

Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:
Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date:
18 June 2013

Meeting time:
09:00

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



For further information please contact:

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Agenda

- 1 Introduction, apologies and substitutions 9.00**
- 2 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the following business: 9.00**
Item 3.
- 3 Discussion on Committee activities 9.00 – 9.10**

Discussion of evidence sessions on 4 June 2013

- 4 P-04-457 The Charitable Chaplaincy Campaign 9.10 – 9.15**
(Pages 1 – 2)
- 5 P-04-474 Support for NHS chaplaincy services 9.15 – 9.20**
(Pages 3 – 5)
- 6 New petitions 9.20 – 9.40**
 - 6.1 P-04-487 A Welsh Government deposit loan scheme for first time Welsh home buyers (Pages 6 – 8)
 - 6.2 P-04-488 The right to decide: an end to the compulsory study of Welsh to GCSE (Pages 9 – 10)
 - 6.3 P-04-489 A National affordable and priority housing Act of Wales (Pages 11 – 12)
 - 6.4 P-04-490 Antiretroviral Medication in Cardiff (Pages 13 – 16)

- 6.5 P-04-491 A National Bank of Wales and complementary Welsh currency (Pages 17 – 18)
- 6.6 P-04-492 Diagnosis of autism in children (Pages 19 – 21)

7 Updates to previous petitions 9.40 – 10-15

- 7.1 P-03-262 Wales Peace Institute (Pages 22 – 25)

Health

- 7.2 P-03-150 National Cancer Standards (Pages 26 – 29)
- 7.3 P-04-366 Closure of Aberystwyth Day Centre (Pages 30 – 71)
- 7.4 P-04-408 Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder Service (Pages 72 – 77)
- 7.5 P-04-460 Lives not Airports (Pages 78 – 83)
- 7.6 P-04-463 Reduction of Salt Levels in Food (Page 84)

Education

- 7.7 P-04-396 Emergency Life Support Skills (ELS) for Wales Schoolchildren (Pages 85 – 87)
- 7.8 P-04-467 January exams (Pages 88 – 90)

Culture and Sport

- 7.9 P-03-263 List Stradey Park (Pages 91 – 97)
- 7.10 P-03-317 Hijinx Funding for Arts (Pages 98 – 102)

Natural Resources and Food

- 7.11 P-04-477 Support for the Control of Dogs (Wales) Bill (Pages 103 – 106)

Local Government and Government Business

- 7.12 P-04-454 Call to end Councillor and Assembly Member Dual Role (Pages 107 – 116)

Economy, Science and Transport

- 7.13 P-04-435 Wales & Border Railways Franchise 2018 to be Operated on a Not-for-Dividend Basis (Pages 117 – 119)
- 7.14 P-04-438 Shopping Access (Pages 120 – 124)

7.15 P-04-475 Wanted – Buses for Meirionnydd (Pages 125 – 127)

**8 P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools: Evidence
Session 10.15 – 10.45** (Pages 128 – 140)

Arfon Rhys, Lead Petitioner

Sara Hawys, Ban Schoolyard Recruitment

Emma Sangster, Forces Watch

Agenda Item 4

P-04-457 The Charitable Chaplaincy Campaign

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to cease the use of National Health Service budget for religious care and to work with the leaders of organised religion to establish a charitable trust to fund religious care in the hospitals of Wales.

Supporting Information:

The charitable chaplaincy campaign comprises an informal network of citizen who are concerned that every million pounds of public money allocated to the NHS in Wales should be used to promote public health and to treat those who need medical attention.

Our campaign has no funds and needs none. It is sponsored by no other organisation within or without Wales. Modern internet based services allow us to communicate with each other and with our democratically elected representatives.

All our supporters have seen and concur with two documents which are provided in support of this petition, Principles which sets out our motivation and Proposal which states our case with supporting evidence and rational argument.

We provide a third document Employment which provides evidence of how the monies drawn from the NHS Budget for hospital chaplaincy services are currently spent.

Petition raised by: The Charitable Chaplaincy Campaign

Date petition first considered by Committee: 19 February 2013



William Powell AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Tuesday 4th June 2013

Dear William,

Thank you for your recent letter requesting the Welsh NHS Confederation's views regarding petition P-04-457 'the Charitable Chaplaincy Campaign' and data about the take-up of chaplaincy services in the NHS.

Hospital chaplains are of enormous value to Health Boards and have an important place as part of NHS staff. By offering spiritual care services to patients, carers and staff, they provide vital support to people in times of need.

It is important to note that hospital chaplains do not solely provide 'religious care' but cover much wider spiritual and emotional support which isn't necessarily of a religious nature. As such, hospital chaplains have a significant number of pastoral and spiritual encounters and contacts which do not lead to a specific religious intervention. These include bereavement support, pregnancy loss funerals, memorial services in addition to awareness training to a number of staff on the diverse spiritual and religious needs of Wales' multi faith patient community.

Information regarding the take up on chaplaincy services in the NHS is not recorded centrally by the Welsh NHS Confederation and we understand there is no requirement for keeping such information across the Health Boards.

I hope that this information is helpful to you.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Birtwhistle
Director

Agenda Item 5

P-04-474 Support for NHS chaplaincy services

Petition wording:

We recognise the positive contribution of hospital chaplaincy services in delivering spiritual care within the Welsh NHS and recognise the tremendous work that the chaplaincy service in the NHS is providing.

This service plays an important role in the spiritual wellbeing of both patients and NHS staff, not only for those with a religious affiliation but also for others with no association with a religious group. We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to continue with its commitment to funding hospital chaplaincy services and to extend the benefits of chaplaincy services to other care settings, including primary and social care settings.

Petition raised by: Jim Stewart

Date petition first considered by Committee: 16 April 2013

Number of signatures: 1077



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Betsi Cadwaladr
University Health Board

The Standards for Spiritual Care Services in the NHS in Wales (2010) requires of Health Boards that *Spiritual/Religious needs are assessed and addressed* (1.a.1 and 1.b.1). Furthermore the Guidance on Capabilities and Competences for Healthcare Chaplains/Spiritual Care Givers (2010) requires a *Chaplain/Spiritual Care Giver demonstrate an ability to maintain appropriate documentation of referrals, assessment, interventions and outcomes*. So the need for good record keeping is fundamental to the Spiritual Care Standards the nature of the records to be kept is not specified except in the broad terms described above. Chaplaincy departments in the three legacy Trusts, Northwest Wales, Conwy and Denbighshire and North East Wales all maintained records of Chaplaincy activity and with the formation of Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCU) the record keeping for Chaplaincy was standardised across BCU. Chaplains are required to maintain records of:

- Referrals for patient care (spiritual/religious) by staff, carers, family or patients themselves, these referral may involved one visit or several visits over a longer period
- Record of calls by wards, drop in visits to Chapel, encounters while out and about in the hospitals during Duty Hours (8am-6pm) and Out of Hours (6pm-8am, weekends and Bank Holidays). These records are kept under the detailed headings shown on the chart page 2.
- Activity undertaken by Chaplaincy volunteers, including religious care i.e. receiving Holy Communion
- Funerals taken by Chaplains usually following pregnancy loss, including miscarriage, still birth and neonatal/child death but also adult funerals provided by the Health Board when there are no next of kin

As Chaplains we are aware that this recording of numerical data reflects only a small part of the work of spiritual/religious care and within BCU we work with the Service User Experience Team to capture wider patient experience through the use of patient/carer stories. We are also currently working on a project to capture intensive data on chaplaincy work over a period of one week across the three acute sites. A spiritual awareness week is planned for autumn 2013 which will include a patient/carer/staff survey to evaluate the awareness of chaplaincy and the broad range of care offered. Within BCU the Chaplaincy Team sits within Nursing, Midwifery and Patient Services Team and reports annually to the Improving Service User Experience Committee on Chaplaincy Activity. Each Health Board in Wales is also required to submit an Action Plan on the Spiritual Care Standards to the Chief Nursing Officer annually.

Revd Kathy Collins, Pastoral Care Manager

Chaplaincy Sessions April 2012 - March 2013 for Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

Session can be 15mins - 2hours, includes both Duty Time (8am-6pm) and Out of Hours (6pm - 8am)

The total sessions are for the 3 Acute District Hospitals of Glan Clwyd, Gwynedd and Maelor (does not include Community Hospitals)

	SESSIONS
Referrals for patients requesting spiritual/religious care (may include more than 1 session/visit)	584
Spiritual or Religious Care of Patient at/after time of Death	135
Bereavement support for Family/carer	34
Spiritual/Bereavement care following pregnancy loss, including miscarriage, still birth and neonatal/child death	120
Support for Mental Health Learning Disability Patients	52
Support for distressed Patients	54
Staff Support, including bereavement support following death of staff member	66
Religious Care provided/facilitated by chaplains for all Faith/Belief groups	96
Hospital provided funerals, all Faiths and Civil, for adults and babies, including bereavement support	88

P-04-487 A Welsh Government deposit loan scheme for first time Welsh home buyers

Petition wording:

We call on the Welsh Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to offer an annual deposit loan scheme for first time Welsh house buyers and/or renters.

It is proposed that Welsh mortgage companies would also need to take part in this scheme and agree to ask for no more than 5% of a deposit on any suitable property (as well as offer a low interest own what you pay for mortgage). This for example would all mean that up to 15,000 Welsh first time house buyers (first time buyers whose earnings are below a certain threshold and have lived or worked in Wales continuously for at least 10 years, or have full time business links to Wales) could be helped annually with a deposit loan of around £7,500 each for an averaged priced house, with the loan back payments deferred for at least one year. Once sellers and buyers agree to the scheme, the property in question would keep its eligible occupancy clause, as happens with similar schemes in the Peak District and North York Moors National parks.

Supporting information:

Although the Welsh Government can't interfere with private properties, owners including second homeowners could be encouraged to consider selling through the scheme if they decide to sell their property. First time renovators of derelict properties/farmhouses should also be eligible for the scheme. It's proposed that Welsh estate agents and the house sellers would be paid a monthly fee (paid for by the interest on the deposit loans) for taking part in the voluntary scheme by agreeing to only advertise, sell or rent within Wales and to eligible Welsh citizens for the first 6 months of a property being put on the market – after which time it would be open to anyone.

This scheme would help to give families and individuals a chance to live and work within their own areas and not be priced out of the market by unreasonable average wage to property price ratios, whilst also ensuring more money stays within local economies, boosting a more sustainable and productive Welsh economy in general.

Petition raised by: Sovereign Wales

Date petition first considered by Committee: 18 June 2013

Number of signatures: 17

P-04-487 A Welsh Government deposit loan scheme for first time Welsh home buyers - Correspondence from the petitioner to the clerking team, 06.06.2013

The petition for an national, annual, capped deposit fund to help the first time home buying citizens of Wales is meant to address the fact that the cost of a home in Wales is way above the means of many young people especially, because house prices have risen in Wales whilst average wages remain relatively low. The aim of this proposed scheme is to help first time buyers whose earnings are below a certain threshold and have lived or worked in Wales continuously for at least 10 years or have full time business links to Wales, to have a fair chance to live and work within their own areas, helping to contribute towards a more sustainable economy whilst not being priced out of the market by unreasonable average wage to property price ratios. The figure of 15,000 annual loans in the petition is a top estimate - in total in 2012, 8,700 loans were advanced to first-time buyers in Wales for example. Not all of these first time buyers would qualify as being eligible for the deposit scheme of course, as many would be earning a reasonable wage above a certain threshold. But 5000 applicants a year for example would mean a reasonable annual (and repayable) sum of £37.5 million. A scheme such as this might also only need to last for 5-10 years as, as happens with similar schemes in the Peak District and North York Moors National parks, the capped number of properties in question could possibly form a 'housing stock' that kept their eligible occupancy clause for future first time buyers, as the original buyers hopefully moved on to other/bigger properties as time goes on.

P-04-488 The right to decide an end to the compulsory study of Welsh to GCSE

Petition wording:

We the undersigned call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to change the policy which makes it compulsory for pupils in English medium secondary schools in the Principality to study Welsh to GCSE level. This should be a matter of choice for the pupils and their parents.

Petition raised by: David Fitzpatrick

Date petition first considered by Committee: 18 June 2013

Number of signatures: 51

P-04-488 The right to decide: an end to the compulsory study of Welsh to GCSE - Correspondence from the petitioner to the clerking team, 07.06.2013

Dear Ms Giddins,

I strongly oppose the compulsory requirement of Welsh language teaching in secondary schools. This is despite my sincere desire to see the language strengthened in its role in the cultural life of Welsh society: I studied Welsh until I was 18 and I was a member of the Urdd.

My justification is as follows:

One volunteer is worth ten pressed men and nobody likes conscription. The policy probably breeds resentment in our youth, as any poll would show if the government had the courage of its convictions;

Most young people can only handle one foreign language to GCSE. French or Spanish are a good springboard to other language skills, Welsh is not. I speak from experience, as a good base in Latin allowed me to get by in French, Spanish and Italian. Useful when I worked for several years as a trade diplomat in Geneva for the Hong Kong government;

The world does business and science in English. Compulsory Welsh may be seen by the rest of the World as an inward looking attitude, or misplaced cultural chauvinism. Our children must go out to meet the world, which is English speaking. Most postgrad science or business courses in Europe are now conducted in English. France will soon offer most undergrad science in the English language. The language of international business and diplomacy is English. This is not to our national disadvantage. The Welsh are masters of the language and very gifted communicators. How often have you received the national compliment from an Englishman, of the fondly remembered inspiration that came from a Welsh teacher? These English language skills should be celebrated, not impliedly apologised for..

Please place this email before the Committee.

Regards,

Dai Fitzpatrick

P-04-489 A National affordable and priority housing Act of Wales

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to create a National Housing Act of Wales to regulate the building of new houses in accordance with sustainable, affordable local and national needs and capabilities: to be regulated by an exclusive independent Welsh Inspectorate and Welsh housing projections panel. Around 80% of all new houses built in Wales, whether for renting or selling, should be local need, affordable housing (priced proportionally to average local authority wages) and priority given to local authority residents (people who have lived or worked continuously in the area for 10 years or more, or have work, business or other immediate spouse/family connections to the area). This will ensure that most of the local money flow circulates within local economies, keeping them healthy to develop within their means. This is a similar policy to the ones practised in National Parks in England such as the Peak District and North York Moors.

Supporting information:

A housing act would guarantee that new all house builds are built in strict proportion to the existing urban/rural balance and within the means of the economy, social cohesion and infrastructure capabilities of the local authorities, and of Wales as a whole. A basic minimal amount of new houses/flats could be built at the discretion of local authorities under agreed guidelines, with any other new houses/flats having to go through the scrutiny of an independent Welsh Housing Inspectorate and Welsh Government. Disproportionate high housing prices in many areas of Wales can often result in local families being driven out of the areas where they've grown up. The focus therefore needs to be on real local need including affordable housing and renovating existing buildings, rather than on unsustainable housing projections conjured up by far removed civil servants.

Petition raised by: Sovereign Wales

Date petition first considered by Committee: 4 June 2013

Number of signatures: 28

P-04-489 A National affordable and priority housing Act of Wales- Correspondence from the petitioner to the clerking team, 06.06.2013

The petition for a national priority and affordable housing act of Wales aims to shine a light on the incredibly disproportionate 320,000 new houses (projected 800,000 new people) planned for Wales in the next 20 years by local authorities and the Welsh Government's planning policy framework (or lack of) and calls for a new act to regulate new housing in line with prioritised local and national need, and sustainability in general. I don't believe it is far fetched to say that these housing plans by local authorities, and the failure of the Welsh government to have a coherent sustainable national housing policy are akin to the Israeli forced housing settlements in the West Bank of Palestine, although the proposed plans for Wales would mean that new housing (which could be described as settlements) would be roughly three times the amount already carried out in the West Bank. When we already have over 125,000 people looking for work in Wales, the Welsh Government have failed to state where these extra proposed 800,000 people will suddenly come from, what jobs there will be for them or how our already crumbling economy and infrastructure is meant to deal with them all.

I'm sure that there is no need to state that this is not based on an anti new houses or an anti immigration sentiment but rather on the rights of all Welsh citizens to priority and affordable housing and a pro sustainable level of immigration that's based on Wales's economic capabilities and its general sustainability - sustainability supposedly being one of the core remits of the Welsh Government. Currently there is also no exclusive single Welsh planning inspectorate or Welsh projections panel - there are housing projections research banded out to various institutions such as the Anglia Ruskin University in England and an England and Wales housing inspectorate with a technically subordinate Welsh division of that main inspectorate. These disproportionate planned 320,000 new houses are an utterly irresponsible plan by local authorities and a Welsh Government that are happy to preach sustainability but seem unable to practice it. I believe there is a duty on our representatives, who we elect and pay to represent us as public servants, to bring in a new act that regulates all new housing in Wales in a way that ensures the economic and societal sustainability of all areas of Wales first and foremost, and stops these bizarre un-asked for mass plans before they do any more damage.

P-04-490 Meddyginiaeth Gwrth-retrofeirysol yng Nghaerdydd

Geiriad y ddeiseb:

Rydym yn galw ar Gynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru i annog Llywodraeth Cymru i weithredu ynghylch y cyflenwad cyfyngedig iawn o feddyginiaethau HIV gwrth-retrofeirysol. Mae newidiadau diweddar a wnaed gan Ysbyty Athrofaol Caerdydd yn golygu bod yn rhaid i bob claf sy'n cael meddyginiaethau gwrth-retrofeirysol naill ai ddod i fferyllfa'r ysbyty, sydd ag amseroedd agor cyfyngedig, neu ddewis i'r feddyginiaeth gael ei hanfon i'r cartref. Caiff cleifion sefydlog sy'n glynu at y driniaeth apwyntiad bob 4-6 mis gyda'r ymgynghorydd. Er hynny, mae dosbarthiad meddyginiaethau wedi'i gyfyngu i gyflenwad misol yn unig. Nid yw'r Gweinidog Iechyd yn teimlo mai ei gyfrifoldeb ef yw hyn ac nid yw am ymyrryd. Dylai cleifion gael dosbarthiad teg o feddyginiaeth yn unol â chanllawiau cymdeithas HIV y DU.

Prif ddeisebydd: Joerg Thieme

Ysytiriwyd am y tro cyntaf gan y Pwyllgor: 18 Mehefin 2013

Nifer y llofnodion : 150

Petition

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to act in regards to the very limited supply of antiretroviral HIV medications. Recent changes by the Cardiff University Hospital means that every single patient receiving antiretroviral medications has to come either to the hospital pharmacy with restricted opening times or opt for home delivery. Stable patients with good adherence are seen every 4-6 months for an appointment with the consultant yet distribution of medication is limited to a monthly supply only. The minister of health does not feel responsible and does not step in. Patients should receive a fair distribution of medication that is according to the guidance of the UK HIV association. Apparently the hospital wants to save costs and therefore hand out medication on a 28 days cycle. Patients on antiretroviral medication are normally stable. No consultant would prescribe medication for 6 months if there is a need to change the medication because of medical reasons. In those cases patients are seen more regularly anyway.

I cannot come to the pharmacy that's open 3 times a week from 8.30am-3pm and being forced to pick up my medication. Home delivery is not an option for me as I am not at home most days.

I have now transferred my care to London Chelsea Hospital and they are happy to prescribe medication on a 6 months interval. They have never heard of any guidelines stipulating a 28 days prescription cycle. I therefore strongly question the health minister's assumption of cost savings.



Joerg Thieme

6th February 2012

To whom it may concern,

I wish to make a formal complaint in regards to the amount of medication I am getting for antiretroviral therapy.

This month I was running out of medication and I received only 1 months worth of medication. My next appointment is in 5 weeks.

Furthermore I noticed that I am getting only 3 months worth of medication whereas my appointments are every 6 months. I am even considering having an appointment only once a year.

- I am stable and healthy
- I spare the hospital time and resources
- The current European and German guidelines tend to go towards once a year appointments and I would like to follow it

I am surprised that the hospital is facing financial difficulty as I was told. Apparently that's the reason for the once a month or every three months medication. I would much prefer a yearly subscription and a yearly attendance.

I would like to draw to your attention a FOI request (Ref FoI/12/38), there is about **£100.000** outstanding payments for foreign patients.

Nearly **£8.000.000** were spent on clinical negligence in 2011-2012. An enormous increase compared to the previous year.

1900 shifts were filled by agency nurses within the first 6 months of 2012. I estimate that the hospital has to pay about 3 times more compared to a nurse employed by the hospital. That would be roughly **£600.000** according to my estimated calculation.

There is a trend for increase in DNA, costing the hospital money that's not going to be recovered.

Considering the above points I am not happy with my treatment. I would like medication for a year and a once a year appointment. I am a Radiographer myself and in constant GP contact. I can manage my health as it's all good for many years.

Can you please investigate. I think if the hospital is more relaxed about appointments and medical prescription it would save costs and free space for more patients.

kind regards

Joerg Thieme

Hello Cathy

I understand you are supporting a action to keep HIV medication provided at current levels of six months for patients.

I hope you do not mind me mailing you but I have an issue that I fear needs addressing.

For nearly 5 years now I have been receiving HIV medication from the CRI after a diagnosis over 10 years ago. Over the last few years I have had no luck in finding a job in my area leading to me looking outside of Cardiff. currently I work abroad from 2 months up to 6 months at a time. (I have to return 6 monthly for my HIV levels to be checked at the CRI.

