Comments have been received from the petitioners for P-05-750.



#### Points for discussion:

- The Minister's statement refers to three relevant joint consultations being held by Defra and the Welsh Government in relation to Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) and a proposed tax on the production and import of plastic packaging.
- All consultations run until mid-May 2019.
- On 27 March 2019 the European Parliament [approved a new law](#) banning single-use plastic items such as plates, cutlery, straws and cotton buds sticks by 2021.

#### Potential actions:

- The Committee could agree to await the outcome of the relevant joint consultations between the UK and Welsh Governments before considering whether it should take further action on the petitions.

## Education

### 4.12 P-05-862 Tackling school bullying

This petition was submitted by the BlowforBradley Campaign and was first considered in February 2019, having collected 1,463 signatures.

#### Text of Petition

*We believe that bullying in schools is often ignored and the issue is not confronted in too many cases. Schools are required to have an anti bullying policy but too often this is merely a paperwork statement which is not acted upon.*

*We want the Welsh Assembly to produce a standard bullying framework which is enforceable by law. The after effects of school bullying often affects victims throughout their lives therefore changes are required as the current system is a failure. Schools often fail to record bullying incidents as such for fear of damaging their reputation and victims who speak out often find themselves punished themselves, harming their self esteem even more.*



*We insist that bullying is recorded and acted upon as such with better recording, cctv, reporting, compulsory parental interaction.*

### Assembly Constituency and Region

- Llanelli
- Mid and West Wales

### Background

- The Committee last considered the petition on 12 February and agreed to write to the Minister for Education to:
  - provide the further comments received from the petitioner;
  - ask her to provide an assessment of the sufficiency of current legal duties in relation to preventing and tackling bullying in school; and
  - ask further information about when the outcome of the public consultation on anti-bullying guidance will be available.
- A response from the Minister was received on 12 March.
- The petitioner has provided further comments.

### Points for discussion

- The **Minister** mentions a recent meeting she has held with the petitioner, and a further meeting between the petitioner and officials.
- The Minister also sets out current legal duties, including for all schools have a school behaviour policy and that *“effective anti-bullying strategies should be central to that behaviour policy”*.
- The draft anti-bullying guidance, which was recently subject to consultation, also *“highlights that some types of bullying behaviour that constitute harassment or threatening behaviour or communication may in fact be a criminal offence.”*
- The Minister is not currently able to confirm the timescale for publishing the new guidance.
- The **petitioner** welcomes the current work in this area. However, he reiterates the petition’s demand for a standard anti-bullying framework across Wales which is legally binding. He believes that



such a framework should contain legal requirements to “*record, educate, support and deal with escalating issues*”.

- The Minister has previously stated that the Welsh Government’s approach focuses on prevention.

#### **Potential actions**

- In light of the work currently underway in relation to revising the Welsh Government’s anti-bullying guidance, and the recent consultation, the Committee could agree to await the publication of this before considering the petition again.

OR

- The Committee could write back to the Minister for Education to request a response to the specific proposal made by the petitioner for a Wales-wide anti-bullying framework, containing strengthened legal requirements for schools.

## **Economy and Transport**

### **4.13 P-05-793 Hi speed broadband to Llangenny village**

This petition was submitted by Llangenny Village residents and was first considered by the Committee in January 2018, having collected 72 signatures.

#### **Text of Petition**

*We, the residents of Llangenny village in Powys call upon the National Assembly for Wales to ensure that Welsh Government manage their contract for hi speed broadband in Wales with BT in such a way that Llangenny village is connected to hi speed by 31st December 2017.*

#### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Brecon and Radnorshire
- Mid and West Wales

#### **Background**

- The Committee last considered the petition on 29 January and agreed to write to the Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport





to ask him to provide the Committee with an update about coverage for premises in Llangenny under the successor programme to Superfast Cymru, and an indicative timeline for its connection to high speed broadband.

- A response from the Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport was received on 20 March.
- The petitioner has also provided further comments.

#### **Points for discussion**

- The **Deputy Minister's** letter states that postcodes in Llangenny are *“not scheduled to be connected under the successor programme. Openreach has determined which premises they can cover under this project based on multiple factors including value for public money, deliverable broadband speeds and delivery timeframes.”*
- The Deputy Minister outlines a range of alternative options which could be pursued by the residents of Llangenny.
- The petitioner expresses frustration with the different approach for Llangenny compared with other local villages. However, he also thanks the Committee for its efforts and indicates that he doesn't think that the Committee is able to progress this matter further.

#### **Potential actions**

- As indicated by the petitioner, the Committee may conclude that, regrettably, it does not seem possible to make further progress in relation to broadband connections to Llangenny at this time. The Committee could therefore close the petition.

## **5. Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public for the remainder of the meeting (10:30)**



## 6. Discussion of previous evidence session

Members may wish to discuss the evidence received during the earlier evidence session and agree any further action that it wishes to take on petition P-05-805 Fair Deal For Supply Teachers.

### End of the meeting

- The Committee's next meeting will be held on 7 May following the Easter recess.