

Concise Minutes – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

This meeting can be viewed

Committee room 1

on [Senedd TV](#) at:

Meeting date: Monday, 14 October 2024

<http://senedd.tv/en/14136>

Meeting time: 14.02 – 15.00

Hybrid

Attendance

Category	Names
Members of the Senedd:	Carolyn Thomas MS (Chair) Rhys ab Owen MS Peter Fox MS Vaughan Gething MS
Witnesses:	
Committee Staff:	Gareth Price (Clerk) Kayleigh Imperato (Deputy Clerk) Gruffydd Owen (Legal Adviser) Lara Date (Second Clerk)

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Luke Fletcher MS who was substituting on the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee.



Members declared the following relevant interests under Standing Order 17.24A for petitions under consideration:

Item 2.1 – Peter Fox Ms declared that he is a farmer.

Item 2.2 – Members noted that all Senedd Members are in receipt of expenses under the Determination on Members’ Pay and Allowances.

Item 3.1 – Vaughan Gething MS is an honorary associate of the British Veterinary Association;

Item 3.1 Carolyn Thomas MS has a sister-in-law who works for a veterinary practice which has been taken over by a corporate.

2 New Petitions

2.1 P-06-1461 Scrap the ‘Universal Actions’ and payment reductions in the proposed Sustainable Farming Scheme

The Committee considered the petition and highlighted the plenary debate scheduled to take place on Committee reports from both the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee and the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee on the Sustainable Farming Scheme.

Members noted there will be an opportunity to raise the petitioners concerns on the floor of the Senedd later this month.

In light of the forthcoming debate, the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner for raising the important issue.

2.2 P-06-1473 Reduce Members of the Senedd's expenses bill

The Committee considered the petition and agreed to forward it to the Independent Remuneration Board which is responsible for such matters. In doing so Members agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioners.

3 Updates to previous petitions

3.1 P-06-1291 Hold an enquiry into the corporate takeover of the veterinary profession in Wales

The Committee considered the petition and noted the recent correspondence received from the petitioner, academics and Cats Matter.

The Chair also drew Members' attention to information received from Unite concerning the situation with Valley Vets.

Members thanked the petitioner for the work done on this issue and agreed to keep a watching brief on the petition pending the conclusion of the Competition and Markets Authority inquiry, which is expected to conclude in May 2025.

The Committee also noted the petitioner's request that the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee consider an inquiry on the matter within its forward work programme, and agreed to write to the Chair of the Committee to pass on the request.

3.2 P-06-1334 Make the Senedd More Representative of the Welsh Population

The Committee considered the petition and noted that since the last consideration of the petition the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidates List) Bill has been withdrawn and it is unlikely that any further legislation will be forthcoming prior to the next Senedd election.

Members agreed that increasing the representativeness of the Senedd will now be a matter for political parties in their selection of candidates, and the electorate at voting time. In light of this Members agreed to close the petition and thanked the petitioner.

3.3 P-06-1374 Bring Wales in line with England by allowing landowners 60 days tent and campervan camping a year

Peter Fox MS declared the following relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A:

He is a caravanner and member of caravan clubs.

The Committee considered the petition and noted the forthcoming consultation by the Welsh Government, and agreed to write to the petitioner to encourage them to respond to it when it launches.

In doing so Members agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

3.4 P-06-1433 Stop the ban on GB News in the Senedd

The Committee considered the petition and thanked the Llywydd for a comprehensive response to the petition.

Members noted the Senedd Commission now has a transparent, publicly-available policy covering which channels are included on the internal TV system. In light of this Members agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

3.5 P-06-1442 Extend Universal Free School Meals to secondary schools

The Committee considered the petition and congratulated the students for their #nohungrylearners campaign and thanked them for taking the time to submit evidence to the Committee.

Members agreed to close the petition, but in doing so would write to the Cabinet Secretary for Education to share the petitioner's evidence.

3.6 P-06-1455 Protect the junior departments of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama from closure

The Committee considered the petition again following the plenary debate on 18th September.

Members agreed that as the issues would be taken forward by other Senedd Committees, the petition should now be closed.

In doing so Members thanked the petitioner and agreed to share their latest correspondence with the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership.

3.7 P-06-1392 Reform of the additional learning needs Code of Wales 2021

The Committee considered the petition alongside four other petitions relating to ALN reform and support and funding for ALN provision. Members noted that the Minister is already working with campaigners to address concerns, and the ongoing work in this area by the CYPE Committee, which is due to report again by the end of the Senedd. There are also forthcoming Senedd debates which will address the issue. It was therefore agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

3.8 P-06-1341 Accessible guidance for parents and schools to help develop plans to support children with additional learning needs

The Committee considered the petition alongside four other petitions relating to ALN reform and support and funding for ALN provision. Members noted that the Minister is already working with campaigners to address concerns, and the ongoing work in this area by the CYPE Committee, which is due to report again by the end of the Senedd. There are also forthcoming Senedd debates which will address the issue. It was therefore agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

3.9 P-06-1342 Fund more specialist school places and staff for children with additional learning needs in Wales

The Committee considered the petition alongside four other petitions relating to ALN reform and support and funding for ALN provision. Members noted that the Minister is already working with campaigners to address concerns, and the ongoing work in this area by the CYPE Committee, which is due to report again by the end of the Senedd. There are also forthcoming Senedd debates which will address the issue. It was therefore agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

3.10 P-06-1347 Review Additional Learning Needs policies & make compulsory to FULLY train all teachers and TAs in regulation techniques

The Committee considered the petition alongside four other petitions relating to ALN reform and support and funding for ALN provision. Members noted that the Minister is already working to address concerns, and the ongoing work on ALN by the CYPE Committee, which is due to report again by the end of the Senedd. There are also forthcoming Senedd debates which will address the issue. It was therefore agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

3.11 P-06-1406 Financial penalties for Local Education Authorities who do not comply with timeframes for ALN

The Committee considered the petition alongside four other petitions relating to ALN reform and support and funding for ALN provision. Members noted that the Minister has accepted there are inconsistencies between local authorities, but that fines are not being considered. Members noted the ongoing work on ALN by the CYPE Committee, which is due to report again by the end of the Senedd. There are also forthcoming Senedd debates which will address ALN-related issues. It was therefore agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

3.12 P-06-1474 Stop Natural Resources Wales closing Bwlch Nant yr Arian, Coed y Brenin & Ynyslas visitor centres

Members noted the correspondence from Natural Resources Wales.

3.13 P-05-1447 Stop Natural Resources Wales closing the visitor centre at Ynyslas National Nature Reserve

Members noted the correspondence from Natural Resources Wales.

4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the remainder of today's business:

The motion was agreed.

The Committee considered a scoping paper for evidence gathering on the petition Ban smartphones in all schools in Wales (with exemptions for exceptional circumstances).