I have found going on medication very disturbing and in fact became very depressed shortly after starting the regime. However after a while it became easier and easier. I was visiting the clinic every six months which I found easier as it was every month when I first started medication and that was intimidating.

It was a great relief when the hospital said that I could have my meds every 6 months as I felt less stigmatised and also more comfortable. It also enabled me to look for work and finally find a post that means I will have to work abroad for considerable amount of time. as I do not work and live abroad permanently as the contracts can be 2 or even 5 months long it is impossible for me to get my medication and have a consistent care plan in another country and I do not want to be forced to out my status to people or employers that do not need to know. I feel like I am being made to beg for this medication, I have thought about stopping the medication all together but I have been advised that I will become ill if I stop.

Now I am told that I will have to get my medication every month from the CRI which means I have to suffer the stigma of visiting again and again. The medication service did send my medication to my home address once and my house mate opened my box of meds and as a result now is fully aware of my HIV status. I was not aware of this until I returned home to a quite angry flat mate who started to say I had no right to keep this info from her.

I found this so upsetting as it is nothing to do with the people I share a house with. it is becoming more and more stressful and I am feeling like I am being forced to leave my job after a long time in unemployment. This job has made me feel so much better about myself, and I think has helped me to come to terms at last with my status.

I hope I make my plight clear to you and hope you can present this as an argument for keeping the medication at the levels I have been used to.

regards

P-04-491 A National Bank of Wales and complementary Welsh currency

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to help establish a National Bank of Wales / Banc Cenedlaethol Cymru that would seek to operate within a new modern, responsible, sustainable and transparent Welsh banking code of conduct. We also call for a complementary Welsh currency to be established by the bank: similar to the C3 complementary currency in Uruguay and the Swiss WIR, and issued to interested SME's, the self-employed, industry, farmers and traders.

We believe that in the face of the global economic mismanagement seen in recent years especially, the Welsh Government needs to show economic accountability and leadership by encouraging and promoting debt free money in the public and state creation of money and by promoting currency innovation and sustainable banking as promoted by movements such as Positive Money. We believe that a Bank of Wales would be a perfect opportunity for Wales to demonstrate such economic innovation and leadership in the world.

An independent transparent Welsh Monetary Committee containing a mixture of non-politically affiliated experts and a citizen observer panel could act as an advisory body between the bank and the Welsh government on all relevant matters.

Petition raised by: Sovereign Wales

Date petition first considered by Committee: 18 June 2013

Number of signatures: 43

P-04-491 A National Bank of Wales and complementary Welsh currency - Correspondence from the petitioner to the clerking team, 06.06.2013

The third petition is for the chartering of a publicly owned National Bank of Wales, which is achievable even under the present weak devolution settlement. Through a public Bank of Wales, the system of fractional reserve lending, used carefully and targeted towards specific areas of productive investment, could mean that a great deal of extra credit would be available to SME's and productive industry, as well as potentially for investment in much-needed infrastructure projects, including green infrastructure. The dangers of Welsh Government borrowing powers as they are currently envisaged post-Silk should be obvious to the Welsh Government following the sovereign debt crises which have swept Europe and also from the previous history of suffering in developing nations brought about through excessive debt loading leading to the imposition of 'conditionalities' on their governments by the IMF and the World Bank. Borrowing from private banks and capital markets, with the potential charging of excessive interest rates, could leave Wales open to further wealth extraction from unaccountable external forces with no vested interest in the long-term prosperity of the country. Borrowing from our own Welsh public bank at low interest and recycling the profit on the interest paid for the good of the country is a logical alternative to this, and one which has proved successful elsewhere in Europe and the world. The Welsh government is currently conducting the Access to Finance review, which is being carried out by Prof. Dylan Jones-Evans: this review presents a great opportunity for the case to be made for the launch of a Welsh public bank to protect our economy and our future.

P-04-492 Diagnosis of autism in children

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to:

- ensure timely diagnosis for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder [ASD], regardless of where they live, so that children with autism can be supported and lead fulfilled lives; and
- review implementation of and ensure compliance with the NICE guidelines on recognition, referral and diagnosis of children and young people on the autism spectrum as part of the Welsh Government's refresh of its ASD Strategic Action Plan.

Supporting information:

Diagnosing can be a critical milestone for people with autism. For children, it can help ensure that the right support is put in place from an early age.

Diagnosing autism can be difficult because autism is complex condition that affects each person in a different way. We therefore support the view that a number of different specialists should be part of the process to ensure a correct diagnosis.

However a timely diagnosis is vital in order to minimise anxiety and stress for children with autism and their families. The Deputy Minister for Social Services supports this view and in response to a question from Rebecca Evans AM said: 'I fully recognise the importance of receiving a timely diagnosis.' We also know that early intervention for children with autism is crucial in their educational, emotional and social development and for their longer-term health.

While there are good examples of diagnostic and assessments services in Wales, we are very concerned that not everyone can access a timely diagnosis and that not every area is following the NICE guidelines on recognition, referral and diagnosis of children and young people on the autism spectrum.

Our experience in Pembrokeshire has been particularly difficult, with some members of the branch waiting up to seven years for a diagnostic assessment. This lengthy wait for diagnosis is having a huge impact on families across Pembrokeshire.

We have tried on several occasions to engage with Hywel Dda Local Health Board. We have also met with local AMs Paul Davies and Angela Burns outlining our concerns. Paul Davies has written to Hywel Dda Health Board

urging them to meet with the branch. We are still waiting for the Health Board to act on that request.

One of the branch members has 'waited over six years for my one son to get a diagnosis. Now I'm waiting for the other it's been about two years and it fills me with dread.'

We want to ensure timely diagnosis for all children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder across Wales so that they can be supported appropriately to lead fulfilled lives.

About autism

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability that affects the way a person communicates with, and relates to, other people. It also affects how they make sense of the world around them. It is a spectrum condition, which means that, while all people with autism share three main areas of difficulty, their condition will affect them in different ways. The three main areas of difficulty are:

- Difficulty with social interaction. This includes recognising and understanding other people's feelings and managing their own. Not understanding how to interact with other people can make it hard to form friendships;
- Difficulty with social communication. This includes using and understanding verbal and non-verbal language, such as gestures, facial expressions and tone of voice; and
- Difficulty with social imagination. This includes the ability to understand and predict other people's intentions and behaviour and to imagine situations outside of their own routine. This can be accompanied by a narrow repetitive range of activities.

Some people with autism are able to live relatively independent lives but others may need a lifetime of specialist support. People with autism may also experience some form of sensory sensitivity or under-sensitivity, for example to sounds touch, tastes, smells, light or colours. Asperger syndrome is a form of autism.

Research has shown that 1 in 100 people have autism. By applying the 1 in 100 figure we estimate that over 30,000 people in Wales have autism. Together with their families, they make up over 100,000 people whose lives are touched by autism every single day.

About the NAS and Pembrokeshire Branch

The National Autistic Society Cymru [NAS Cymru] is Wales' only member-led charity for people affected by autism. The National Autistic Society was founded in 1962 by a group of parents who were passionate about ensuring a better future for their children. In Wales, since 1994, we have been

providing local support, services and actively campaigning so that people with autism get to lead the life they choose.

NAS Cymru believes that the right support at the right time makes an enormous difference to the lives of those affected by autism and we are committed to ensuring that their voices are heard.

Across Wales we have over 900 members and 11 local branches including the one in Pembrokeshire. Launched on the 1st April 2011, the branch is for parents of children with autism to provide a network of support for people connected through autism living in Pembrokeshire and surrounding areas. The branch meets on a regular basis holding formal and informal events, as well as campaigning and fundraising locally.

Petition raised by: National Autistic Society Pembrokeshire Branch

Date petition first considered by Committee: 18 June 2013

Number of signatures: 902

Agenda Item 7.1

P-03-262 Wales Peace Institute

Petition wording

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to investigate the potential for and practicality of Wales having a Peace Institute concerned with Peace and Human Rights, comparable with those supported by state governments in Flanders, Catalonia and elsewhere in Europe

Petition raised by: Welsh Centre for International Affairs, Cymdeithas y Cynod, Cynefin y Werin and CND Cymru

Petition first considered by Committee: November 2009

Number of signatures: 1525

Academi Heddwch Cymru / Wales Peace Institute

This paper summarises responses to a public consultation¹ initiated by the Petitions Committee in October 2011 in response to a petition supporting the creation of a Wales Peace Institute (full title above). The Petitions Committee had asked² the All Party Group on Human Rights to analyse the 81 pages of 75 closely worded responses but, as this All Party Group on Human Rights and Peace now exists, it is fitting that this new cross-party group responds to this request.

Background

Ideas for an Academi/Institute were debated at a gathering in June 2009 in Aberystwyth of religious, peace and other interested societies. The broadsheet summarises these ideas and has been widely circulated during the campaign that then followed - supported by these organisations and 'sponsored' by four AMs: Bethan Jenkins, Michael German, Christine Chapman and Nick Ramsay. A petition to this National Assembly collected 1525 signatures within one month (by hand! - not as an e-petition) and was presented on 28 October 2009³. It reads:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to investigate the potential and practicality of Wales having a Peace Institute concerned with Peace and Human Rights comparable with those supported by state governments in Flanders, Catalonia and elsewhere in Europe”.

On 23 February 2010⁴ the Petitions Committee heard the petitioners and took evidence from Peace Institute in Flanders⁵. On 27th April 2010 there was a video link to the Peace Institute in Catalonia⁶ and the Frankfurt Peace Institute submitted a written paper⁷. Although the committee members were favourable to the concept of a Peace Institute (three of its four members were sponsors!), it proved challenging *to investigate the potential and practicality* of having a Peace Institute and the petitioners were asked suggest more specific proposals.

Following changes to the committee membership during 2010-2011, just one of the four original committee members remained in post after May 2011 and had had the benefit of hearing all the evidence. Rather than revisit evidence gathering, the new committee after May 2011 decided on a public consultation⁸ - which then received a greater response than any previous public consultation.

Rather than undertake the analysis 'in-house', on 24th January 2012 it was decided to refer this to the All Party Group on Human Rights: The specific Minute of that meeting of the Petitions Committee reads:

Forward the petition and information gathered so far to the Cross-Party Group on Human Rights and request that the working up of a concept for the establishment of such an institution is placed on future agendas;
Forward the consultation responses gathered to the petitioners to work up a concept in parallel and suggest that they lobby individual Members to hold a Member-led debate in Plenary on the subject.

In the event, the Cross-Party Group on Human Rights did not meet in 2012. Instead, this reconstituted All Party Group on Human Rights and Peace has taken on this task, intending to report back to the Petitions Committee. To date, the petitioners have not pursued the suggestion to lobby for a Plenary debate.

Analysis of responses

A total of 75 responses were received, all reasonably consistent with the perspective that had been outlined in the attached broadsheet but with some of issues (naturally) receiving greater emphasis. A largest number of mentions was to the effect that its duties should be to:

'Engage in research into issues of global security, peace, justice, human rights, and sustainable development, by liaising with universities and institutes of higher education in Wales and drawing on the experience and expertise of the teaching staff of these institutions to help us in taking on this research'.

Many contributors put more emphasis on campaigning about the outcome of research rather than the 'research' *per se* - but all were wholly consistent with the basic premise that it had be "a truly independent institution, independent of all governments and all commercial bodies, independently funded and self-sustaining".

All who mentioned funding thought it should be "independently funded" – an issue was raised on several times during the evidence gathering and, despite repeated assurances that the petitioners did not seek financial backing, this was clearly a concern for committee members and in the First Ministers' replies.

In fact, the petitioners believe that the receipt of government funding may conflict with the independence of the Wales Peace Institute. What is requested is National Assembly support for the concept of creating an independent institution in Wales that could provide government and the people with well-researched and independent information on all such issues. It would not be a branch of the Welsh Government or the National Assembly but would be anticipated to have a close relationship with both.

As might have been expected from the fact that most respondents were from religious and/or peace organisations, many were concerned with how the results of the research would be used, notably it was said that it should:

"Draw attention to the fact that Wales has a long and proud tradition of pacifism and devotion to the cause of peace, as exemplified by men like Waldo Williams, Henry Richard, and many others"

"Speak on the issues, not merely to the people of Wales, but to the whole world, and should do that by addressing itself through the international media of mass communication".

"Forward the content of all discussion and the text of all papers produced on these subjects to the Welsh Government".

"Press the Welsh Government to incorporate education in the issues mentioned into the National Curriculum for Schools in Wales ensure that these vital issues are given the priority they deserve by the teaching staff of each school".

"Draw attention to the fact that small states, like Wales, have a role to play in exerting pressure on the world's larger states to do the right thing, in addressing the issues".

These comments presuppose that peace and peace education is desirable in its own right and that – as in Northern Ireland – education should be biased in favour of conflict resolution. This would be wholly consistent with the appeal of

the children of Wales to the children of the world, which used to be read out at Welsh schools on St David's Day. It is not inconsistent with what many people in Wales believe to be one of our distinctive cultural features.

Supporters held a second Aberystwyth conference on 23 March this year to discuss independent funding and management of the Wales Peace Institute. The petitioners are not asking for an open-ended commitment of support (before it is decided how it is to be constituted, governed and funded) but **do hope that the National Assembly will agree to support the concept of Wales having its own Peace Institute - comparable to those existing in comparable regional states in Belgium, Spain, Germany, Finland and elsewhere in Europe.**

The petitioners and respondents are not asking for funding for (1) new University courses on peace-related issues or (2) peace campaigning. Both were made explicit in the evidence sessions and but may need reiteration. The concept of a Peace Institute is that there should be, for the benefit of government and the peace movement and the military establishment, an independent think tank with unimpeachable academic credentials able to provide detached factual analysis on matters of mutual and universal concern.

This petition has been discussed at length for over three years and been subjected to greater scrutiny than any other. It is time for a decision.

¹ <http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=0918>

Submissions for the Public Consultation

² Minute of meeting 24th January 2012

³ <http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-third-assembly/bus-committees/bus-committees-other-committees/bus-committees-third-pc-home/bus-committees-third-pc-agendas.htm?ds=12%2F2009&submit=Submit>

PDF Viewer - PET(3)-15-09 : Paper 01A : Academi Heddwch Cymru / Wales Peace Institute (PDF, 101KB)

⁴ Petitioners hearings

⁵ Flanders hearings

⁶ Catalonia hearings 27th April 2010 PDF Viewer - PET(3)-05-10 : Paper 1, Annex A : Evidence Session : Catalan Peace Institute

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-third-assembly/bus-committees/bus-committees-other-committees/bus-committees-third-pc-home/bus-committees-third-pc-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=177571&ds=5/2010>

⁷ Prof Dr Harald Müller, Director Peace Research Institute, Frankfurt, March 2009 <http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-third-assembly/bus-committees/bus-committees-other-committees/bus-committees-third-pc-home/bus-committees-third-pc-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=177571&ds=5/2010>

⁸ <http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=0918>

Agenda Item 7.2

P-03-150 National Cancer Standards

Petition wording

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to investigate whether Local Health Boards have the necessary strategies and action plans in place to deliver the target to comply with the National Cancer Standards by March 2009 in RCT and throughout Wales, as a matter of urgency.

Petition raised by: Rhondda Breast Friends

Date petition first considered by Committee: 9 July 2008

Number of signatures: 43. In addition Rhondda Breast Friends have developed a charter regarding improvements required to cancer care services, supported by 1,475 signatories.



Eich cyf/Your ref P-03-150
Ein cyf/Our ref MD/00889/13

William Powell AM

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

23 May 2013

Dear William

Thank you for your letter of 7 May requesting an update on cancer services in Wales.

I would like to provide assurances around the suggested recommendations for improvement and I will address each of your points in turn.

Key Workers

Since 1 April 2011 policy in place states that anyone diagnosed with cancer in Wales should have access to a Key Worker. The policy has recently been reviewed by the Cancer Implementation Group and a key principles document on the role of Key Workers is being developed as a result.

Feedback

The first all Wales Cancer Patient Experience Survey is being run in the next few months. This survey will, for the first time, provide a full picture of patient experience and give quantitative and qualitative information to drive improvement in the Health Boards.

Distribution of Information

Public Health Wales has a responsibility for promoting messages to patients. I would encourage Breakthrough Breast Cancer to write to Public Health Wales in order to discuss the distribution of information.

Care Plans

It is a commitment in the Programme for Government that all cancer patients in Wales receive an individual care plan. The Cancer Implementation Group is looking at how care plans are used and how they can be improved to support the holistic needs of individual patients.

Carers

I recognise the need for support for carers and we will shortly be publishing a Carers Strategy for Wales following the consultation which closed in February.

Improved Access to GPs

The Welsh Government is committed to improving the accessibility of GP services for working people by ensuring appointments are available at times which are convenient to them.

A staged approach has been developed to ensure delivery of this commitment. The first phase has focused on ensuring adequate capacity and appropriate redistribution of appointments within contracted hours, including early morning and evening appointments between 5.00pm and 6.30pm. This, along with a further reduction in the number of practices with half day or lunchtime closing, has been the priority for 2012/13. Good progress has been made in the delivery of the first phase. Published GP access statistics for 2012 indicates that 94% of GP practices now offer appointments between 5.00pm and 6.30pm at least two week nights per week and the number of GP practices which were closed for half a day on one or more week days decreased from 19% in 2011 to 11% in 2012.

From April 2013, the second phase will focus on extending opening and access to appointments after 6.30pm. In addition, access to early morning appointments is also being addressed, particularly in rural areas for people who have long commutes. During 2014/15 the focus will be on enhancing access at the weekends. Work is currently underway to explore the potential models as part of the review on Out of Hours.

I hope this provides the information you were seeking.

Best wishes
Mark.

Mark Drakeford AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

P-03-150 National Cancer Standards - Correspondence from the petitioner to the clerking team, 07.06.2013

Hi Sian,

Just a quick comment on the Minister's response.

I think the Minister's response highlights the amount of work being progressed in many areas of Cancer Care. I think it is important that we recognise it is a work in progress and that tremendous progress has taken/is taking place with most of the issues raised and we have to celebrate successes and await the results of current initiatives. I have therefore kept my response brief.

The Government is well supported by major players in the voluntary sector eg. Macmillan and Tenovus but I would like to also acknowledge the work being undertaken by all the other cancer charities to support the government in providing patient centred cancer care.

Information /Public Health Wales (PHW)

It is my experience that Public Health Wales is involved with information on promoting screening and Healthy Lifestyles. It appears not to engage in any other information needs around cancer services. The Cancer Charities appear to be the main support of information provided.

Early detection/Improved access to GPs

I am pleased with the planned improved access to GP appointments. This was one of the barriers identified in an informal survey undertaken at one of Rhondda Cynon Taff's Open Days looking at what barriers might delay people visiting their GPs with symptoms indicative of Cancer.

I look forward to the response of the committee,

Best wishes,

Diane Raybould

Agenda Item 7.3

P-04-366 Closure of Aberystwyth Day Centre

Petition wording:

We the undersigned call on the Welsh Government to consider if proposals for day care for the vulnerable elderly, to be moved from a purpose built, thirty year old Day Centre, to an unsuitable basement in an old building, previously used as the Town Hall Aberystwyth, are compliant with statutory requirements, and any relevant guidance. The County Council are planning to demolish the Centre as part of a development to build a car park, a supermarket and a retail outlet.

Petition raised by: Pamela Ellis

Date petition first considered by Committee: 28 February 2012

Number of signatures: 10 (An associated petition collected approximately 6,000 signatures)

Supporting information: The present Day Centre is a purpose built facility, about thirty years old. It is in a convenient situation in the town centre, with easy access, a large drop off point and is near a road safety crossing. It is light and sunny, and can accommodate about 90 clients of mixed dependency, in several spacious rooms. The envisaged centre is not quite half the size and will only be able to cater for 32 clients in one main room. At present those carers of disabled clients or those caring for victims of a stroke, can have access to respite care on 2 or 3 days of the week. We feel the move will discriminate against this group as already fewer people are being assessed and referred by Social Services for this respite care. The council have admitted there will be rationing. Because of difficulties of access to the basement area, an outdoor, steep ramp with a 180 degree turning point half way down has been built. We feel strongly that carers or mobile chair users will have huge problems, particularly in stormy or icy weather. The ceilings in the basement are low; there is a large pillar in the centre of the room making it difficult to move wheelchairs or trolleys, natural light levels are low as it is partially below ground and several doors have to be navigated to access toilets. The old centre has a superb new kitchen providing good meals, the weekly luncheon club, a valuable socially inclusive option, has been closed already. In future, meals will be prepared elsewhere and brought in. There will only be one area available for meals and all other activities; thus space will be extremely limited. The local WVS presently provides drinks and snacks; that will no longer exist. The present centre has a large bathroom with a hoist, also laundry facilities, which were invaluable. The new centre will have a shower built into a toilet for assisted bathing, which opens directly onto a communal area. As this is the only disabled

toilet, it will be difficult for a disabled client to access a toilet if another client is having a shower. If the only new facility will only be able to cater for 32 clients, these will almost certainly have to be those needing respite cares, so those older citizens who value the opportunity to enjoy time at the centre to socialise, take part in activities, have a bath and enjoy a good meal will not be able to do so. The present centre has a very pleasant garden with seats, ample parking, a bay for dropping off people and is completely accessible to all. The present centre is made available in the evenings to groups of elderly, for example the Arthritis Care group fear that they will not be able to cope with the rain, in the dark, for their evening meetings. The new centre is on a dangerous main road turning, with heavy traffic use. Former users of the basement when it was the Town Hall have complained that it is too hot in the summer and cold and damp in the winter. The heating system has been improved, but the present sash windows are not being replaced and there will be no air-conditioning installed. Whilst the County Council have made efforts to meet our concerns, we strongly believe that the proposed new centre is absolutely unsuitable and is vastly inferior in the present centre. We would add that the Council have admitted that they did not carry out a proper consultation. Hence the formation of this pressure group.

