

Concise Minutes – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee room 1

Meeting date: Monday, 17 February 2025

Meeting time: 14.00 – 14.50

This meeting can be viewed

on [Senedd TV](#) at:

<http://senedd.tv/en/14833>

Hybrid

Attendance

Category	Names
Members of the Senedd:	Carolyn Thomas MS (Chair) Luke Fletcher MS Joel James MS
Witnesses:	
Committee Staff:	Gareth Price (Clerk) Lara Date (Second Clerk) Kayleigh Imperato (Deputy Clerk) Gruffydd Owen (Legal Adviser)

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Rhys ab Owen MS joining remotely.

Apologies were received from Vaughan Gething MS.



2 New Petitions

2.1 P-06-1488 Establish a 'Care Society' to Tackle the Long COVID Crisis in Wales:

The Chair had privately met with petitioners immediately before the meeting and highlighted areas covered in those discussions. Members noted the broad scope of the issues raised, which were beyond the Petitions Committee to take further, and would require the Welsh Government to have a cross-governmental strategy. The Committee therefore agreed to write to the First Minister to ask about the Government's cross-portfolio strategy on tackling long COVID, and particularly for those people who are out of work or struggling to get back to work because of potentially undiagnosed long COVID, and to keep the petition open pending a response. The letter would be copied to all the relevant Cabinet Secretaries for awareness. Members also agreed to write to the relevant Senedd subject committees to ask for more information about what they were doing, or had planned on Long Covid, with a view to making recommendations to the Welsh Government. The Wales Covid-19 Inquiry Special Purpose Committee would be copied into the correspondence, for awareness.

3 Updates to previous petitions

3.1 P-06-1335 Welsh Government should take steps to ensure vulnerable adults without bank cards can pay with cash

It was agreed to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales to seek clarification on the point raised by the petitioners about staff discretion on Transport for Wales catering services, with a view to then closing the petition once that response is received.

3.2 P-06-1350 Re-open Dyfi Ward at Tywyn Hospital now

The Chair noted that in a recent meeting between North Wales Members and the Health Board the Chief Executive had indicated that a further update on the situation would be provided in writing. The Committee agreed to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Health

and Social Care to highlight the latest responses from the Hospital Action Group and the Community Hospital Association, and to copy in the Chief Executive of the Health Board, and then hoped to see more clarity in the next update from the Health Board. The petition would be kept open pending their response.

3.3 P-06-1405 We want and need a Mental Health unit for men in North Wales with beds

The Committee noted the detailed information provided by the Health Boards in response to a previous request about provision of 24/7 acute mental health support. The data showed a range of practice across different parts of Wales. It was noted that, since last consideration, progress was being made by the Welsh Government in developing a Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and a Suicide and Self-Harm Prevention Strategy, and that the petitioner's comments and observations could be fed into that process. It was therefore agreed to write to the Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing to highlight those comments and observations and seek clarification on the timeline for publication of those strategies. It was agreed to keep the petition open pending a response.

4 Papers to note

The papers were noted.

4.1 P-06-1449 Designate the Tywi Valley as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

4.2 P-06-1467 Instruct NHS Wales to add Adenomyosis to its 111 A-Z webpages

4.3 P-06-1482 Ban smartphones in all schools in Wales with exemptions for exceptional circumstances

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

The was motion was agreed.

6 Strategic Planning Discussion

Members discussed a paper on work programme priorities for the remainder of the Sixth Senedd, including: focus of further inquiry work in the time available; reviewing Standing Order provisions for the petitions process in advance of the Seventh Senedd; public engagement issues; and legacy reporting. Members shared their views and agreed to consider a further options paper at a future meeting.