P-04-366 Closure of Aberystwyth Day Centre – Correspondence from Ceredigion County Council

FAO Mr William Powell AM

Chair – NAFW Petitions Committee

Re: Review of the first year of service at Aberystwyth Day Centre

Your ref: P - 04 - 366

I would advise that the Council's Cabinet at its meeting held on 21st May decided to accept the Report and its recommendations, and will now be taking all necessary action to address those recommendations. The Cabinet decision was endorsed by the Council at its meeting held on 23rd May.

A copy of the Report is attached for your information.

ABERYSTWYTH DAY CENTRE REVIEW

1) Purpose of the Report

To inform Members of a Review into the first year of service provided at the relocated Day Centre for Older People.

The Report will provide brief background information into legislative and statutory requirements, identify relevant Council policies, outline the rationale for and approach to the Review, provide feedback from service users, their carers, Day Centre staff and other stakeholders.

Reference will also be made to current research and thinking in respect of support to Older People.

The concluding section will summarise the findings and make recommendations for Members to consider

2) Legislation and statutory responsibilities

Services for Older People are provided within the purview of the National Assistance Act, Chronically Sick and Disabled Act, and Community Care legislation

All Local Authorities, since 2002, have been required to comply with Welsh Assembly Government S7 Guidance-“ Unified Assessment and Fair Access to Care Services.”.

This Guidance was established to ensure a consistent person centred approach to assessment of need and clarity in respect of eligibility for services to meet identified need

Ceredigion County Council’s document “Eligibility Criteria—taking care to make a difference”, clearly sets out the responsibilities of the Council to meet the social care needs of its population and the level of eligibility it is able to meet.

Legislation in respect of Carers is contained within the Carer’s Act and the recent Carer Strategies (Wales) Measure

It should be noted that whilst Local Authorities have a duty to meet the eligible needs and identified outcomes of service users and their carers, in respect of the need for day support, the manner in which service and solutions are provided is not prescribed. The forthcoming Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Bill, provides a legal framework to give effect to ‘Sustainable Social Services: A Framework for Action’, the Welsh Government’s overarching agenda for social services and within which the need for service users to have greater choice and control is a key priority.

3) Ceredigion County Council Policy

Within the Council’s Improvement Objectives for 2012/13, Objectives A and D :-
“**Transform our services to be more efficient and effective for the citizens.**” and
“**Improve the ways we safeguard and promote the independence of vulnerable**

people”. emphasise commitment to delivering the best outcomes for people who need care and support, most cost-effectively and efficiently.

Reference is also made to the need to “develop early intervention and preventative services with a view to removing or reducing the need for a more intensive, intrusive response later on”

Ceredigion Social Services’ Business Plan 2012/13 expands these Objectives further into Aims and Expected Outcomes

4) Background and Approach to the Review--

In March 2011, Ceredigion County Council received proposals for an Integrated Library, Archives and Day Centre Facility in the Town Hall. The Day Centre to be re-provided from Park Avenue.

Criticism was later made, that there had been insufficient consultation in respect of these plans, with the decision being opposed by the Save Park Avenue Day Centre Action Group, established in November 2011 and who continue to voice their protest. The move took place in April 2012 with the County Council committing to undertake a Review of the service after its first year in operation

The outline for the Review is attached as Appendix 1, with the focus agreed as being the provision of services at the Day Centre as experienced by those most directly involved

The Review commenced with an initial visit in December, followed by a further day in January and 3 days in February. During this period I was present in the new Day Centre on 4 occasions, where I was able to speak individually to service users and also to them at their monthly Service Users’ Committee meeting. I visited Park Ave , met with the Archivist and Librarian and also with the Carers’ Development Officer, Older Person’s Strategy Co-ordinator, representatives of the Adults social work team and the Cabinet Member for Social Services.

A Questionnaire was sent to all Day Centre service users and another to their carers I invited any Day Centre service user or carer who wished to discuss issues confidentially, to meet with me privately. Only 3 service users requested this and their comments have been incorporated into the Questionnaire responses.

5) Service User and Carer Questionnaires

As it would not be possible for me to meet with all service users prior to the dissemination of the Questionnaire, I felt it would be helpful to provide them with a brief outline about myself --this is attached as Appendix 2

The Questionnaires are attached as Appendices 3+4

40 responses were received from service users, which is an excellent response rate from a potential 64 people.

The Carer's questionnaire elicited only 15 responses.

The Summaries of responses are attached as Appendices 5+6.

Service User Questionnaire (40 responses—I on behalf of 2 people)

- 19 people responded anonymously, so it is not possible to identify accurately the number who were previous attendees at Park Ave, nor the gender of respondents.

However where it was possible to be specific, it should be noted that 29 respondents had previously attended Park Ave and 5 were new to the service. 23 respondents were female and 16 male. The gender mix in the Centre being of particular note to the Reviewer, as frequently men are not significant Day Centre attendees.

- The majority of responses (39) in respect of reason for attendance were Companionship (31) and Meals (19), with 31 people considering that the new Day Centre fully met their needs. 8 people did not respond directly to this latter question or felt their reasons not fully met, with most of these making comments adversely comparing the new provision with Park Ave

"I like the company and see friends. Also the food is good"

"The new day centre meets my criteria and it is a lovely modern building, I am quite happy there"

"More room in the old centre, food cooked on the premises"

- With regard to "What do you like best about the new day centre?" there were 35 responses, with Staff (12) Building/environment (9) and Meals (8) being the most prominent. 6 people said there was nothing they liked about the new centre or made reference to preferring Park Ave

"Good service, well looked after"

"Modern, cosy building"

"Convenient for shops. Warm caring environment"

- There were 38 responses to "Are there things you do not like about the new Day Centre?", with 25 responding Yes and 13 responding No. The main issues for the former group were the size of building/low ceiling (14) and access/ramp (10)

"I do not like the walk from the coach. I'm a bit nervous of the ramp on wet days, there's no shelter from the rain"

"It is in the cellar, too small, too cramped"
"Location, lack of bus routes that stop outside the Centre---"

- When asked "What would make the Day Centre better?" , there were 29 responses, with 9 saying "Nothing" (and from their overall responses, for 8 people this was a positive comment) and 8 people wanted a return to Park Ave or a change of location

"Nothing—it's marvellous"
"Improve entrance"
"I would love to go back—please try and make this happen"

- "Can you tell staff if you are not happy?" led to 39 responses, 38 affirmative and even the person responding No, added "but staff are always friendly and helpful"
- A question concerning problems with travel led to 40 responses, 34 people saying No and 6 saying Yes
- 36 people responded to the query re the benefit of being linked to the library, with 28 considering it positive (2 of these also valuing proximity to the Archives) and 5 people not seeing any benefit
- The final question invited any further comments re the new Day Centre. 35 people responded, with 8 wishing to voice their appreciation of the staff, 7 wishing to return to Park Ave and 5 making positive comments re the new Centre

"The staff are lovely, very friendly and caring. The service users are the same and I've made new friends, I love the way it is decorated"
"We should never have left the old centre, ----miss some of the facilities"

Carer Questionnaire (15 responses)

3 people responded anonymously, so again it is not possible to gauge exactly whether the service user was a previous Park Ave attendee. It would appear that 9 were, with 3 being new service users and 3 unknown; this numerical breakdown being similar re the gender of the service user ie 9 female, 3 male and 3 unknown In respect to the relationship of the service user to the carer, 8 = parent, 4 = partner, 2 = niece/nephew, 1 = unknown.

It should be noted that from comments made in the questionnaires, not all the Carers who responded had visited the Day Centre.

- Initially Carers were asked whether attendance at the Day Centre helped them in their caring role. There were 11 responses, 8 acknowledging this support, with reassurance that the cared for person was being well looked after and having a structure to their day being the prominent comment.

" for x days a week I know that my mother is with other people and so taking part in some activity----"

"-----the day centre provides her with the stimulus that I cannot provide"

- "Are there any positive changes from the move to the new Day Centre?" elicited 9 responses, 6 saying No and 3 saying Yes. 4 Carers felt unable to comment , although noting that their parent was happy to attend

"I think that because the new day centre is smaller, it is easier to socialise"

- 11 Carers identified aspects of the new Day Centre that they did not like. The key issues being reduced space/light (5) no bathing facility (5)

" the obvious withdrawal of previously essential services mainly because of the lack of available space"

"No bathing or showering"

- 13 responses were made in respect of whether improvements could be made to the Day Centre. 6 made suggestions, 4 said No (but with a positive connotation) and 3 people felt that nothing could be done to make it fit for purpose/ be a replacement for a purpose built day centre

- All 15 Carers considered that they could talk to staff if they had any concerns

- With regard to there being any problems with travel for the service user to the Day Centre, there were 15 responses, 12 not identifying any. The main comment related to access and the ramp

- The final section requesting any further comments re day services for Older People, elicited 11 responses. There were 7 comments praising the staff.

"The staff are so good, the success of the Centre is down to them. The transition was painless"

6) **Other feedback from service users**

In addition to the questionnaires and individual meetings, I was also able to talk with service users informally during the day and at their Service Users Committee meeting.

Their appreciation of and affection for the staff was evident, but for some this brings challenges as the staff are all female. One male user commented that he would feel embarrassed at having to receive intimate personal care from someone he has a close (albeit professional) relationship with.

Similarly to the responses to the questionnaires, the views of the people attending the Day Centre range considerably. I met with some people who had attended Park Ave for over 15years (*"I retired and went straight to the Day Centre"*) and for whom the loss of a *"purpose built facility"* which was *"close to the shops"* and where the food was cooked on the premises, was keenly felt. These service users hoped that they could return to Park Ave .

Other people who had attended Park Ave, whilst expressing a preference for some aspects of Park Ave were happy with the new facility; finding the atmosphere homely, the town close at hand and the food to be well made and of good value. Some of these expressed frustration at the pressure they felt from the above group to be negative about the new Centre.

For those who had not attended Park Avenue, the comments were positive *"we are very lucky to be here"*

The issue which gave rise to most adverse comment from all service users was the access to the building, with many finding the uncovered ramp unsatisfactory. The lack of a direct bus route was raised by several people, but this was challenged by others, with details of bus numbers and routes being advised. This conversation gave rise to a perceived need for a pedestrian crossing outside the Centre.

Some people considered that having only one disabled toilet, which also accommodated the shower, was inadequate.

Several people commented on the change to the arrangements for the Wednesday Drop-In, expressing that this was a loss to them and also to the people who attended.

7) Workforce

Day Centre staff learnt of proposals to move from Park Ave via the media; with this lack of initial engagement and limited involvement in the planning for the building leading to them feeling devalued. It is to their credit that transition to the new Centre was managed well with only 2 service users who attended Park Ave choosing not to visit or attend the new Centre.

Whilst staff were initially apprehensive about the move, they are now very positive about the new building and consider that it is a facility which can meet the needs of the service users to remain physically and emotionally healthy, enabling them to continue living independently in the community.

Whilst they acknowledge that the new Centre is smaller than Park Ave, they consider that its size promotes more interaction between the service users. The staffing complement is now commensurate with that at Park Ave, and the removal of the

bathing service has freed up staff to engage in more activities. Recruitment to a part time post is underway and this will enable extension of afternoon activities.

When asked what their key positives were from the move their response was *“Enhanced socialisation, service users seem happier and are more vocal, they participate in activities more, they have more voice in decision making”*

Integration with the Library and Archive service is seen as providing a positive opportunity for increased community involvement, intergenerational activity and the development of new learning for service users, although they acknowledge that engagement is limited thus far.

Staff recognise that the Day Centre is a valuable resource and consider that it should be utilised to its optimum, providing services to those with highest needs. Whilst annual service reviews are held at the Centre, care management reviews have not been as frequent and sometimes where they have been held, the Day Centre staff have not been directly involved. Staff consider they have the skills to enable the Centre to provide support to reablement and outreach services

8) Intelligence from other stakeholders

Gareth Griffiths and Helen Palmer (Library and Archive Services respectively) spoke positively about their co-location with the Day Centre, one comment being made that the *“friendly and cheerful atmosphere experienced in the building is in great part attributable to the culture of the Day Centre”*

Only 2 adverse comments, in respect of the smell of food from the Day Centre, has been received since the integrated facility came into operation

Regular meetings are held between the 3 managers and a shared staffroom would have been welcomed to further improve staff interaction, but space has precluded this

A Reminiscence session is held by the Archivists on a monthly basis and Day Centre users do come up to the Archivist section of the building to bring documents for retention. People who wish to explore their genealogy also access the service.

In respect of the library service, again some service users take the opportunity to visit when attending the Day Centre and there is a Book Club held monthly in the Day Centre. Co-working with the Carer's Development Officer has led to the production of focused information and the extension of facilities to meet their needs.

The opportunities afforded by an integrated facility were also acknowledged by Mr Griffiths not to have been maximised as yet

Meetings with the Carers Development Officer and the Older Person's Strategy Co-ordinator again provided positive feedback in respect of the new Centre, albeit that

some carers had expressed a lack of understanding as to the reason for the closure of Park Ave.

In respect of Carers, there have been no adverse comments received from the Carers Alliance or the Carers Support Workers and at the Coffee Morning held in December comment was made to the effect that the Protest Group was not representing the views of the service users.

Debate concerning the Carers Measures Strategy again did not lead to any criticism of the new Centre, but there was acknowledgement that future generations would expect a different and wider range of services

Support groups for Carers previously held at Park Ave had been found alternative premises without difficulty and these have proved to be more inclusive within the community whilst also offering greater flexibility eg re timings for meetings

The Older People's Strategy Co-ordinator advised that a new lunch club was set up at the Football Club to accommodate the needs of the people who had previously attended the Drop In at Park Ave. These people who did not have needs which met Social Services Eligibility Criteria were found to have been attending primarily for the midday meal

Further opportunities for community development with voluntary organisations are being explored with the Football Club and the forthcoming Single Plan for the Council should further enhance the engagement of all Departments in meeting the needs of Older People to remain living independently in the community.

The North Adult social work team have recently undertaken 33 Reviews of Day Centre attendees and during these have asked for comment re the new Day Centre. Their findings, 86 positive comments and 27 negative, echo those of the Review Questionnaires. Overall 22 people were satisfied with the new facility with 4 being dissatisfied and again issues with access and the ramp being identified as a concern.(5 comments)

There were 5 adverse comments re the space, 2 noting that this affects socialisation. However 4 people commented on the positive experience of socialisation

The social work staff consider that facilities previously provided at Park Ave eg bathing, Drop In have been replaced satisfactorily and where less traditional solutions have been identified to meet need, Direct Payments have been utilised. There has been no reduction in the number of requests to attend the Day Centre. Where these have been found to be outside Eligibility Criteria, they have been signposted to the wide range of voluntary support available or if only requiring support with ensuring adequate nutrition, again there are sufficient luncheon clubs to meet this need.

9) Outcomes for Older People

In meeting the overarching Outcome of living independently in the community, the provision of day support is a key component. Such support providing

- *Company and social interaction*
- *Mental stimulation and continued learning*
- *Physical exercise*
- *Adequate nutrition*
- *Assistance with health and personal care*
- *Confidence boosting and support to re/build skills*
- *Respite from/for main carer*

Two recent reports “Preventing loneliness and social isolation among older people “ (Social Care Institute for Excellence May 2012) and “Widening Choices For Older People with High Support Needs” (Joseph Rowntree Foundation January 2013) highlight the crucial importance of providing such support to ensure that health and wellbeing are maximised. Their reports also provide examples of the options for meeting needs other than through traditional buildings based services.

Within the SCIE report, recognition is given to the spectrum of need identified by Older People, which requires a commensurate spread of service provision ie from intensive and frequent to low level preventative..

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation study, which included a fieldwork site in South Wales, highlights the desire of Older People to have greater choice and control and to have a wider range of options.

The report emphasises the benefits and potential of options based on mutuality, where people support each other and/or reciprocity, people contributing to individual and group well being.

10) Conclusions and Recommendations

In undertaking the Review I have been mindful of the criticisms and concerns expressed about the new Day Centre, so that in all the work with the people directly engaged I have sought to explore these aspects.

My conclusions will focus on the needs of people who are eligible for support from Social Services. (*see Recommendation 6*)

Direct feedback from service users and carers have evidenced a wide range of comments, but overall the view from those involved in the Review is that the new Day Centre can and does meet the needs for day support for Older People

I would concur with this view, considering that the new Day Centre is fit for purpose and well placed to enable people to live independently in the community.

a) Whilst it is smaller in size than Park Ave, the building is bright, cheerful and has a lively atmosphere, with staff working to ensure there is no air of the “institutionalism” which often stereotypes such provision.

The main room has tables which can be dismantled to provide for more space, should this be necessary for activities.

Health and Safety issues are paramount and the Fire Officer has visited twice in the last year. An evacuation exercise in October was undertaken successfully.

b) Despite the hot food not being made on the premises, the midday meal is nutritious and of good value. The Council’s catering manager has met with service users to address complaints and ongoing comments are sought.

c) Provision of a shower enables a swift response to any personal mishap. Only 4 people receive a shower as part of their care plan, with previous users of the bathing service being provided with this service either in their own home or in one of the residential homes. I fully support this change as being a more dignified and respectful response to need. By not providing this as a service, the disabled toilet will be more available.

(See Recommendation 4)

d) A range of creative and therapeutic activities is provided, including regular exercise sessions, which are crucial in retaining mobility and balance; quizzes; art and craft sessions, the former being supported by the external tutor who previously visited Park Ave and monthly Holy Communion, which meets the spiritual needs of those who are unable to access their local church or chapel.

e) A room has been set aside for visiting health staff, the hairdresser and any personal care support which the staff are trained to provide

f) Transport to the Centre does not cause a problem, with bus routes having been adjusted to accommodate the needs of the integrated services.

g) Banks and shops in town are accessible

h) Co-location with the Library and Archive Department facilitates access to mainstream services and provides opportunities for enhanced learning, reminiscence and intergenerational activity. *(see Recommendation 3)*

There are however aspects which need further exploration and debate in the short and longer term

a) Access to the building causes significant concern *(See Recommendation 2)*

b) My visits were undertaken in the winter months and I am therefore unable to comment on use of the exterior of the building. I am advised that service users enjoyed sitting outside the front of the building last summer and that the back area will be a “garden area” with tables, chairs and sunshades. *(see Recommendation 2)*

- c) Within the provision of day support to a growing and ageing population, the position of the Day Centre needs to be clarified and its resources fully maximised
(see Recommendation 6)

11) Recommendations

- 1) Following discussion of this report, senior officers and politicians to meet as soon as possible with service users, their carers and staff to clarify the position of the Day Centre and give feedback on their response to the Review
The messages from this meeting to be put in writing for those unable to attend, and for future reference.
- 2) Further consideration to be given to access arrangements to the building and the outcome of this to again be delivered personally and in writing, by the relevant officer.
This exercise to consider ease of access to the garden in the summer and also include the possibility of a pedestrian crossing
- 3) The Business Plans for the Day Centre, Library and Archive Department to contain specific actions in respect of integrated working
- 4) Unless there is an extenuating need for a shower to be provided at the Day Centre, this service is not provided to any new service user.
- 5) Annual care plans be undertaken to ensure that people attending the Day Centre meet eligibility for the service, to specify the outcomes to be achieved and to ascertain whether some of these needs can be now be met through services within their local communities
- 6) Within the change agenda required by Sustainable Social Services and the Social Services and Well-being Bill, strategic debate be undertaken as to the needs of the future generation of Older People for day support, together with the services and solutions to meet these. This debate should build on recent research, maximising the contribution of the voluntary sector and faith communities and utilising mainstream locality based community facilities.
The new requirement to meet the “well –being” needs of the population will ensure that the voice of all Older People, whether or not eligible for social services support, will be part of the debate.

Sheila Wentworth
Independent Reviewer
7/3/13

ABERYSTWYTH DAY CENTRE

OUTLINE FOR REVIEW

Outcome to be achieved

A report to be completed by the end of the first week in March, in readiness for consideration by Cabinet in April.

This report to present a review into the first year of the service provided at the newly relocated Day Centre.

The report will review whether the outcomes for the Day Centre are being met from the perspective of service users and their carers, staff, care managers, senior managers and council members.

The report will be framed within the context of the model of services for Older People in Ceredigion

Process and timescales

- 1) Meeting with Assistant Director, Adult Services and Mental Health to finalise the scope of the Review, gather relevant documentation, plan the meetings schedule and visit the Day Centre (1 day)**
- 2) Reading and preparation for meetings (1day)**
- 3) Meetings with stakeholders, (3 days plus 1 day for write up)**
- 4) Final meeting with Assistant Director (half day)**
- 5) Report writing (2days)**

ABERYSTWYTH DAY CENTRE REVIEW

Independent Reviewer

Sheila Wentworth is a registered social worker, who has worked for both the voluntary and the public sector during her career.

Sheila worked mainly with children and families when she was first a social worker, but since 1993 has been a senior manager for Adult Services Initially working in England, Sheila (who was born in Colwyn Bay) moved back to North Wales in 2001 to take up post as Assistant Chief Social Care Officer in Wrexham. In this post she had the full range of operational and strategic responsibilities for care management and local authority services (day, respite and residential) for Older People, people with a Learning Disability, with Mental Health needs or with a Physical Disability.

Sheila retired from full time work in the summer of 2009 and has worked independently since that time. Her most recent work has been for North Wales Chief Executives and Social Services Directors to improve partnership working with the Local Health Board.

Sheila is also a professional adviser for the Social Services Improvement Agency, currently providing support to their programme of improvement for Older People's services

Ceredigion County Council have commissioned Sheila to provide an Independent Review of the Day Centre, for a Council meeting in April.

In undertaking this Review Sheila will meet with the users of the Day Centre and their family carers, with staff at the Day Centre and with other key officers from the Council.

ABERYSTWYTH DAY CENTRE REVIEW

Questionnaire for service users

Ceredigion County Council agreed that it would discuss the move of the Aberystwyth Day Centre from Park Avenue a year after the new service began

I have been asked prepare an independent report for discussion at a Council meeting in April and in order for me to write this report, it is essential that I include the views of the people attending the Day Centre and also those of their family carers.

I plan to collect the views of service users through questionnaires, through individual meetings (on February 21st and 22nd) and also by attending the Service User's Committee (on February 22nd)

If you would be willing to complete a questionnaire, please can you answer the questions below and return in the envelope provided, to the Day Centre office by February 22nd

If you would prefer to talk with me individually, then please let Shirley Steen, or your key worker know and they will arrange a time for us to meet on Thursday February 21st or Friday February 22nd

I look forward to talking with you and with the questionnaire I also include a brief summary of my career so that you know a little about me

Thank you

Questionnaire for service users

1)Name (you do not have to include this if you prefer to respond anonymously)

2)Female or Male---(please circle)

3)Do you attend the Day Centre every week?

If Yes--please tick here

If No—please write below how often you attend eg every fortnight/every month

4)On which day/s do you attend the Day Centre ?(please tick below)

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

5) Why do you come to the Day Centre? (please use your own words below)

6) Do you think that the new Day Centre can meet the reasons for attending that you have noted in Question 5?

If the reasons are met fully—please tick here

If only some reasons are met—please explain in your own words what is met and what is not met and what would make it better

If the reasons are not met at all, please explain in your own words why this is the situation and what would make things better

7) What do you like best about the new Day Centre ?(please write as many things as you want)

8) Are there any things that you do not like about the Day Centre? (again, write as many things as you want)

9) Are there any things you think would make the Day Centre better? (write as many things as you want)

10) Are you able to tell the staff at the Day Centre if you are not happy with things?

If Yes—tick here

If no—please explain why not and what would make this possible

11) Does it cause you any problems travelling to the new Day Centre ?

If No—tick here

If yes, please explain what problems you have

11) Is it a good thing for the new day centre to be linked to the library ?

(please write Yes or No or Neither and give any reasons you have for your answer)

12) Is there anything else you would want to say about the Day Centre

Many thanks for the time you have taken to fill this questionnaire

ABERYSTWYTH DAY CENTRE REVIEW

Questionnaire for Family Carers

Ceredigion County Council agreed that it would discuss the move of the Aberystwyth Day Centre from Park Avenue a year after the new service began

I have been asked prepare an independent report for discussion at a Council meeting in April and in order for me to write this report, it is essential that I include the views of the people attending the Day Centre and also those of their family carers.

I plan to collect the views of family carers through questionnaires, and through individual meetings (on February 21st)

If you would be willing to complete a questionnaire, please can you answer the questions below and return in the envelope provided, to the Day Centre office by February 22nd

If you would prefer to talk with me individually, then please let Shirley Steen, or the service user's key worker know and they will arrange a time for us to meet on Thursday February 21st in the afternoon or early evening

I look forward to talking with you and with the questionnaire I also include a brief summary of my career so that you know a little about me

Thank you

Questionnaire for Family Carers

1) Name (you do not have to include this if you prefer to respond anonymously)

2) Name of Day Centre Service User (again this can be anonymous, if you prefer)

3) Relationship to Service User (please tick below)

Wife

Husband

Partner

Daughter

Son

Granddaughter

Grandson

Other—please specify

4) Does the Service User attending the Day Centre help you in your caring role

Please add comments to explain your response

5) Are there any positive changes from the move to the new Day Centre?(please write as many things as you want)

6)Are there any things that you do not like about the new Day Centre?
(again, write as many things as you want)

7) Are there any things you think would make the Day Centre better?
(write as many things as you want)

8) Are you able to talk with the staff at the Day Centre if you have any concerns

If Yes—tick here

If no—please explain why not and what would make this possible

11) Do you experience any problems for the service user re travel to the new Day Centre ?

If No—tick here

If yes, please explain what problems there are

12) Please add any further comments about Day Services for Older People

Many thanks for the time you have taken to complete this questionnaire

SERVICE USER QUESTIONNAIRE SUMMARY

40 responses (1 jointly by 2 people) --- 19 anonymous

23 female, 16 male, 1 unknown

Park Ave = 29, New = 5, Unknown = 7

Q5 Why Do You Come to the Day Centre?

39 responses

Companionship = 31

Meals = 19

Avoid isolation = 11

Activities = 7

Medical reasons = 3

Shower = 1

Help and Advise = 1

Break for carer = 1

Hairdresser = 1

Q6 Can the new Day Centre meet these needs?

39 responses

31 = Yes, fully

0 = No, but there were 11 negative comments, which are summarised in Q8

Q7 What do you like best about the new Day Centre?

35 responses

Staff = 12

Building/Environment = 9

Meals = 8

Other users = 6

Nothing/Not a lot/ Prefer old Centre = 6

Activities = 4

Proximity to town = 3

Exercise = 1

Health support = 1
Linked to Library =1
Toilets =1

Q8 Are there things you do not like about the new Day Centre

38 responses

25=Yes, 13 = No

Size of building/low ceiling = 14 (1 person said this had been an issue initially, but not so now)

Access/Ramp = 10

Food /not cooked on premises = 5

Less convenient for shops = 5

No bathing = 5

Insufficient toilets = 2

No room for coats = 1

Miss Drop-In users = 1

No privacy = 1

No garden = 1

Difficulty using lift =1

Collected earlier = 1

Transport—see Q 11

Q9-- What would make the Day Centre better?

29 responses

9 = Nothing (positive) 1 =Nothing (neutral)

Return to Park Ave/change location = 8

Improve food = 5

Improve access/cover ramp =3

Increase toilets = 3

Flexibility re hairdresser = 2

Improve bus service = 2

Provide a view = 1

Provide bath, not shower = 1

Fan for hot weather = 1

Improved seating = 1
Increased activities/day trips =2

Q10 Can you tell staff if you are not happy?

39 responses

38 = Yes, 1 = No, “but staff are always friendly and helpful”

Q11 Are there problems with travel?

40 responses

34= No, 6 =Yes

Further to walk = 4

Problems with finding parking space = 1

Problems with bus travel = 1

Q12 Is it a good thing to be linked to the library?

36 responses

28 =Yes (2 also responding that access to archives also helpful) 5 = No

Not a lot of people use it = 2

Not sure = 1

Uses the library as this is an “airier environment” = 1

The lift is difficult to use = 1

The lift is helpful = 1

The library not easy to use due to medical needs = 1

Q13 Are there any other comments you would like to make about the Day Centre

35 responses

Appreciation of the staff = 8

Wishing to return to Park Ave = 7

Nothing further to add = 6

Positive comments about the new Centre = 5

Positive comments re food = 3

Problems with location = 4

Problems with access = 2

Problems with toilets =1

Should use Park Ave as a community facility due to its central location = 1

Health needs are met = 1

As below street level, not much to see = 1

Likes the decor = 1

Cloakroom very small =1

Inconvenient to go upstairs for meetings = 1

Would like a volunteer singer = 1

Carer Questionnaire Response Summary

15 responses—3 = anonymous
12=Female, 3=Male, 3=Unknown
Park Ave =9, New = 3, Uncertain = 3

Q4 Does the service user attending help you in your caring role?

11 Responses

- 8=Yes, 1=question not clear, 1=Not applicable, 1=No
- (a) Reassurance that person cared for/ has structure to day =7
 - (b) Gives carer a break = 4
 - (c) Feeling of shared responsibility = 2
 - (d) Service user gaining independence = 1
 - (e) Time to do other caring tasks = 1

Q5 Are there any positive changes from the move to the new Day Centre?

9 Responses

- 6=No, 3=Yes,
- (a) Sharing a building with the Library = 1
 - (b) Smaller, so able to socialise better=1
 - (c) Better food =1
- 1 negative response but saw the continuity of the staff as a positive aspect

Q6 Are there things that you do not like about the new Day Centre?

15 Responses

- 11=Yes, 4=No
- (a) Reduced space/light = 5
 - (b) No bathing facility = 5
 - (c) Difficulties with Access/Ramp =4
 - (d) Insufficient toilets = 4
 - (e) Difficulties with parking =4
 - (f) Meals /not made on site = 3

- (g) Day too short= 1
- (h) No privacy for confidential discussion= 1
- (i) No Drop In =1
- (j) No garden = 1

Q7 Are there things that would make the Day Centre better?

13 responses

6 =Yes, 4=No, 5=No with negative comment re premises

- (a) Improve meals/Cook food on the premises =2
- (b) Increase range of activities =1
- (c) Provide bathing =1
- (d) Hold more social events =1
- (e) Improve parking =1
- (f) Provide daily papers =1
- (g) Increase the space available = 1

Q8 Are you able to talk with staff if you have any concerns?

15 responses

15=Yes

Q9 Do you experience problems for the service user re travel to the new Day Centre?

15 responses

12 = No

1=No, but considers the ramp impacts on service user independence ie having to use wheeler rather than walking stick

2=Yes,

1 has concern re uncovered access and 1 considers day too short

Q10 Please add any further comments re day services for Older People

11 responses

7 praised the staff

Other comments:-

- Mother finds the Centre claustrophobic, so spends time in the library , so she is not benefitting from company
- Council should arrange a meeting to explain what is actually happening with Park Ave
- Bring back Art Classes
- Older people not likely to complain so the Council should make every effort to optimise facilities
- Where service user is a spouse, consideration should be given to their needs as a couple and not just as separate entities. Joint visits would be beneficial.
- There are limited Day services for a growing population of Older people
- Carer support is also limited

-

FOR THE ATTENTION OF MR. WILLIAM POWELL:

Martin Shewring, Chairman of SPADCC has asked me to relay the following:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee of Ceredigion County Council called a meeting on 15 May, to discuss Sheila Wentworth's Independent Review, and the Basement Day Centre. At this Meeting it was decided that the Chairman and the members of the Committee are to visit the Day Centre to form an opinion; the meeting to take place "in the next 2/3 weeks" (this was said on 15 May). Hopefully you will receive a response.

The Scrutiny Committee will meet again on the 20th June. Have you requested a copy of the Scrutiny Report? The Scrutiny Report will be relaid to CCC, which is important, in line with our Petition concerns. Are you, as a Petitions Committee, able to obtain the Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee, as I feel that the comments made are important to the first Scrutiny meeting, for you to understand concerns?

We, as a SPADCC have concerns regarding the recommendations from Sheila Wentworth's Report. Have you viewed these recommendations in full?

Many thanks,

Martin W. Shewring
Chairman

Dear Sian,

I hope that Pam Ellis has already sent you the information below. As I will be away for a few days, I have sent it directly to be sure you get it in time for the meeting.

As it is easier to get blood from a stone than information from Ceredigion County Council, I have submitted the following questions [in blue] under FOI to them:-

1. Is the "Wentworth" Report on Aberystwyth Day Centre now in the Public Domain?
2. Did Sheila Wentworth attend the Cabinet meeting on 21st May 2013 to present her report?
3. Where and how often was the tender for performing the Review advertised? A copy of the advertisement would be appreciated.
4. Does Sheila Wentworth have any qualifications, or has she had any training, in the design and analysis of questionnaires?
5. If the answer to Q4 is no then did she consult an expert in these matters? If so who?

David and Meg Kirby

Dear councillor

I read your piece in the Cambrian News in which you asked people to contact their councillors if they wanted to discuss the Day Centre. As you know I used to do the Tea Bar there. I'd been away all week due to family illness away. On Friday I came home and met a gentleman who goes to the Day Centre walking in Terrace Road he'd just come from there. I asked why he was walking when he looked so hot? He said he needed fresh air because the Centre was too hot

because it was a nice day out,
The basement was like an oven
with no air or windows open
and that at least two people
needed to use their pumps to
help them breathe. Last year
I was talking to two gentlemen
I knew from the old Day Center
and they told me they'd come
out because it was too
stuffy in there on a nice
day. I'm all for the New Shops
we need them. But not for
putting our elders below
ground before their time.
I'm not a mourner usually
but thank you for sorting
the bridges out.

sincerely

Anne Maynes

Response to the Review of the Day Centre
from
Gwenda Williams
Eurwen Booth
Members of Save Park Avenue Day Centre Group
May 2013

1. Save Park Avenue Day Centre Group (SPADC)

Save Park Avenue Day Centre Group (SPADC) was set up in November, 2011, to oppose the closure and demolition of the Park Avenue Day Centre. It has never claimed to represent the current users of the Day Centre or their carers, although its members include previous users, carers of current and previous users, ex-members of staff, and potential users since the majority of its members are over 65. Its concern is to ensure that a good quality day care service is available for all who need it in the area. This concern was reflected in the 6,000 signatures collected on the petition to save the Day Centre in 2011.

2. The remit of the Review

The remit of the Review was "to review the day centre provision at the Town Hall, to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the service users." **This has limited its scope** to the needs of current users and, to some extent, the needs of their carers. Therefore, the Review does not look at how well the Day Centre is meeting the needs of all vulnerable older people in the area and makes only passing reference to future needs as the numbers of older people rise.

3. Sources of Information

Its main sources of information were questionnaires to the current service users and their carers, meetings with the service users, discussions with relevant Council officers and employees, plus several visits to the Town Hall facility. **The Review has taken little or no account of the views of the many other stakeholders** who no longer have access to day care services or have been affected by the move to the Town Hall basement. Examples include:

- Those who have chosen not to attend and their carers
- Previous users of the Park Avenue Day Centre who are no longer eligible because of changes in criteria for attendance
- The non-referred drop-in users who went to the old Day Centre on a Wednesday for lunch, social contact and access to the services and facilities provided. For some, this was the main outing of their week. The Report dismisses this group on the basis of information provided by the Older People's Strategy Co-ordinator that they attended "primarily for the midday meal". The Report does mention, however, that several of the user's responses to the questionnaires commented that the change in the

- arrangements for the Wednesday Drop-in "was a loss to them and also to the people who attended".
- Organisations concerned with older people such as Age Concern and the Aberystwyth 50+ forum.
 - The organisations concerned with older people who met in, or provided services to the Park Avenue Day Centre such as Arthritis Care, the Darby and Joan club and the WRVS.
 - The SPADC Group who asked to meet the Reviewer but were refused.

Without these views, the Review cannot be comprehensive and its conclusions are likely to be unrepresentative of those needing some kind of day care service.

4. The questionnaires

The questionnaires consisted of a number of basic, mainly open-ended questions. As with all questionnaires, **the wording of the questions is crucial** as a question worded in one way may elicit a different response from the same question worded slightly differently. For example, Question 7 on the questionnaire to service users asked what they liked best about the new Day Centre while Question 8 asked whether there were any things that they did not like about the Day Centre. The answers may have been different if the same form of question had been asked each time, for example, "What do you like about the new Day Centre?" and "What do you dislike about the new Day Centre?"

The answers to the questionnaires are **by no means wholly positive**. Nearly one fifth of service users responding to Question 7 said there was nothing they liked about the new centre or made reference to preferring the Park Avenue Day Centre and just under one-third of those responding to question 9 wanted a return to the Park Avenue centre or another location. The Review itself says that the loss of a purpose built facility was keenly felt by some of those who had attended the old Day Centre.

The Review also points out that the issue which gave rise to most adverse comment from all service users was **the access to the building** "with many finding **the uncovered ramp** unsatisfactory". The purpose built Park Avenue building did not, of course, have this problem.

Members of last week's Scrutiny Committee pointed out that **the Review contravened Ceredigion Council's own Welsh language policy** in that the Reviewer was not a Welsh speaker and the questionnaires and the Review Report were in English only. In relation to the questionnaires, older people, in particular, find it much easier to talk about personal issues in their first language and this may have affected the responses they gave.

Members of the Scrutiny Committee also pointed out that **19 of the 40 service users preferred to respond to the questionnaires anonymously**. Questions need to be asked as to why.

5. Patterns of use

The Review implied that there were 64 service users but gave **no breakdown as to how many days these service users attend, how many hours they spend there each day, and how this compares with their attendance at the Park Avenue Day Centre**. This would have given some idea as to whether they are receiving an equivalent service in terms of time spent at the new Day Centre and whether the facility is being fully used. There is a reference to the staff considering that it should be "utilised to its optimum, providing services to those with highest needs" but no information is given as to whether this is the case.

6. Referrals

The Review mentioned that **the number of referrals has not fallen** since the move to the Town Hall but gave **no information about waiting lists or the numbers of those refused a referral**, the reasons for those refusals, and whether or not some form of rationing has had to be introduced. It also gave no information as to the source of referrals and whether this has changed since the move. At a time of increasing numbers of older people, requests for referral would be expected to rise.

(The Review refers to the change agenda required by Sustainable Social Services and the Social Services and Well-being Bill (when passed and implemented) which should lead to the voice of all older people being heard. The Social Services Bill aims to ensure that older people's needs are assessed but does not specify how these needs are to be met. The Town Hall Day Centre is not future proofed to meet the needs of an increasing older population who may require this kind of day care service.)

7. Facilities and services

The Review glossed over **the decrease in facilities and services** provided by the Town Hall Centre compared with those provided **all in one place** in the Park Avenue Day Centre. Some of these are now scattered to various venues around the town and elsewhere, making access more difficult for service users eg assisted bathing, retinopathy. The questionnaires that were given to the current users and their carers did not ask them to rate the new facility against the old one but, interestingly, respondents did make comparisons.

8. Costs and savings

The Report mentions that staffing levels are now '**commensurate**' with those in the Park Avenue Centre. Presumably this means that the staff/service user ratio has not changed, rather than the total of number staff, and only refers to support staff, since there is no longer a functioning kitchen? Questions need to be asked about the costs of the new centre and whether significant savings are being made, particularly if a restriction in numbers leads to the need for extra care services in the home and elsewhere.

9. Comparisons with other parts of the County

Several members of the Scrutiny Committee said that Aberystwyth was better provided for than many of the rural areas they represent. Scattered rural communities present a different set of problems for the provision of day care for older people than more compact urban areas. Have needs assessments been undertaken for the rural areas or estimates of money spent on day care services per head of older people been made between the urban and rural areas in order to make such comparisons?

10. Finally

The current provision does not really need a 40 page review to assess its suitability. It can be summed up in one sentence "Fewer services for fewer people in a smaller, less appropriate space with lousy access."

Agenda Item 7.4

P-04-408 : Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder Service

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to fund the Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder Service in Wales to the same degree as the Adult Eating Disorder Service in Wales.

It has come to my attention that there is a disparity in funding between Adult Services and Child and Adolescent Services as regards funding for Eating Disorder Treatment. At the present time Adult Eating Disorder Services receive £1 million per year from the Welsh Assembly, as well as 4 specialist trained provider groups.

Sadly research points to the fact that Eating Disorders, especially Anorexia Nervosa, are predominantly first experienced around puberty. Historically puberty was around 12-15, however, puberty is becoming younger and therefore statistics are beginning to show the prevalence of Anorexia Nervosa starting at younger ages is apparent. Bulimia Nervosa is generally a disease with an onset age of 18-25, however as with Anorexia this may differ from person to person. The fact that in both disorders, and indeed all diagnosable Eating Disorders, early intervention is the key to a quick recovery, therefore preventing long term financial implications for the WAG, makes this plea more pertinent.

I therefore implore the Assembly to consider this a priority for debate and to mend this disparity by giving equal finances and services to the Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder service in Wales as already given to Adult EDS.'

Petition raised by: Helen Missen

Date petition first considered by Committee: 17 July 2012

Number of signatures: 246

Mark Drakeford AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-408
Ein cyf/Our ref MD/00683/13

William Powell AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

9 May 2013

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

Dear William

Thank you for your letter of 24 April on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding a petition which calls for the Welsh Government to fund the Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder Service in Wales to the same degree as the Adult Eating Disorder Service in Wales.

The pattern of eating disorders is a complex one and the characteristics differ considerably between children, younger people and adults. The effects of eating disorders can be devastating and studies demonstrate the majority of cases begin to develop during adolescence.

Eating Disorder services are one of the mental health intelligent targets for the 1000+ Lives programme. The Eating Disorder Target has been designed to drive improvement to the 5 standards within The Eating Disorder Framework for Wales (2009). The drivers are:

- Secondary care mental health services to improve specialist advice and support to primary care, including pre-referral advice & shared care arrangements
- Improved assessment care-coordination & interventions across Secondary mental health services for CAMHS and CMHTS
- Improved provision of Specialist (Tertiary) ED Services (SEDS) to local communities
- Improved acute medical inpatient care for patients with anorexia nervosa

The target includes CAMHS and Adult mental health services. As CAMHS have always regarded Eating Disorders as a core part of service, each local service is required to have an eating disorder lead for child & adolescent mental health services to deliver the Framework. Services should also have clear guidelines and shared pathways with local medical services for emergency re-feeding.

We will shortly publish Service Planning Advice for CAMHS Services developed by our National Expert Reference Group, which comprises practitioners working in the field. The Advice, which includes Eating Disorders, builds on existing activity. It is not meant to be prescriptive and focuses on service functions, as opposed to specifying a service model. It aims to optimise the balance of primary, secondary and tertiary level services, proportionate to need, and deliver services as locally as possible in a sustainable way which are child and family focused.

The Eating Disorders Framework was published in June 2009 and outlined a new specialist community eating disorder service at the Adult Tier 3 level. Since 2010, £1million has been provided by the Welsh Government on an annual basis to first establish and now sustain a north Wales and south Wales service to support both secondary and primary care in managing their patients, and provide direct input on complex cases (under certain circumstances) to improve diagnosis, care and support for people with eating disorders.

While this funding is aimed at providing provision for adults over 18, the all-Wales service has developed close links with CAMHS teams across Wales including Tier 4 CAMHS. The aim is to create pathways for young people suffering with eating disorders, increase the sharing of knowledge amongst CAMHS staff, and facilitate the effective transition between CAMHS and adult services.

I hope this is helpful.

Best wishes

Mark

Mark Drakeford AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

BETHAN JENKINS AC / AM

Aelod Cynulliad Plaid Cymru - Gorllewin De Cymru
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William Powell AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Falcon Drive
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

June 7, 2013

REF: BJDH-WP-CAEDSP-07-06-13

Dear William,

Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder Service petition

I am writing as chair of the Cross-Party Group on Eating Disorders to give a response to the above petition.

The group met on May 21 and discussed this petition, and we were in agreement with the main findings of the evidence given by Beat Cymru to the Petitions Committee, and summarised by Susannah Humphreys in her letter to you on March 22 this year.

In short, on the basis of the evidence I have heard, I would agree with Susannah that community children and adolescent mental health services in Wales are insufficient to meet current demand, and I would back the petitioner's call for matched funding.

It is clear, from what Beat Cymru have said and from the evidence to the committee that CAMHS requires a great deal more focus and a joined-up approach from local health boards, because if we don't get to grips with eating disorders when they present in young people, then we are storing up trouble for the future. Not only will this mean increased costs for the NHS in the future but, more importantly, it will leave people with eating disorders suffering for longer than they should be.

As chair of the chair of the Cross-Party Group on Eating Disorders, I will continue to question the Welsh Government on its strategy in this area, and will report back to the committee as and when there are developments.

Kind Regards,

Bethan Jenkins AM South Wales West

Aelod Cynulliad Plaid Cymru - Gorllewin De Cymru
Plaid Cymru Assembly Member - South Wales West

P-04-408 Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder Service – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Deputy Clerk, 06.06.2013

Dear Kayleigh

I am grateful to the petition committee for investigating and researching further the basis of the original challenge.

Mark Drakeford in his response to the committee highlights the different characteristics between children, younger people and adults when diagnosed with an Eating Disorder, he also appears to back up my point that the majority of cases of eating disorders begin to develop during adolescence. It is now well documented that the average age of onset for Anorexia Nervosa is 15. This is dropping all the time with either better diagnosis, higher awareness, less stigma or the fact that menarche has dropped from 16 to 13 in the past couple of decades. The onset of Bulimia Nervosa (BN) and Eating Disorders Not Otherwise Specified (EDNOS) is generally thought to be later, though still within the 15-25 year age gap.

Mr Drakeford also quotes from the Welsh Framework for Eating Disorders (2009) using the five points as highlighted in it. His predecessor, in her response to the committee, used the same 5 points and similarly some of the very same wording as the now Health Minister. I find that copy and pasting is a useful tool as well. The Welsh Framework 2.3 'Characteristics and natural progression of eating disorders' goes on from Mr Drakeford's first point (in the very next paragraph if he cared to read on) to say that whilst some young people may recover from mild conditions that are available within first level specialist CAMHS others go on to more serious illness; "at this stage, they can do great damage to young people's long term physical and emotional health if they are not tackled appropriately, effectively and quickly. They can also have significant negative impact on academic and subsequent career and life choices". Furthermore it states that early identification can prevent escalation, and more importantly "when EDs present for the first time in adulthood, the disorder may turn out to be already of some years' duration and may require longer periods of intervention and monitoring."

How sad that the Health Minister will allow this to happen by leaving CAMHS under equipped. These illnesses need specialist care. To use a much loved analogy of mine: to attend the GP for a Heart Attack or Broken leg is the first line of treatment and is effective so long as the GP has the where with all to refer on to specialist intervention, these specialists are highly trained in their area and we would never expect less. One would not take someone with one of these conditions over and over again to the GP, who does have knowledge, but not expertise. The Welsh Assembly know this by providing the Framework and specialist teams for adults. It would indeed be negligent to allow either of these illnesses to just continue being seen by the GP. The specialist cardiologist and orthopaedic surgeon may or may not refer this afore mentioned example on to have invasive in-patient treatment. CAMHS really is like the GP service of mental health especially for eating disorders, some of which have the highest mortality of any mental illness.

The fact remains that for children and adolescents in Wales at the present time there is no specialist service between tier 2 and tier 4. Children and adolescents in any other medical service are treated quickly and effectively by the very merit that they are children.

I do wonder if the question needs to be: How did the need for Adult Eating Disorder Services (AEDS) specialist teams come about? Secondly, Why is there not such a specialised service for Child and Adolescents with Eating Disorders? As the need was highlighted in 2009 for Wales to put in place the four tier 3 specialist teams for Eating Disorders and 1 million pounds for the use thereof (to be noted that this money is not for general Mental Health), it should be interesting and perhaps for debate that Child and Adolescent funding is only provided for the support and education of the CAMHS services.

I will be interested to see the response of the Cross Party Group as it appears they are heavily weighed on their recent panel with Adult Service providers and influenced by self esteem and body image matters. Thus far no research has shown that any eating disorders are caused by either of these, but may be triggered by these influences.

It could be argued that all eating disorders are genetically based and thus with a predisposition to these illnesses the triggering factors will 'tip' someone into one of these illnesses. Somewhat like the perfect storm analogy: Hurricane season is always at the same time of year, its the climate that may or may not allow a hurricane to form. Some of these storms are just that: a storm, others progress to hurricanes and still more go onto to be super storms. Perhaps not the most helpful of analogies, but one which I hope you can see as useful.

I do feel that the petition committee has been extremely helpful in opening all these debates. B-eat in their response were damning in some ways highlighting the lack of provision, stalling of services and thankfully have backed this petition. They also highlighted some of the good that is happening in and around Wales.

It is however, time for action. There are many families struggling with their children's illness, not receiving the best possible care and the 'storm' just rumbles on. This 'rumble' ends up in adult services and the 1 million pounds sanctioned for that service becomes more and more stretched and less effective. By providing equal, if not more funding to child and adolescent specialist eating disorder services and providers thereof the total expenditure should be less. Call me simplistic, but it seems that: simple!

Thank you once again for the continuation of this petition. I hope that it will culminate in a positive outcome for Welsh children, adolescents and their families, both now and in the future.

Helen Missen

P-04-460 Lives not Airports

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to consider the following.

Procedures currently in place that decide case by case the delivery of specialised medicines to patients through the Welsh Health Special Services Committee (WHSSC) are fundamentally flawed, damaging and extremely distressing to patients. New protocols and procedures are now required as a matter of urgency...The Welsh Government must review the whole procedure of allocating specialised medicines to patients. The system needs to be made far simpler to navigate. Doctors must have more say in the decision making process as they are the best judge of a 'patients' needs. Alternative ways to fund medicines, such as negotiating with manufacturers more realistic pricing structures and the possibility of individual short term free trials should be looked at.

Supporting Information:

Further details of the problems we see and our proposals are as follows...

1. When the WHSSC assess a requested drug the recommendations from the All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG) should be no more than 18 months old. This is due to the fact those that are years old do not have a reliable bench mark. Reliable data for all medicines improve day by day as case studies multiply. The WHSSC should have the right to request an up to date review from the AWMSG and this should be carried out as a matter of urgency.
2. When the WHSSC declines a request for a medicine an appeals process is then initiated in which the patient, doctors or an advocate can be present but none are allowed to speak. This must not continue therefore the WHSSC should by law be required to hear the case with the full participation of the patient, doctors or advocate.
3. In many cases patients are extremely ill, alone and vulnerable. It should be a priority to make sure such patients have an advocate to help them through the procedures in place for the funding of medicines. Doctors have large case loads so are unable to give extra time to patients.
4. A review of the actual costs of specialized medicines that have been refused and the subsequent hospital admissions, alternative treatment costs should be carried out. This would be beneficial to determine the true costs of specialized medicines to the tax payers.

5. The WHSSC should have the power to grant a medicine if the medical teams have concluded that all other treatments have failed and that the said medicine in their opinion has a chance to benefit the patient.

6. The WHSSC should be given the option to at least give a patient a trial run with a drug to ascertain if a positive result could be expected.

Petition raised by: Jeremy Derl-Davis

Date petition first considered by Committee: 19 March 2013

Number of signatures: 51

Mark Drakeford AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-460
Ein cyf/Our ref MD/00169/13
William Powell AM
Chair Petition's committee
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4th April 2013

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 21 March on behalf of Mr Jeremy Deri-Davies regarding his petition about the delivery of specialised medicines through the Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC) and seeking the views of Welsh Government on the issues raised.

I was very sorry to read about Ms Wheate's condition and the difficulties she has experienced in trying to obtain the medicine pegvisomant. I am aware that Mr Deri-Davies has made previous representations to Welsh Government on this matter

In determining the potential benefit of a medicine such as pegvisomant the Welsh Government is guided by advice from the All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG) when the medicine has not been appraised by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE). The AWMSG carried out an appraisal of pegvisomant in 2005 and recommended it should not be routinely available for use within NHS Wales. In advising the manufacturer of this decision, AWMSG invited the company to submit further clinical data for reappraisal. To date this has not occurred although I am aware that AWMSG have recently had discussions with the manufacturer regarding a possible reappraisal.

The Scottish Medicine Consortium (SMC) also appraised pegvisomant in 2005 and came to a similar conclusion to AWMSG. The manufacturer chose to make a resubmission to SMC in 2006 but SMC again did not recommend pegvisomant for use in NHS Scotland.

The AWMSG is recognised as having a transparent and robust appraisal process. Membership is drawn from across NHS Wales and includes senior clinicians from both hospitals and general practice, nurses, public health clinicians, pharmacists, patients and health economists. More information can be found on the AWMSG website including details of forthcoming meetings, all of which are open to the public and have been since the Group was established in 2002. A link to the AWMSG website can be found below:

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
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English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400
Correspondence.Mark.Drakeford@wales.gsi.gov.uk

<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sites3/home.cfm?orgid=371>

The funding of many treatments for rare diseases currently falls under the remit of WHSSC. WHSSC was established in 2010 and is responsible for the joint planning of Specialist and Tertiary Services on behalf of Health Boards (HBs) in Wales. When making funding decisions WHSSC are also guided by advice from AWMSG but may also consider advice from their Individual Patient Funding Request (IPFR) panel where the patient may fall outside current AWMSG, or NICE, guidance.

In your letter you also make reference to the high cost of medicines. The pricing of medicines is a non-devolved issue but ensures the NHS has access to quality branded medicines at reasonable prices. The price of medicines in the UK is now one of the lowest in Europe and we strive to drive down costs further, particularly in hospitals, by having all-Wales contracts in place for selected medicines. In addition, and since 2011, we have also operated a scheme which provides, high cost, AWMSG approved medicines at an additional discount to the NHS.

I hope you have found this information helpful.

Best wishes.

Mark.

Mark Drakeford AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol

Minister for Health and Social Services



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Pwyllgor Gwasanaethau Iechyd
Arbenigol Cymru (PGIAC)
Welsh Health Specialised
Services Committee (WHSSC)

Your ref/eich cyf: P-04-460
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Director.whssc@wales.nhs.uk

Mr William Powell AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
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Thursday 6th June 2013

Dear William

Re: Allocation of funding for specialised medicines to patients

Thank you for your letter dated 21st March 2013. Please accept my apologies for the delay in providing you with a response.

The Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC) as a Joint Committee of the seven Local Health Boards is governed by the same arrangements as the Health Boards with regards to specialised and high cost drugs.

For drugs approved by NICE via Technology Appraisal Guidance (TAG) funding is mandated through existing NHS policy. Drugs that have not been considered by NICE are considered by the All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG). This includes drugs newly available which are not scheduled to be considered by NICE within a 12 month period. The WHSSC Medical Director and WHSSC Director of Finance are members of the AWMSG and WHSSC also has a representation on the AWMSG Steering Committee.

When a clinician believes that a patient should receive a specialised treatment for which there is not an existing policy e.g. for a drug which has not previously been assessed by NICE or AWMSG they can make a request to AWMSG to appraise the drug. In accordance with the *All Wales Policy: Making Decisions on Individual Patient Funding Requests (IPFR)*, funding can also be considered by the All Wales IPFR Panel on the basis of

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Caerffili
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Chair/Cadeirydd: *Professor Mike Harmer*

Interim Director of Specialised and Tertiary Services/Cyfarwyddwr Dros Dro y Gwasanaethau Arbenigol a Thrydyddol: *Mr Stephen Harry*

individual clinical exceptionalty. In order for the request to be considered by the All Wales IPFR panel on the basis of exceptionalty, an IPFR form must be completed by the referring clinician which clearly demonstrate why funding should be provided as an exception. The evidence of exceptionalty should include evidence base considerations, economic considerations and ethical considerations. Social factors will not be considered when making decisions on IPFR.

Where the intervention is not specifically drug related (i.e. a technology) WHSSC have implemented a process of evidence evaluation and assessment which considers the evidence for clinical and cost effectiveness. An evidence-based recommendation is then made to the Joint Committee of WHSSC whether to approve or not approve the resources required to implement the technology.

The information that you provided refers to drugs being available in England but not in Wales. We are aware that England has a separate high cost drugs fund relating to Cancer Treatments (The Cancer Drugs Fund). The decision not to implant a Cancer Drugs fund in Wales has already been made by WAG

Yours sincerely

P. a. Wenger

pp.
Mr Stephen Harrhy
Interim Director of Specialised and Tertiary Services

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P-04-463 Reduction of Salt Levels in Food

Petition wording:

We, the undersigned, call upon the Welsh Government to reduce the amount of salt in food so that people are able to choose healthy lifestyles in Wales.

Supporting Information: High salt intake is a noted contributor to hypertension (high blood pressure) that can lead to strokes and heart attacks.

Petition raised by: Harry Hayfield

Date petition first considered by Committee: 19 March 2013

Number of signatures: 11

Agenda Item 7.7

P-04-396 Emergency Life Support Skills (ELS) for Wales Schoolchildren

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to make ELS skills training, including vital cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) a compulsory part of the curriculum at secondary schools in Wales, forming part of the core knowledge and understanding that children acquire at school. This would create a new generation of lifesavers across Wales.

Petition raised by: British Heart Foundation

Date petition first considered by Committee: 19 June 2012

Number of signatures: Petition brought by the British Heart Foundation. An associated petition collected approximately 4,000 signatures.

Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-396
Ein cyf/Our ref LA/01303/13

William Powell AM

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

21 May 2013

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 7 May about the possible inclusion of Emergency Life Skills as a core component of the Welsh Baccalaureate.

The current model for the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification includes a Personal and Social Education (PSE) component. Issues such as Emergency Life Skills can be delivered under this component. You will be aware that, following the Review of Qualifications in Wales, the Welsh Baccalaureate is being revised to make the qualification more rigorous. A Steering Group has been established to oversee this development and a number of working groups are considering the elements of the Welsh Baccalaureate Core in detail.

Whilst decisions about the precise content of the revised Welsh Baccalaureate have yet to be made, it is unlikely that the place of PSE and opportunities for issues such as Emergency Life Skills will be diminished. I will ensure that the Steering Group is aware of the Committee's views about the importance of these skills. A revised model with draft core content will be available for stakeholder feedback in the autumn and responses will feed into the further development of the draft model.

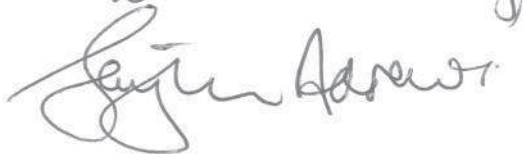
The Welsh Baccalaureate is designed for learners aged 14-19. More generally in schools, the Personal and Social Education Framework for 7 to 19-year-olds in Wales provides opportunities for learners to develop the practical skills necessary for everyday life, including emergency aid procedures and how to administer basic first aid.

The delivery of the curriculum in Wales is a matter for schools as they are best placed to make decisions about their curriculum based on the needs of their children and local community. Therefore, the precise content of a school's PSE programme lies with head teachers and their governing bodies; this includes deciding whether to work with specialist providers to ensure that they deliver relevant learning experiences.

The Welsh Government's PSE guidance website has links to a range of voluntary organisations that support schools with the teaching of ELS. Schools also work alongside specialist providers, such as the British Heart Foundation, to ensure the most relevant learning experiences for their learners.

On 1 October, I made a cabinet statement announcing my intention to review assessment and the National Curriculum in Wales. I have, however, no plans to review the non-statutory PSE framework for 7 to 19-year-olds in Wales.

I hope that this information reassures you that there are opportunities for learners in Wales to develop their Emergency Life Skills, both through the PSE curriculum in schools and through the Welsh Bacallaureate.

Yours sincerely


Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills

P-04-467 January Exams

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to continue to support the provision of January examinations at GCSE, AS and A Level.

Petition raised by: A-Level Students

Petition first considered by Committee: 19 March 2013

Number of signatures: 90

Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-467
Ein cyf/Our ref LA/01302/13

William Powell AM
Chair Petitions committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

23 May 2013

Dear William,


Thank you for your letter of 7 May in relation to January AS and A level assessments.

In my Written Statement on 15 April I set out that for those students who started their A level courses in September 2012, assessment opportunities should remain available to them in January 2014. I did not consider that it would be fair to withdraw these opportunities when candidates who are well into their courses have a legitimate expectation that these assessments will be available to them.

I was therefore disappointed to learn that WJEC had indicated in a letter to officials dated 7 May that they were not intending to offer the A level January assessments. I do not consider this to be in the best interests of candidates in Wales and I made this very clear to the WJEC's Board at a meeting on 9 May.

The Board responded positively at that meeting and indicated that they will offer the A level January assessments for candidates in Wales subject to receiving assurances relating to certain regulatory matters. My officials are currently dealing with the points raised by WJEC.

I can assure you that I will take whatever action is required to ensure that January assessment opportunities are made available, by WJEC, to A level candidates in Wales.

Yours sincerely,


Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills

P-04-467 January exams - Correspondence from the petitioner to the clerking team,. 07.06.2013

Dear Sian

Many thanks for your communication and for the previous letter related to our petition. The letter and Ministerial Statement seems to indicate that the Minister for Education is minded not to extend January exams beyond 2014. This will disappoint my students-who have now completed the AS and A Level Course and are sitting their examinations-who were keen for January exams to remain as a permanent feature of AS and A Levels. The reason for this surprising enthusiasm for January exams is that they see the benefits of these for developing and enhancing their performance in examinations at A Level i.e. refining their examination technique. In addition It allows students who are slower to develop a second bite of the cherry thus allowing them to gain better grades at A Level than they otherwise would.

It was my AS Government and Politics students, from the Crosskeys campus of Coleg Gwent, who actually proposed and submitted this petition to your Committee via the sixth form conference at Ty Hywel in February. It had previously been proposed, discussed and voted upon in class. They are passionate in their belief that AS/AL students in Wales should continue to have the opportunity to sit examination modules in January. I hope that the Minister, NAFW and Petitions committee are able to take into account the views of the 16-18 year olds who are faced with these exams rather than bowing to the commercial imperatives of the examination boards.

Regards

Rob Southall
Lecturer, Government & Politics

Agenda Item 7.9

P-03-263 List Stradey Park

Petition wording

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Minister for Heritage to grant listed status to Stradey Park, in order to protect the heritage of this world famous rugby ground and cultural icon for the people of Wales.

Supporting information:

The petition to list Stradey Park was inspired by calls that *“something should be done”* to protect the heritage at this world famous location. It is significant that these calls have continued after the Scarlets have moved across Llanelli to their new stadium. Stradey Park is clearly more than just a place where rugby was watched – it is part of local culture and national heritage.

A cultural icon can be defined as anything that is readily recognised, and generally represents an object or concept with great cultural significance to a wide cultural group. It may come to be regarded as having a special status as particularly representative of a particular group of people or a period in history.

Stradey Park is synonymous with the support of a Welsh community for its rugby club in the 20th century – it is undoubtedly a cultural icon.

Stradey Park has gained worldwide fame, not only for the exploits of the players who took to the famous turf, but also for the fervent support supplied by those who crammed into the stands and terraces surrounding it during the matches, and at half-time and full-time onto the pitch itself.

That support became world renown as typically Welsh, an image strengthened by songs celebrating famous victories at Stradey, such as the Max Boyce song “9-3” about the support of the community at Stradey for the 1972 victory over the All Blacks – the last by any club side in the world. “All roads led to Stradey Park”, “The day the pubs ran dry” and “I was there” all conjure up images of Stradey Park on that day and Llanelli captain Delme Thomas being carried off the pitch by fellow players, surrounded by thousands of supporters.

Stradey Park invokes images of Welsh working men completing a shift in the tinsplate works, docks or mines before playing a match in front of thousands of fellow workers of Tinopolis. The famous “sosbans” that were placed on the Stradey posts were a direct reference to Llanelli’s main export – Tinsplate – and in particular the “Stamping” Works located less than a mile from Stradey Park where saucepans were made and exported worldwide.

Stradey Park has always been known as the “most Welsh” of Welsh grounds, not least for its Welsh language scoreboard and Welsh language singing on the terraces. “Sosban Fach” is known throughout the world after it was adopted and sung by supporters due to the “sosbans” on posts. A gymanfa ganu was held in 1972, before the All Blacks game.

Typical of a rugby ground being at the heart of a Welsh community, Stradey Park has seen many non-rugby events including hosting several other sports and annual Guy Fawkes night fireworks displays.

On 15th November 2007 the funeral of Ray Gravell was held on the Stradey Park pitch. This unique event in Welsh history – described by some in the press as “a Welsh state funeral” – was attended by 6000 mourners including leading figures in Welsh political, sporting and cultural life, with many thousands of people lining the streets outside. Images of the coffin standing on the pitch, flanked by the Eisteddfod sword bearer and the assembled tribute makers were broadcast live on S4C.

There is no doubt that Stradey Park is of great cultural and historical significance to Wales. It was a modern day battle field and particularly representative of the Welsh passion for rugby in the 20th century. The petition has achieved in excess of 3500 signatures made more significant because this was a heritage petition not a rugby petition. The petition was collected on shop counters throughout Carmarthenshire and even without much publicity it has attracted signatures because people believe that the Stradey Park pitch should be saved to mark the location and its heritage.

Although the petition is named “List Stradey Park”, and there are many that would like to see the whole stadium saved, it is generally accepted that listing Stradey Park would mean listing the Stradey Park pitch and retaining it as open space within any development. This modern day battlefield is what makes it unique because of the events that have taken place on it, obviously rugby successes and the momentous Ray Gravell “state funeral”, but also the famous Stradey Park half-time and full-time pitch invasions where families would play where their heroes had just played.

To list a sports pitch would probably require a new listing category or an amendment to an existing category. As tourism becomes ever more important in Wales, key locations of modern Welsh heritage such as Stradey Park need to be protected, so the need for the National Assembly to direct Cadw to create or adapt a listing category for sports pitches is evident.

Once a location like Stradey Park is lost under a development it becomes almost worthless. Perhaps a few tourists may be attracted to read an interpretive panel or blue plaque near the site, but the benefit to the local economy would be negligible. Places like Stradey Park need to be preserved to allow them to be marketed as tourist locations of modern Welsh heritage for the 21st century. Tourists want to be able to take to the pitch, not just read about it.

As well as the 3500+ signatures and a Facebook group of over 520 members, several local organisations including Llanelli Town Council and Llanelli Rural Council support the aims of the petition to protect the Stradey Park pitch. However none of these groups has the power to deliver that protection.

The petition has received international support, as well as support from other parts of Wales and the UK showing clearly that Stradey Park is of national

importance. Locally, the petition has also received the support of former Llanelli, Wales and Lions greats such as Delme Thomas and Phil Bennett.

A website supporting the petition can be found at www.stradeyparkpetition.co.uk. Further information to support a listing, from the kind provision in 1879 of land within its boundary walls by the Stradey Estate, through to the closure of the ground in October 2008, can be supplied.

Petition Raised by: Mr V Jones

Petition first considered by Committee: November 2009

Number of signatures: 4383

John Griffiths AC /AM
Y Gweinidog Diwylliant a Chwaraeon
Minister for Culture and Sport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-03-263
Ein cyf/Our ref JG/00659/13

William Powell AM
Chair Petitions Committee

C/O Clerk of the Committee
Naomi.stocks@wales.gov.uk

Dear William,

7 May 2013

Thank you for your letter of 8 April about the petition which calls for Stradey Park to be listed and the consultation on the Heritage Bill.

I can confirm that my officials in Cadw have added the lead petitioner's details to their distribution list for e-bulletins on the progress of the Heritage Bill. This will ensure that he receives notification of the consultation on the proposals for legislation, which I intend to launch this summer with a view to introducing the Heritage Bill to the National Assembly for Wales in 2015.

Yours,

John Griffiths AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Diwylliant a Chwaraeon
Minister for Culture and Sport

P-03-263 List Stradey Park - Correspondence from the petitioner to the Chair,. 07.06.2013

Dear Mr Powell,

RE: P-03-263 List Stradey Park

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Ministerial Correspondence regarding Cadw's report scoping the options for protecting our sporting heritage. I have informally canvassed members of various heritage groups within Llanelli to draw up my response.

It is strongly agreed that sport is an important and integral part of the heritage of Wales and should be recognised for its contribution to the culture of the country. Sports pitches are the modern day battlefields and sporting battles are celebrated in much the same way as battles of old. A good example is the Max Boyce "9-3" song about Llanelli's victory over the All Blacks at Stradey Park in 1972.

It is felt that sports pitches, and generally most open space, has fallen through the net in terms of protection. While listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments have consent regimes in place, the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens does not appear to include anything apart from the more obvious places such as the grounds of large mansions and famous parks. The Register is not widely known by the public or even many councillors and in the Llanelli area there is very little on the Register. As it is non-statutory it carries very little weight in our local planning process, where it is generally felt that the attitude is "if it is not listed, it is not important". Making inclusion on the Register as providing the same level of protection as listing would be seen as a great step forward in the protection of recreational heritage such as parks, gardens and sports pitches.

As identified in the consultation document many buildings with sporting use are protected due to listing, but it is the architectural merits of the building that have enabled its protection not the sporting heritage itself. At Stradey Park the only part of the structure that was considered worthy of listing by anyone was the scoreboard. The value of that structure was even recognised by the club itself and it was moved to the new stadium. The rest of the buildings at Stradey Park were not unique and did not have any architectural merit on an all Wales level and nobody claimed that they should be listed. At Stradey it is the area of the pitch that is of interest, because as well as the events that took place there, such as famous victories and the funeral of Ray Gravell, it was unique in being accessible to all at half-time and full-time during matches. The pitch was part of the community as well as the sporting heritage of Llanelli and Wales. The "listing" of the Stradey pitch, or more accurately the inclusion of the pitch on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, was the quest of those supporting the petition in the hope that it would afford the pitch some protection. Having the pitch included on the Register proved impossible due to the

current criteria and its strict interpretation, so the current work to consider sporting areas in their own right is very much welcomed.

Local Listing is an area of the planning process that many people in Llanelli interested in heritage would like to see implemented and adhered to. Local Listing has been raised with the Local Planning Authority Carmarthenshire County Council several times over the last few years, but there is clear opposition to it. This does not appear to be the case with Llanelli Town Council and Llanelli Rural Council who appear far more supportive of a Local List. There is concern that using Local Listing to protect heritage of local interest would be pointless unless the LPA was forced to give it equal status to Cadw listing. The problem with local listing and LPA's is that what is of local interest to Llanelli is usually of no interest in other parts of the county or the needs of the county council are deemed to outweigh the needs of locals. In the case of Stradey Park, both local councils formally wrote in support of retaining the pitch within the housing development. The planning committee ignored them and the 5000 or so people who had signed the petition. This is despite the provision of open space in the new development being over 50% less than Planning Policy Wales and the Unitary Development Plan guidelines for the size of development proposed.

The consultation document suggests that it would be possible to extend the concept of local listing to include a specific category for historic areas, but considers that this may be seen as duplicating conservation area status. In Llanelli there is only one conservation area that comprises of Llanelli Parish Church, Llanelly House and the library. A proposed second conservation area in the town has been "under consideration" since 1998. An obligation for LPA's to draw up Local Lists that have statutory protection and which include a specific category for historic areas would appear to be a far more flexible and efficient way of providing protection for our heritage. Conservation areas refer to the group value of (mainly) buildings and sports and recreational areas do not often exist in these areas.

The recommendations are generally supported, but the idea of "encouraging" LPA's to act in certain ways seems inadequate. As has been clear in the case of Stradey Park, Carmarthenshire County Council had a short-sighted financial requirement for the land and flexibility in the system allowed them to do whatever they liked, ignoring public opinion and that of local councils. In Llanelli, and no doubt all across Wales, locals want to protect certain aspects of local heritage, but are powerless to stop LPA's who have short term goals. The current system does not afford the protection required because it naively expects LPA's to act in a reasonable manner. To enhance the system Local Lists and the Register of Historic parks and Gardens should provide the equivalent protection for buildings and areas of local interest that listed status already delivers.

The independent Manchester United Supporters' Trust (MUST), and Spirit of Shankly (SOS), the Liverpool Supporters Union, announced in April that they have submitted nominations for Old Trafford and Anfield respectively to be registered as 'Assets of Community Value' under the "Assets of Community Value Regulations of the Localism Act (2011)". A successful listing would mean that in any circumstance where the grounds were put up for sale, there would be the opportunity to purchase

it, and so secure its future for the community. A campaign to inform the public in Wales of what is possible should be undertaken and communities encouraged to submit nominations to protect assets such as sports pitches in their communities. At Stradey Park new homes are yet to be built. However, a revised phasing plan for the development has recently been submitted and given approval by the LPA. This will see the main pitch now become the first of five phases of development rather than the third. Many locals believe that this change is to stop the ongoing requests to retain the pitch area by developing it sooner. Unbelievably there is no recreational open space at all included in the plans in this area of the site, and the only public area is a small paved section commemorating past players. There remains strong support to retain the pitch within the housing development, particularly in the local Stradey community which has seen the loss of both the community used training pitches at the development site, and also the loss of “green wedge” designated land to the north of the development as part of a 480 pupil school development. In fact the LPA used the existence of the green wedge land to the north to justify providing less than 50% of the recommended open space in the Stradey Park development and building on the pitch, but then gave itself planning permission to build a school on part of that green wedge land, and fence off much of the remaining land too. If justification is required to show the need for statutory protection through the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens and Local Lists, surely Stradey Park is it.

During the consultation document by the Head of Regeneration and Conservation she states “... as the scope of the Register includes ‘... designed grounds... and places of recreation’, sporting venues would be eligible for consideration in their own right.” At the end of the document she states “... it should be made clear that both ‘spot-listing’ and ‘spot-registration’ are options for more immediate action where it is needed.”

On behalf of all those that supported the petition I respectfully request that the Petitions Committee urgently suggest to Cadw that having confirmed the “historic importance” of Stradey Park in previous correspondence and having considered and now confirmed that sports pitches do satisfy the criteria to be included on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, that Cadw now immediately undertakes a ‘spot-registration’ for the Stradey Park pitch. This will ensure the preservation of this world famous Welsh sporting pitch within the proposed housing development, and allow it to be enjoyed by locals and tourists alike.

Yours sincerely,

Vaughan Jones

P-03-317 Hijinx Funding for Arts

Petition wording

Following the disproportionate cut in the revenue funding of Hijinx Theatre we call upon the National Assembly of Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure sufficient funding is available so that the exemplary and ground breaking work undertaken by Hijinx is not threatened. This unique welsh company has spent 30 years developing opportunities for people with learning difficulties to be included at all levels and this cut will result in a serious reduction in their current provision.

Petition raised by: Mike Clark

Petition first considered by Committee: March 2011

Number of signatures: 1893

Supporting information:

- Hijinx Theatre is a professional theatre company founded in 1981 touring high quality productions to small venues throughout Wales and beyond. A large part of our remit is working with learning disabled and general community groups.
- Hijinx endeavour to cast learning disabled actors alongside professionally trained actors whenever possible, creating an inclusive cast and, as there is currently no professional drama training for talented adults with learning disabilities in Wales, this is something we are addressing as a matter of urgency with plans in development to provide such training.
- Hijinx set up the **Odyssey Theatre** project in 1999 – funded by the National Lottery up until 31st March 2011 [**not** part of the revenue grant]. Odyssey is a participatory community group for adults of all abilities who also collaborate with several local organizations Meadowbank Special School (a school for children with severe communication problems) and music students from Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama
- **Odyssey was runner up in the National Lottery Awards, Best Arts Project category in 2009.**
- **Hijinx Outreach** offers workshops and projects to people within the learning disabled community
- **Hijinx Outreach** produces **Unity Festival** – a week-long mixed ability festival of performances, workshops and other activities from companies across the world in collaboration with the WMC and Mencap Cymru – (historically funded through additional fundraising and with revenue grant support for core staff wages and general office costs.)
- Hijinx’s revenue grant in 2010/11 is £234,448 + £29,990 lottery funding for Odyssey Theatre project – a figure which represents standstill funding for the last 5 years.
- From 1st April 2011 the grant will be £160,000 to **include** Odyssey. This represents a cut of £74,448 + £29,990 = £104,438

- All ACW Quality Monitoring forms over the past three years have rated the company's work "good" or "excellent"
- ACW's decision flies in the face of the Welsh Assembly Government's priorities and is contrary to the aspirations of its own Investment Review.
- With the new grant Hijinx will not be able develop work with people with learning disabilities and it represents a radical reduction in the activity currently offered.
- There **will** be staff redundancies and a re-structuring of the company – and a marginalized community will suffer.
- Hijinx are unique and innovative – the only company in Wales who offer professional opportunities to adults with learning disabilities, both as performers and workshop assistants. Hijinx are committed to inclusive working and believe that everyone has something to offer regardless of ability.

P-03-317 Hijinx Funding for Arts - Correspondence from the petitioner to the Clerk, 30.05.2013

Hi Naomi,

I am responding to the letter from William Powell to our Chair Mike Clark, dated 27th February. Apologies for the time it has taken to get this to you and many thank for both your patience with me and the generosity of committee members in giving me more time.

Additional funding streams

Here is a table of income from 2010/11 (the year before the cut in revenue grant)

year	Total of all ACW grants – revenue & project	Total of non ACW income including earned	Total all income	% of non ACW income
2010/11 (actual)	£287,438	£124,518	£411,956	30.23%
2011/12 (actual)	£223,500	£89,258	£312,758	28.54%
2012/13 (est @ year end)	£276,500	£131,478	£404,978	32.47%
2013/14 (budget estimate)	£260,000	£145,454	£405,454	35.87%

What is clear from the table is that ACW income in 2012/13 and 2013/14 is almost back up to the level of 2010/11 – the last year before the cut. While this is hugely welcome, much of it relates to project grants. As we have discussed with members in person, while project grants are wonderful, they don't give time for meaningful, strategic forward planning. In terms of the Unity International Inclusive Arts Festival, a massive project that takes place in June each year, we hear the result of the application in mid December, 6 months before the Festival takes place. This makes planning very hard, particularly generating the 25% matching income difficult.

Ironically in 2010/11 – the last year before our revenue grant reduction – we achieved high income generation both from fees for performances and other activity and from Trusts, Foundations, Sponsorship and donations.

Unsurprisingly there was a dip in 2011/12 while the company concentrated on restructuring both activity and staff responsibilities.

During 2012/13 as the new programme of activity has bedded down, and we have delivered more training activity for adults with learning disabilities (3 days a week), daily payments for students come via Local Authority Social Services departments. In spite of this the actual net income from the one-day per week social service funded training courses is £30 per week.

The more focused drama / performance training (The Hijinx Academy) runs for two days each week is virtually cost neutral or running at a slight loss depending on how many external tutors we employ.

So while the bald figures seem to tell a healthy tale, they hide the real picture. The huge increase of work required to generate the additional funding to support the work is growing monthly. This includes shaking buckets in Sainsburys on a Saturday, as well as the hours spent filling in forms both to get the funding, and reporting back on grants and awards. The truth is that there is an expectation that we should deliver more activity with radically reduced resources, and my overwhelming concern is for the health of the four staff who are trying to hold it all together.

Between January 2012 and February 2013 we have submitted applications amounting to £330,714 to Trusts, Foundations and potential sponsors – with a 9.5% success rate. We have been diligent and rigorous in attempts to generate additional income.

The affect on our work

Performances of professional touring productions have fallen massively as you would expect.

	2009/10			2010/11			2011/12			2012/13		
	Wh ole tour	Wal es	Engla nd	Wh ole tour	Wal es	Engla nd & Scotl and	Wh ole tour	Wal es	Engla nd	Wh ole tour	Wal es	Engla nd
Number of performances	59	35	24	72	38	34	23	14	9	27	19	8
Weeks of touring	17			19			6½			6½		
Total audience	3,390	1,976	1,408	5,426	2,975	1,209	1,751	1,131	620	1,794	1,228	566

Our participatory work has increased with the change of programme. We now deliver 3 days of performance training workshops for adults with learning disabilities each week throughout the year. This equates to 500 sessions for 21 people during the year. While this is a new opportunity for the students, they are all based in or very close to Cardiff. Our Wales-wide work (which was our professional touring) has reduced massively.

Similarly the **Unity Festival**, while attracting people from all over Wales and further afield, takes place in Cardiff. The majority of the people who attended events or took part in workshops during the 2012 Festival were based in south Wales. There were 28 workshop sessions, with

285 participants, 105 with disabilities. Performances at Unity Festival generated an audience of 7,259.

Forgive the length of this reply. As you can see there is not a straightforward answer to the committee's very straightforward question. We have radically changed what we do, who we do it for and where we do it. Small communities throughout Wales now have far less access to professional theatre performances by Hijinx Theatre, but people in Cardiff and the surrounding locality have far more opportunities to be involved in inclusive arts activity.

We continue to struggle, we continue to strive to achieve quality in everything we do and remain grateful for the support we do receive. In this very difficult financial climate, we continue to believe passionately that people all over Wales of all abilities have the right to experience quality arts activities close to their home. We continue to explore new and innovate ways to make this happen.

Thank you to all members for the time and trouble you have taken considering our petition, and the interest you have taken in our situation.

With best wishes,

Val

Val Hill
Executive Director
Hijinx Theatre
Wales Millennium Centre
Bute Place
Cardiff Bay, CF10 5AL

Agenda Item 7.11

P-04-477 Support for the Control of Dogs (Wales) Bill

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to proceed with the Control of Dogs (Wales) Bill.

We, the undersigned, residents of Wales, call on the Welsh Government to proceed with its Control of Dogs (Wales) Bill in tackling the issue of dangerous and menacing dogs and not rely on the piecemeal proposals of the UK Government set out in its draft Anti-social Behaviour Bill and initially explained in the its White Paper “Putting Victims First, More Effective Responses to Anti-social Behaviour”.

We agree with the Welsh Government’s statement “The clear advantage of a Dog Control Notice (DCN) over all existing legislation is that a court may never become involved thereby reducing the burden on public finance” and we believe that the UK Governments proposals involving 4 different enforcement tools, namely-

- Injunctions to prevent nuisance and annoyance;
- Crime Behaviour Orders
- Dispersal Powers
- Community Protection Notices

two of which - Injunctions and Crime Behaviour Orders - must be initiated by applications to the court, are unduly complicated, cumbersome, bureaucratic and will lead to delay.

We believe the single all-encompassing Dog Control Notice proposed for Wales is by far the superior approach and we urge the Welsh Government to frame a law based on this concept as originally planned. We draw the Welsh Government’s attention to (i) the highly critical conclusions of the House of Commons Select Committee on Environment, Food and Rural Affairs report “Dog Control and Welfare” which called the UK Government’s proposals as “simplistic” and “woefully inadequate” & recommended DEFRA and the Home Office to introduce Dog Control Notices and (ii) to the fact that the campaign coalition of Unions, Animal Charities, Police, Vets are also unhappy with the proposals.

Petition raised by: Cllr. Dilwar Ali

Date petition first considered by Committee: 30 April 2013

Number of signatures : 1119



Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref
William Powell AC/AM
Chair,
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay

22 May 2013

Don Bill,

Thank you for your letter of 7 May enclosing a petition from Councillor Dilwar Ali.

I recently met Councillor Ali with Julie Morgan AM to hear his concerns about the legislative proposals contained in the Home Office's Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill which was introduced into Parliament on 9 May.

As I said in my written statement, the Welsh Government is committed to ensuring that out-of-control and dangerous dogs are dealt with effectively. We are committed to a statutory framework that will make it unlawful for dogs to be dangerously out-of-control on private premises and committed to the protection for assistance dogs.

I strongly believe in the preventative agenda of dealing with out of control dogs before they become dangerously out of control and that is why the Welsh Government remains committed to promoting responsible dog ownership to protect children, families and communities but also to improve dog welfare which is often at the heart of the problem.

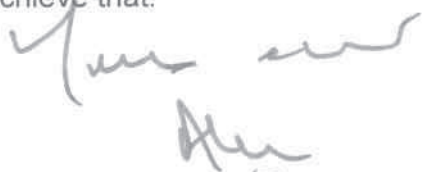
I believe there is a need to bring about cultural change in dog ownership, which cannot be achieved by legislation alone. I also want to raise awareness around the proper care of dogs in areas such as socialisation and training which is vital in dealing with the problem of dangerous dogs.

I have given careful consideration to how these objectives could best be achieved so that our children, families and communities are better protected.

I have met Ministers in the UK Government to ensure that the necessary collaborative arrangements are in place to provide enforcement authorities in Wales as well as England with the right tools to be able to deal effectively with problem dogs and their owners.

Whilst I fully understand why Councillor Dilwar Ali and petitioners want to see dog control notices introduced, I can assure them and Members of your Committee that whatever the name of the tools that are used to deal with out of control dogs and their owners, my objective is to ensure that those tools are appropriate and effectively fit for purpose.

I strongly believe that the most important issue is having a fully trained and effective enforcement regime in place across Wales as well as England and my intention is to work to achieve that.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alun Davies', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Alun Davies AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol a Bwyd
Minister for Natural Resources and Food

**P-04-477 Support for the Control of Dogs (Wales) Bill -
Correspondence from the petitioner to the clerking team,
06.06.2013**

Mr William Powell AM, Petition Committee (Chair)
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Dear Mr Powell,

Thank you for the response from the Petition Committee date 31st May 2013.

At the moment, we don't know whether the negotiations with UK Government at Westminster will result in the measures we want in Wales. We would therefore like to keep the petition alive until we know what the results of the UK Government, Westminster negotiations are.

Regards
Dilwar Ali

Agenda Item 7.12

P-04-454 : Call to end Councillor and Assembly Member Dual Role.

Petition wording:

The petitioner asks the Welsh Government to bring forward legislation to bar the practice currently exhibited by 7 currently serving Assembly Members to hold TWO elected positions simultaneously, namely holding office as a Councillor within the Welsh Jurisdiction and also holding office as an elected Assembly Member in the National Assembly of Wales.

Petition raised by: Nortridge Perrott

Date petition first considered by Committee: 29 January 2013

Number of signatures: 52

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Busnes y Llywodraeth
Minister for Local Government and Government Business



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref

William Powell AM
Chair Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay

22 May 2013

Dear Bill,

You wrote to my predecessor and the Council General seeking views on amending legislation to prevent Assembly Members standing for election to a principal council in Wales or for serving councillors to stand for election to the National Assembly for Wales.

I am responding on behalf of the Welsh Government. I understand the reasoning behind the petition. I will consider the matter carefully ahead of the next elections to the National Assembly for Wales. Any proposal to amend the legislation will be subject to full consultation.

Regards,

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Busnes y Llywodraeth
Minister for Local Government and Government Business

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400
Correspondence.lesley.Griffiths@wales.gsi.gov.uk
Printed on 100% recycled paper



William Powell AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Your ref:
Our ref: PO412/RB/VH

26 February 2013

Dear William

Thank you for the letter from the Petitions Committee regarding the ability of Assembly Members to hold more than one elected office.

Section 16 of The Government of Wales Act 2006 sets out the terms under which someone may not stand as a candidate to the Assembly and a Statutory Instrument (The National Assembly for Wales Disqualification Order) outlining which specific offices preclude candidacy is passed before each Assembly election.

This is not an issue that the Commission has discussed and therefore does not have a view on it.

Rosemary

Rosemary Butler AM, Presiding Officer

Bae Caerdydd
Caerdydd
CF99 1NA

Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Ffôn/Tel: 029 2089 8911

Ebost/Email: private.office@wales.gov.uk

**Y Pwyllgor Materion Cyfansoddiadol a Deddfwriaethol
Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee**

William Powell AM
Chair of Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Tŷ Hywel
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National
Assembly for
Wales



21 February 2013

Dear William

Petition from Nortridge Perrott

Thank you for your letter of 6 February 2013 regarding the petition from Nortridge Perrott.

The Committee considered the petition at its meeting on 18 February 2013. On this occasion, Members agreed that it would be inappropriate for the Committee to look at the issue contained in the petition in isolation from other electoral issues.

In light of this I have written to the Business Committee and I attach a copy of the letter.

Yours sincerely

**David Melding AM
Chair**

Bae Caerdydd
Caerdydd
CF99 1NA

Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Ffôn / Tel: 029 2089 8008
E-bost / Email: olga.lewis@wales.gov.uk

**Y Pwyllgor Materion Cyfansoddiadol a Deddfwriaethol
Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee**

Rosemary Butler AM
Chair of Business Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Tŷ Hywel
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National
Assembly for
Wales



21 February 2013

Petition from Nortridge Perrott

The Petitions Committee wrote to us to consider the Nortridge Perrott petition. A copy of the letter is enclosed.

The Committee considered the petition at its meeting on 18 February 2013. On this occasion, Members agreed that it would be inappropriate for the Committee to look at the issue contained in the petition in isolation from other electoral issues.

We do not believe it is for this Committee to initiate a piece of work on electoral arrangements in Wales but would welcome your views on this matter

Yours sincerely

**David Melding AM
Chair**

Bae Caerdydd
Caerdydd
CF99 1NA

Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Ffôn / Tel: 029 2089 8008
E-bost / Email: olga.lewis@wales.gov.uk

P-04-454 Call to end Councillor and Assembly Member Dual Role - Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Chair, 02.06.2013

WRITTEN SUBMISSION: Petitions Committee ---18/6/2013.—OPEN DOCUMENT

Deadline 7/6/2013—Local Government and Government Business

7.12

P-04-454 Call to end Councillor and Assembly Member Dual Role

For Inclusion -----Committee Deliberations.-18-06-2013.-----

- ACTION request lead Petitioner;-N PERROTT
- ARGUMENT provision lead petitioner:
- PROCEDURAL request lead petitioner.

ACTION :

The Petition Committee has the following options:

Action on a Petition

23.8 If a petition is admissible, the Presiding Officer must refer that petition to a responsible committee.

23.9 The responsible committee must:

- refer the petition to the government, any other committee of the Assembly or any other person or body for them to take such action as they consider appropriate;
- report to the Assembly; or
- take any other action which the committee considers appropriate.

23.10 The responsible committee must notify the petitioner of any action taken under Standing Order 23.9.

ACTION POINTS**

Petition Committee refer to a RESPONSIBLE committee—it is suggested CLACttee with a view to drafting amending legislation. *to bar the possibility of AM's holding simultaneously membership of a Principal Unitary Authority concurrently with Membership of the National Assembly of Wales.**

Petition Committee report to Assembly that a reference is to be made to the Electoral Commission to seek its view on the “ending of the dual role” and seeking from the Electoral Commission case examples from other Jurisdictions.[USA,EU jurisdictions].

Op cit-Electoral Commission

Prioritising our regulatory activity

Audit, advice and campaign monitoring

December 2010

(Updated May 2012)

2.27 By definition we will not hold information of this kind about every registered party, and so it cannot be used to create formal profiles. We will log and collate relevant information as we receive it, but will not publish it. **Our Advice and Guidance Team will refer to the information we hold when considering whether it is appropriate to offer advice on our own initiative. This process is underpinned by our horizon scanning activity which gathers media reports about emerging trends and likely areas on which we may need to target in future.** The types of information we will log are set out in Appendix C and can be grouped under three headings:

- public profile
- governance and capacity
- external factors

Petition Committee in response to Ministerial correspondence from WG to ask for resource to be deployed to assist the drafting of an amending measure to give effect to the proposed change to legislation required in amending the National Assembly Order.

Under Nat Assembly –STANDING ORDER

24.14 Legislation, which is neither government legislation, committee legislation nor Commission legislation, is referred to as “Member legislation”.

Where none of the THREE possible routes to legislative change are forthcoming

The Petition Committee via the Assembly report to Members who would be invited to

–Canvas any views and interest from AM’s who would be interested to –Bring forward draft legislation in a Private Assembly Members capacity as Assembly

Member legislation to allow the Drafting, Consultation and Tabling of the proposed legislative change – if any of the available THREE avenues prove not to come to fruition.

PROCEDURAL:

General Principles

11. The law requires that the interests of parties who are affected by a proposed Order are dealt with fairly, justly and openly; that all the evidence is fully considered and that decisions are based only on material considerations to which all the parties have had access. The Assembly's decisions, and hence any Order which is authorised by the Assembly, can be challenged in the courts if these principles are not followed.

The 29-1-13 Petition Committee meeting did 5 things:

1. Contacted the Minister

I am responding on behalf of the Welsh Government. I understand the reasoning behind the petition. I will consider the matter carefully ahead of the next elections to the National Assembly for Wales. Any proposal to amend the legislation will be subject to full consultation.

2. Wrote to CLAC committee[see e mail -18/2/13-asking for FULL transparency]
3. Wrote to Assembly Commission .

Section 16 of The Government of Wales Act 2006 sets out the terms under which someone may not stand as a candidate to the Assembly and a Statutory Instrument (The National Assembly for Wales Disqualification Order) outlining which specific offices preclude candidacy is passed before each Assembly election.

4. Wrote to Counsel General---indicating whether there are any legal impediment to change .—no advice or view has been adduced in correspondence.—save for-reference in Minister's letter.-COUNSEL[typo]

Dear Bill,

You wrote to my predecessor and the Council General seeking views on amending legislation to prevent Assembly Members standing for election to a principal council in Wales or for serving councillors to stand for election to the National Assembly for Wales.

5. Requested a legal briefing- no advice or briefing available.

-**REQUEST**Legal advice is required to be disclosed.to petitioner.**

The CLAC deliberations were held in CAMERA [18-2-13] and details of correspondence from PETITIONS COMMITTEE to CLAC have been redacted.

ACTION POINT-**

The LEAD petitioner requests that all e mail traffic, letters, correspondence and memoranda ,notes of meetings be made available in a BUNDLE to the lead Petitioner in the interests of transparency and due process and General Principles of Law @11 above.

Summary-

- It is a straightforward task to amend the Order.
- It is straightforward requirement to determine the efficacy of the change both in principle and policy terms.
- It is straightforward to open the proposed change to wider debate and consideration.

NORTRIDGE PERROTT

P454-Lead Petitioner/

Agenda Item 7.13

P-04-435 : Wales & Border Railways Franchise 2018 to be Operated on a Not-for-Dividend Basis

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure that the next the Wales & the Border franchise is operated on a not-for-dividend basis.

Arriva has a monopoly over much of the railways in Wales and the Border; this does not encourage "cheaper prices and better standards through competition" as capitalism intended, due to that monopoly. In 2018 the contract with Arriva is up for renewal. A "not-for-dividends" pricing system would increase the amount of passengers and allow more people to work as they'd be able to afford to travel creating a knock on effect on the welsh GDP and also, in by-product of proving the system, give England more reason for doing likewise.

Petition raised by: Merlyn Cooper

Date petition first considered by Committee: 6 November 2012

Number of signatures: 35

Edwina Hart MBE CStJ AC / AM
Gweinidog yr Economi, Gwyddoniaeth a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for Economy, Science and Transport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-435
Ein cyf/Our ref EH/01059/13

William Powell AM

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

10 May 2013

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Petitions Committee, advising me of the petition that you are currently considering. I note that the petition is calling on the Welsh Government to ensure that the next Wales and Borders franchise is operated on a not-for-dividend basis.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edwina Hart', written over a faint circular stamp.

P-04-435 Wales & Border Franchise 2018 to be Operated on a Not-for-Divided Basis - Correspondence from the Petitioner, 24.05.13

"In response Carl Sergeant's correspondence, I'm given confidence by his level of realisticness, I'm aware that multi-national European contracts are a complicated matter and that kind of care to detail is essential but I would say with the new contract not being until 2018 there are 5 years to manage any and all bureaucracy involved.

Is that time not ample to consider and secure a yey or ney?

Thank you for carrying my petition forward for further consideration, I think it would do physical good for the people of Wales."

If you are aware of what I should look for to further evidence this, please let me know, I'm happy to do some leg work.

Merlyn Nathan Cooper

P-04-438 : Shopping Access

Petition wording:

We the undersigned call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to:

Investigate the provision of off-street disabled parking in line with Department for Transport Guidance

Create a law stating the minimum number, and dimensions of disabled parking spaces Investigate the current minimum size for disabled spaces to find out if they take into account vans used to transport wheelchair users

Set a standard, higher fine for misusing disabled space across all car parks that is enforced on first offence

Make taxi companies carry the correct clamps and inertia reels for use with motorized wheelchairs

Investigate whether current disabled toilet provision is of adequate size for users of motorised wheelchairs and attendant carers

Create a scheme where shops with fixed, or portable ramps display a badge in their windows

Petition raised by: Mencap Cymru & Ysgol Erw'r Delyn

Date petition first considered by Committee: 20 November 2012

Number of signatures: 55

P-04-438 Shopping Access - Correspondence from St. Davids Dewi Sant to the Clerk, 22.05.13

Naomi,

I am emailing you in response to the letter from William Powell to Mark Nott on May 7th. I note the comment about increasing the amount of signage for the 'Changing Places' toilet. We don't plan to make any changes for the following reasons;

- Given the level of disability of the customers using the facility, we know that a trip to St David's has to be carefully planned and they would find out about the facilities before they left home.
- This has been confirmed to me by many representatives of various disability groups informally and they assure me that networks are in place to ensure our customers are aware.
- Feedback from our Security, Cleaning and Information desk teams says that it is very rare that they get asked where the facility is, meaning that the customers who need to use the facility are aware of it's whereabouts.

Kind regards

Steven

Steven Madeley
Centre Director
St David's Dewi Sant

P-04-438 Shopping Access - Correspondence from Cardiff County Council to the Chair, 24.05.13

Dear Mr Powell

Thank you for your letter dated 7th May 2013 in which you present the concerns of the Petitions Committee in connection with disabled people's access to the city of Cardiff.

Firstly let me take this opportunity to thank you for bringing these issues to our attention, but also take this opportunity to inform you of one of our key actions that we have in place to improve the accessibility of the city.

In 2010, as a result of the major redevelopment of the city centre, Cardiff Council employed a specific Access Officer and created the Cardiff Council Access Focus Group. Both these objectives have been very successful in improving the way that the disabled community's voice is represented in our schemes policies and projects. This also ensures that we comply with our duties within the Equalities Act 2010, building regulations and a number of other legislative requirements.

I would really welcome a representative from the petitioners to meet with our Access Officer, Dr Robert Gravelle, who will be happy to go through each issue you have raised. I would also like to invite a representatives of Mencap Cymru to the next meeting of the Cardiff Council Access Focus Group.

I will ask Dr Gravelle to contact you and arrange a suitable meeting to see how we can in partnership move forward with our shared objectives.

Regards

Jon House
Chief Executive

P-04-438 Shopping Access – Correspondence from the petitioner to the Chair,. 06.06.2013

Thursday 6th June 2013

Response to Correspondence from Cardiff County Council and St Davids Dewi Sant.

Mencap Cymru welcomes Cardiff County Council's invitation to meet with the young people from Ysgol Erw'r Delyn and look forward to arranging a meeting.

With regards to the letter from St Davids Dewi Sant, Mencap Cymru accepts that it needs to do more to publicize the existence and location of the Changing Places Toilets around the country. A stick man sign was designed for changing places toilets along the same lines as standard male / female and standard disabled signs. Like all facility signs it was designed to be recognizable for people with communication issues. If this sign is not displayed alongside other facilities it makes it harder to spread the word.

The young people we have worked with were unaware of the Changing Places facility despite visiting the centre on numerous occasions. In the past they have correctly assumed that a standard disabled toilet was available and visited it without asking centre staff or making advanced plans.

We also accept that sadly, many disabled people and their carers need to carefully plan trips out. However we believe that we should strive as a society to arrive at a place where people with complex needs can assume that adequate facilities are available, much like the rest of the population does. Obviously this is not yet the case, but we believe that small changes, like erecting a sign are the types of changes that make real differences to people's lives. These are the changes that people really notice in their day-to-day business.

Taxis

Mencap Cymru would also like to highlight again the issue of taxis not being able to transport users of all types of wheelchairs. Earlier this week a volunteer was told by a taxi company that he couldn't be strapped or clamped into the taxi because they didn't have the correct equipment. They routinely send out taxis with ramps but no clamps, the assumption being that a wheelchair user would be ok for the journey.

P-04-438 Shopping Access - Correspondence from the petitioner to the clerking team, 30.05.2013

Hi Kayleigh,

I have come across this article which explains why crossings don't beep and how blind people use a little known about tactile button that tells them when to cross (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs-ouch-22706881>) It also states that local authorities are not legally obliged to make crossings accessible.

As the committee had asked for information around this at their last meeting I thought it might be of some use to them.

Regards

Paul Hunt
Participation Project Manager
Mencap Cymru

Agenda Item 7.15

P-04-475 Wanted – Buses for Meirionnydd

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to:

- Review the funding for rural bus services to ensure adequate levels of service for the whole of Gwynedd but particularly south Meirionnydd.
- Consider funding to be ensured for additional services to improve access to health services, education, and employment, and thus support the economy and tourism of the area.

Petition raised by: Barbara Snowball

Date petition first considered by Committee: 30 April 2013

Number of signatures : 174

Edwina Hart MBE CStJ AC / AM
Gweinidog yr Economi, Gwyddoniaeth a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for Economy, Science and Transport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref p-04-475
Ein cyf/Our ref EH/01254/13

William Powell AM

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

21 May 2013

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter dated 7 May 2013 regarding the recent petition your Committee has received from Barbara Snowball.

I remain committed to the provision of attractive, affordable and sustainable public transport services to rural communities across Wales. In 2013-14 I have set aside a budget of £25m under the Regional Transport Services Grant to help local authority's local bus services and community transport.

I have also asked the Regional Transport Consortia to prepare new Regional Bus Strategies, which will prioritise more clearly how this funding is used. As part of this work I have asked them to ensure that good access is maintained to key education, training, employment, health and shopping facilities.

I have asked Officials to ensure that Taith and TraCC, the regional bodies with responsibility for co-ordinating bus funding in the south Meirionnydd area, are working closely with Gwynedd Council to ensure that key bus service links are improved.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400
Correspondence.edwina.Hart@Wales.gsi.gov.uk
Printed on 100% recycled paper

P-04-475 Wanted - Buses for Meirionnydd – Correspondence from the petitioner to the clerking team, 04.06.2013

Dear Sian,

Thank you for your invitation to forward our views to be considered at the next Petitions meeting on Tuesday, 18th June.

(1) We would urge you to ask the Committee to ensure that our area is given fair consideration in the allocation of the RTSG grant given by the Welsh Assembly for the purpose of improving services. We note from Edwina Hart's letter that she wishes to facilitate good access to key education, training, employment, health and shopping facilities, which are to a large extent denied in this area.

(2) We would like the opportunity for a "pilot" run of a modified service for a year. If such a pilot was initiated Mawddach Bus Users would use the medium of the local press including "Sibrydion", a community magazine (delivered free to every household in eight villages in south Meirionnydd, and on sale in a further nine, and further copies placed in public venues), to raise awareness of travelling opportunities with the aim of increasing the number of bus users.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

Barbara Snowball
Mawddach Bus Users

P-04-432 : Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to recommend that the armed forces should not go into schools to recruit.

Britain is the only country in the European Union that allows a military presence in its schools. Britain is the only country of the 27 European Union countries to recruit 16-year-old children to the armed forces. The armed forces target their recruitment in schools in the most deprived areas of Wales.

Petition raised by: The Fellowship of Reconciliation

Date petition first considered by Committee: 6 November 2012

Number of signatures: 374 Associated petition collected approximately 700 signatures

Submission by Cymdeithas y Cymod (the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Wales) to the Petitions Committee of the National Assembly for Wales on the fellowship's petition, which asks the Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to recommend that the armed forces should not visit schools to recruit children.

Cymdeithas y Cymod has presented this petition to the committee on the basis of children's rights and education.

Article 13 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child declares: "The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice." This makes it the responsibility of the Welsh Minister for education to ensure that careers information in Welsh schools provides an accurate and balanced picture of all careers, including a career in the armed forces. Not all employers go into schools, but the armed forces do so in order to recruit children. Over the last two years, the Army visited secondary schools in Wales 1,200 times, visiting 74% of all secondary schools in Wales. In the same period, the Armed Forces in their entirety visited only 30% of schools in London. Obviously, as a poor country, Wales is being targeted by the Army.

The Armed Forces also hold open days for school children, particularly in Bala and Margam Park on an annual basis. The Armed Forces do not provide balanced and accurate careers advice because they do not talk about the right to leave, the period of service, or the extent of the risk of injury or death. Also, schools that allow their pupils to go to the open days held by the Armed Forces deprive those children of a full day of education in school. Missing a whole day of school is considered to be a serious matter if a parent keeps a child at home for no reason or when teachers strike according to the education Minister himself. These open days include an exhibition showing tanks playing at war in an appealing way, whereby nobody is injured or killed. Here is a link to an event held by the Army for school children in Bala:- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0G68Ug45Hyc>

The British Government has admitted in its submission, under Article 8 paragraph 1 of the UNCRC Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, that "Army recruiting initiatives include presentations in schools by Army careers advisers (ACA), a variety of Army youth team and Army recruiting team activities, attachments and visits to units, school fairs, Combined Cadet Force (CCF), advertising and marketing initiatives, membership of the Army's Camouflage Club."

Britain is the only European Union member state that recruits children to the Armed Forces or allows their Armed Forces to go into schools. The UNCRC said in 2008 that Britain should reconsider its policy of recruiting children to the Armed Forces. We are aware, of course, that the Armed Forces are not devolved but the National Assembly could at least encourage schools not to invite the armed forces into schools to recruit Welsh children nor to allow children to miss a day of school to go one of the Armed Forces' open days.

There is an educational argument, in that the level of education that is available to children who join the Armed Forces is lower than that which is available in state schools according to the Wolf Report 2011 by the Department for Education in England. The level of the numeracy and literacy curriculum in the Armed Forces is lower than the recommended level for that age group. Most of the education that is provided comprises military skills, such as using arms, which are not transferrable to the world outside the forces. Training children to use arms that can kill people is also repellent and immoral in our view, as a fellowship of pacifist Christians. We are aware that education in the Armed Forces is not a devolved matter in Wales but recommending that the Armed Forces should not go to recruit children in the first place would be a step towards keeping Welsh children in schools, where they can receive the best possible education.

Arfon Rhys

Secretary

Cymdeithas y Cymod (the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Wales)

To demand an end to a morally indefensible practise that needs to be contested.

Following last year's successful referendum on delivering greater legislative powers to Wales, and since education falls under the Assembly's remit, there can be no better time or place in which to raise the issue of MOD recruitment in schools. The petition that we are launching this evening will hopefully raise awareness of such practises, but also aims to have the issue debated by the Assembly, utilising its concession to direct democracy, the e-Petition facility.

At the moment it's the head teachers prerogative who goes into schools. In Wales we have a political chamber, a democratic sphere, our own elected representatives who should debate the issue. We should catch up with the other states who don't recruit on schoolyards, and with the recommendations of expert international human rights bodies. There has been no formal government review or parliamentary debate on this issue in the UK for the past one hundred years and we feel the time should come to discuss it.

My co-organizer Leon and myself have found many obstacles along the way, one being that out of the many Labour AMs we wrote to, we received only one reply back and that was to inform us this individual would not be involved in debating such practises. Labour deems such a campaign as extreme or outlandish, yet outlawing of MOD recruitment in schools would only bring Wales up to speed with prevailing international standards and previous comments by the United Nations.

Out of the 27 EU countries, the United Kingdom is the only one to recruit within schools. Doubters about a prospective ban, those who often argue in favour of 'opportunities for poverty-stricken youth' and overseas adventure, need be informed that this cause is not a general comment aimed at the armed forces as a whole, but aimed at the more pointed target, the specific issue of the MoD's active pursuit of minors.

Why must there be an MoD presence in schools when there is no presence in other EU countries? Compared with minors in Britain, children across the European Union have some protection from eager military recruiters. They are deemed perfectly capable of walking down to the recruitment offices on their own prerogative at a more suitable age for making such major decisions. Why can't UK children be the same? The contrast between UK practises and standards elsewhere is as stark as it is shameful.

In 2008 the National Union of Teachers voted to ban misleading propaganda in schools, calling for a more balanced view of army life to be given to children. The image of military life that is currently presented is false, and fails to mention any of the potential enormously negative consequences of signing up. Having succumbed to the glamorised picture of military life as a source of unique learning opportunities and the world as an endless adventure playground, youngsters face the very real prospect of Post Traumatic Stress, long term mental illness, poverty and homelessness. The stories from post traumatic stress charities are all similar in the sense, many go away at 18, come back at 21, but their lives are over. And none of them had been prepared for such devastating consequences.

In 2007 the government spent a record £89 million on army recruitment campaigns – almost £7,000 per recruit, and an increase of £3.6 million on the previous year. We feel that, when it comes to the government spending aimed at our youngsters' future prospects, there are far more positive available options. More positive options than tying those under the age of 18,

still considered children into a legally binding contract, which after a six month trial period is very hard to break.

In terms of children getting a further education, what kind of a country do we live in if the only way a teenager can get an education is with the permanent risk of death lurking around the corner? No young person should feel obliged to join the armed forces in order to fill an educational vacuum, nor should the MoD be required to fill a gap left by the inadequacies in the educational system.

Freedom of Information requests have proven how MOD recruiters disproportionately target the poorest communities. And considering that Wales is one of the poorest regions of the UK and Europe, there should be no surprise to learn that Wales ends up sending a disproportionate number of youngsters into the military relative to its size of the UK population. Why should the poor be expected to risk their lives much more than children from better-off areas, simply as means for paid work?

The bottom line of the argument is if you're not old enough to vote, how can you be old enough to decide if you want to give your life? One can't be an economic asset in one sense but not another.

Wales has an image of itself as a relatively progressive country. The Welsh Government should take a stand, and take the moral lead on the issue; not wait, as ever for Scotland to first. Will Welsh politicians have the guts to forge ahead on something the UK-level government drags its heels on – and for all the wrong reasons.

Finally we would like to thank Arfon Rhys of Cymdeithas Y Cymod for agreeing with our request that he head this campaign.

1. Introduction to ForcesWatch
2. Overview of this evidence
3. The situation in Wales - answers to Petition Committee questions
4. Unpacking 'recruitment'

1. Introduction to ForcesWatch

ForcesWatch is a British-based campaigning organisation. We seek to hold the state to account on the ethical integrity of its recruitment of young people into the armed forces. We advocate changes to policy, raise public awareness of the issues and challenge the armed forces on their recruitment practices, especially those aimed at the youngest and most disadvantaged groups.

2. Overview of this evidence

One of our main areas of concern is the extent to which the armed forces are given access to young people within education. We are undertaking research on the extent and character of this activity using information within the public domain and through Freedom of Information requests to the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Department for Education.

We are aware that other organisations submitting evidence to this consultation have cited reports and recommendations relating to this issue, such as the 2008 UN report on UK's compliance with Convention on the Rights of the Child optional protocol relating to children in armed conflict ¹, *Informed Choice? Armed forces recruitment practice in the United Kingdom* ² (written by a member of the ForcesWatch Steering Committee), *Mind the Gap: Education for minors in the British armed forces* ³ and others. These documents are essential to any consideration of the issue and they outline key arguments supporting our claim that military engagement with young people should be avoided as it is not benign and is potentially damaging to the future interests and opportunities of those the young people they seek to influence.

Our evidence does not aim to further explain these arguments, but to detail the extent of the presence of the armed forces in schools and other educational institutions during the last two full academic years: 2010-11 and 2011-12.

We then consider the argument presented by the armed forces and the MoD that the visits to schools are not for recruitment purposes. We argue that they constitute activities leading towards recruitment with many of the activities being specifically about careers in the forces. We also state that the armed forces are using visits to schools in order to positively influence young people's opinions and that more balanced view of life in the armed forces and its activities needs to be presented within educational environments.

3. Armed Forces visits to schools in Wales, 2010 to 2012

The data presented here was received from the British Army under the Freedom of Information Act. The data relates to the academic years of 2010-2011 and 2011-2012. The original information received included details of visits made to FE Colleges, schools for special needs and primary schools, but for the needs of this submission only data for state and independent secondary schools is considered. It is worth mentioning, however, that FE Colleges are visited significantly more often than any other education institution. In the original information received there were many visits that were not to one specific institution, but rather to

the town hall, or a youth club, or, in one instance - a twice-weekly running club in a small town. None of these visits are counted in the analysis submitted here. Finally, when comparing with data from other areas, it is important to note that the data for Wales refers only to the army and not all three forces.

For general information about the type of visits made to schools and the activities undertaken, please see the *Military Activity in UK Schools* briefing in Appendix 1.

Welsh secondary schools were visited by the army just over 1200 times during the two year period. The break-down by percentage of the types of visits made to Welsh secondary schools is presented in Table 1 below. The greatest number of visits made by the army were focused on mock interviews and interview techniques, general presentations (which include a section on the types of careers available in the military), and Personal Development Activities (generally outdoor, team-building activities). Presentations and activities exclusively focused entirely on careers (such as stalls at careers fairs, presentations about early entry to the military, etc...) made up 7.5% of visits (equivalent to nearly 100 visits).

The Challenge Index for Wales lists 219 state secondary schools in Wales for the academic years 2010-11 and 2011-12. During that time, the Army had visited 163, or 74%, of them. To put this in a national context, in London all three armed forces had visited less than 30% of state schools and in Scotland over 85% were visited by the three forces. The army alone visited Welsh state schools an average of twice a year during that period (compared with just once in London for all three services and twice in Scotland).

Within Wales schools with a more disadvantaged demographic (based on the Welsh Multiple Deprivation Index and measuring the average percentage over a three year period of students eligible for free school meals, and the percentage of students living in the most deprived 20% of Wales) were not visited a significant number more times than those with less deprived demographics. However, the high average number of visits during a year compared to other areas in the UK suggests that there is increased engagement of the armed forces with local authority schools in Wales as a whole compared to, for example, the South East of England where the number of visits is substantially lower.

There is however, a very striking difference between the level of engagement with independent schools compared to that with state schools. Of the 21 independent schools registered with the Welsh Independent Schools Council, only six, or 29% have been visited by the army compared to 75% for state schools. Furthermore, these schools were visited an average of just 1.5 times over the two year period, less than half that of their state equivalents.

Table 1 - Breakdown of type of visits to Welsh secondary schools 2010 to 2012

Type of visit	Percentage	Further notes
Interview techniques/Mock interviews	22.6%	One-on-one interview practice and whole classroom workshops
General Presentations	21%	General overview of Army work/role, with section on types of careers available in Army
Personal Development Activities	20.6%	Mostly outdoor activities focusing on team-building and leadership
Curriculum enrichment	12%	Including presentations to engineering, public services, and other vocational courses students
Participation in routine school activities	8.3%	Including induction days, industry days, certificate presentations, staff meetings, etc...
Careers focused activities	7.5%	Events with careers in title, including 'early joining' presentations to under-16s
Army focused workshops	2.4%	Activities with Army focus, such as 'Build a Barracks', 'Force Multiplier', etc...
Citizenship & Terrorism presentation	1.9%	Specific presentation apparently delivered to 24 schools during this period

Enterprise/business activities	1.6%	Common across country - Armed Forces regularly invited by schools to deliver and contribute to business/enterprise focused events
Fitness/sport focused activities	1.3%	Running clubs, fitness assessments, etc...
Mentoring	1.3%	Unknown what this actually looks like
Combined Cadet Forces	0.1%	Only one visit recorded to CCF

Further analysis of this data is available on request.

4. Unpacking recruitment

It is likely that in response to the Petitions Committee's call for evidence, the MoD or one of the three services will respond with a statement that they do not 'recruit' in schools and that they are only invited in at the bequest of a teacher. This statement has been issued numerous times in response to the research undertaken by ForcesWatch. Here is our statement on their activities in schools should be considered to be recruitment.

- i. *The MoD state that the armed forces only visit schools following an invitation from a member of staff*

This statement means very little as no external visitor would ever visit a school without an invitation. The key point to consider is the terms by which an invitation is gained. Following extensive consultation with colleagues who work in delivering Information, Advice and Guidance on Higher Education (IAG), an invitation to a school is gained by approaching them first offering what services you can.

The armed forces, like any organisation regularly visiting schools, normally has to approach them first. The aim is to build up a relationship with staff at the school and establish regular annual (or more frequent) visits. Of course, it does happen that some schools get in touch requesting services, but this occurs on a minority of occasions, as generally (with the exception of careers advisors whose job is to contact organisations like these) teachers are too busy to actively pursue external visitors. ForcesWatch has evidence of the letters sent by the Armed Forces to local schools offering their services to corroborate this claim.

- ii. *The MoD state that the armed forces under no circumstances undertake recruitment activities in schools*

For a full analysis of why we know this to be untrue, see our briefing on *Military Activity in UK Schools* (Appendix 1). Briefly, the evidence for our claim that recruitment is at the heart of armed forces engagement with education comes from the MoD itself; the Defence Youth Engagement Review of 2011 and various other internal MoD reports and documents are quite clear that the overarching rationale for engaging with young people is one of recruitment and the need to influence 'future opinion-formers'. ForcesWatch has also made multiple Freedom of Information requests, which all demonstrate that a significant proportion of armed forces' visits to schools include attending careers-related events and activities, such as presentations about the work of the forces (which include detailed descriptions of the different careers available in the armed forces) and offering more general careers advice such as mock interviews and CV workshops. Some young people go on to pre-recruitment activities such as Insight interviews and courses which are designed to offer a taste of what life is like in the army.

However, the main point to consider is the absurd distinction the MoD is making by claiming that recruitment is only the act of signing on the dotted line. Other organisations visiting schools, attending the exact same events as the Armed Forces including universities, local employers and major national firms, would all define

this activity as recruitment but none of which would 'recruit' in the sense that students would sign a contract or have an interview in situ.

ForcesWatch
16 April 2013

¹ Committee on the Rights of the Child, (2008) *Concluding Observations on the initial report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland under the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict* (UN Doc: CRC/C/OPAC/GBR/CO/1)), para.13.

² David Gee, *Informed choice? Armed forces recruitment practice in the United Kingdom*, www.informedchoice.org.uk accessed 19.3.13

³ *Mind the Gap: Education for minors in the British armed forces*, Child Soldiers International, July 2012,

Appendix 1

Military activity in UK schools

October 2012

This briefing outlines the methods and rationale of the military's engagement with young people within the education system and highlights potential developments in this area, including projects under consideration or development by the Armed Forces and the Department of Education.

Armed forces activities in schools and colleges

Each of the three services that make up the Armed Forces, as well as the Ministry of Defence, have their own education and outreach programmes to engage with young people. Of the three, the Army has the most extensive programme of activities, reflecting their need to recruit more young soldiers.

Although it is often refuted that the overall rationale for engaging with young people is one of recruitment, particularly following the beginning of ForcesWatch's national series of debates, internal documents and publicly available reports demonstrate that interesting potential recruits, coupled with the need to influence future decision makers and opinion formers, is a primary part of the rationale (1). The recent report by ResPublica, *Military Academies: Tackling disadvantage, improving ethos and changing outcome*, is explicit in suggesting that a major benefit of more interaction between the armed forces and education would be "assuring and extending the future Reserves' intake".

A key task for ForcesWatch has been to establish the mechanisms and practice of the military's engagement with schools, including the ways in which they approach schools or schools approach them, the activities on offer, the type of schools/students they generally work with and localised information on their engagement with schools. While it is difficult to assess the scale of activity nationally, it is estimated that around 900,000 young people come into contact with the armed forces within the education system each year. See below for details and types of activities undertaken.

Pushing a 'military ethos'

In addition to the current challenges facing those concerned with this issue, there are greater challenges yet to come. In the past six months there has been an increase in visible efforts to integrate the military into national education policy. The Department for Education's "military skills and ethos programme encompasses Cadets, Troops to Teachers, the cadet version of the National Citizen Service and alternative provision with a military ethos." (FOI request, 13/07/12). On Armed Forces Day 2012, the Government announced a budget of nearly £11m to expand cadet units into state schools.

'Alternative provision' includes the Military to Mentors programme run by Skillforce and a £1m grant for work from September 2012 "supporting military ethos in schools", working with "pupils who are either disengaged with education or at risk of becoming disengagedutilising the skills of a high proportion of former armed services personnel or other staff with experience in this field of work".

The Department for Education states that "these programmes will give young people the opportunity to develop teamwork, self-discipline, resilience and leadership" but do not explain what is meant by 'military ethos' or why a military framework will develop these skills more effectively than one based in other 'service' contexts. Furthermore, that there may be aspects of a 'military ethos' that are not appropriate to education does not seem to have been considered.

Military Academies / Service Schools

Following the ResPublica report calling for the establishment of Military Academies, a number of politicians (from Labour and the Conservative Party) have supported the idea of 'service schools', which would be primarily or entirely staffed by ex-servicemen and women. The rationale would be to provide ex-forces with employment opportunities, introduce a more disciplinarian ethos to schools in need of it and increase recruitment capacity (especially to the reserve forces). The politicians interested in this scheme speak almost exclusively about the second of these recommendations in what seems to be very much a reaction to the riots in summer 2011.

Summary of activities across the UK:

There are no national figures that provide a reliable overview of the number of young people that take part in armed forces related activity within education. However, youth/schools engagement surveys conducted by the MoD suggest that, at a minimum, around 900,000 children (mainly 8-19 years old) are contacted each year, which is about 15% of the age group.

Army

- Presentations - These can cover various topics such as the role of the Army as well as topics such as peacekeeping and presentations on Afghanistan.
- Insight Interviews - The Army run Insight Courses which are designed to offer a taste of what life is like in the Army. The interviews with students who want to attend a course provide information on the course and what is expected of them so they get the most from the course.
- Careers Fair - The Army having a stand at a school fair with other businesses.
- Careers Day - A whole day in the school to discuss Army Careers.
- Careers Brief - A single presentation on Careers in the Army (could be recorded as a presentation).
- Team Visits - Support of the National Curriculum
- Schools Challenge - This is a regionally run competition between schools run by the Army Careers Adviser pitting the schools against each other in a competition based around command tasks (such as getting across an area using ropes and planks etc.).

In addition, a large number of curriculum resources are provided on the Army in Education website.

Navy

Schools received a wide variety of activities, including:

- Careers Conventions/ Jobs Fairs
- Shows & Exhibitions & Carnival (or Parade)
- Presentations about the work of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines
- Displays by the Royal Marine Commando Team
- Team-Building exercises
- Physical Training and sports instruction (including a programme called Fit 4 Life)
- Careers presentations
- Alternative curriculum events such as 'leadership tasks'

RAF

All visits prior to the most recent academic year were made by the RAF Presentation Team which no longer visits schools. It is unclear how the RAF's outreach will progress.

Quotation from letter sent to ForcesWatch regarding RAF visits to schools:

All schools received the same 40 minute presentation, a series of narrative and DVD presentations that cover who the RAF are, what they do and how they do it. The 'who we are' section covers a few facts and figures about the trades within the RAF. The 'what we do' section focuses on the four pillars of air power

(Intelligence & Situational Awareness, Control of the Air, Attack and Air Mobility & Lift). The 'how we do it' section covers training, specialist roles and welfare. There is Q&A session at the end.

Notes

1. On the reasons to provide armed forces related activities within education:

- The MoD have stated that curricular activities are “a powerful way to facilitate recruitment”. *MoD Strategy for Delivery of MOD Youth Initiatives. Directorate of Reserve Forces and Cadets, 2005*
- “Our overall rationale for engaging with schools is to encourage good citizenship, provide an environment which raises awareness of the MOD and Armed Forces among young people, provide positive information to influence future opinion formers, and to enable recruiters to access the school environments.” *Engagement with UK schools, MoD, 2007*

Petitions Committee,

22nd March 2013

National Assembly for Wales,

Cardiff CF99 1NA

Re: Petition P-04-432

As conscientious citizens of Wales we welcome this opportunity to express our views to the committee.

The Assembly has taken public pride in protecting the rights of children, not least in its innovative role as the first legislature in Britain to appoint a Children's Commissioner. That the Commissioner's work must follow the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), encourages expectation of a positive outcome for the petition. The stance of the UNCRC towards the British military's recruitment of children is very clear.

In its 2008 report to the UK, the UNCRC expressed concern at recruitment practices relating to under-18s (the UN uses the term **child soldiers**) and called for the minimum recruitment age to be raised to 18. In 2009 this recommendation, and others relating to young people in the armed forces, was endorsed by Parliament's Joint Committee on Human Rights. The report also highlighted evidence that the experience of recruits in the 16 – 18 age bracket is adversely affected by their relative lack of maturity, and that their high drop-out rate results in millions of pounds in wasted expenditure.

The outcome of the petition has broader relevancy than the question of MOD recruitment in schools, and may serve as something of a test-case for the depth of autonomy of the Welsh legislature, following the March 2011 referendum for increased powers.

We feel that this petition faces Welsh politicians with the dilemma over whether to truly represent the interests and values of the people of Wales, or to simply serve other interests. Has the Assembly become sufficiently democratic that it legislates on behalf of the welfare of the children under its care, in opposition to the requirements of the UK military-industrial complex? The Labour Party has transformed considerably in recent decades in pursuit of votes in English constituencies; this petition offers an opportunity to prove publicly that it has not cut loose completely from its founding values.

The question of Ministry of Defence recruiters' pursuit of minors in the school environment offers a very clear case for legislative change on moral grounds alone. However, should the Petitions Committee find cause to close the petition, our campaign will continue apace, armed with documented evidence of Welsh politicians' reluctance to take action where they should. We trust that our representatives would much prefer to spare themselves such public embarrassment.

Although members of Cardiff & District United Nations Association, we write in our personal capacity and as initiators of the petition and campaign.

Yours sincerely

Leon Russell and Sara Hawys

United Nations Association, Cardiff

