

Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date:

11 November 2014

Meeting time:

09.00

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



For further information please contact:

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Committee Clerk

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Agenda

- 1 Introduction, apologies and substitutions**
- 2 Evidence Session – P-04-597 Protect the future of Funky Dragon, the Children and Young People’s Assembly for Wales (9.00 – 9.30)**
(Pages 1 – 8)
- 3 Updates to previous petitions (9.30 – 10.30)**

Health

- 3.1 P-03-150 National Cancer Standards (Pages 9 – 13)**
- 3.2 P-04-494 Robotic assisted laparoscopic prostatectomy must be made available to men in Wales now (Pages 14 – 15)**
- 3.3 P-04-540 Stop Sexism In Domestic Abuse (Pages 16 – 20)**
- 3.4 P-04-570 Inequitable Access to Treatments That Have Not Been Nationally**

Appraised in NHS Wales (Pages 21 – 24)

- 3.5 P-04-586 All NHS Wales staff to be Paid at Least the Hourly Living Wage Rate of £7.65. (Pages 25 – 27)

Communities and Tackling Poverty

- 3.6 P-04-487 A Welsh Government deposit loan scheme for first time Welsh home buyers (Pages 28 – 31)
- 3.7 P-04-598 Disability Awareness Training (Pages 32 – 34)

Education

- 3.8 P-04-516 Make political science compulsory in education (Pages 35 – 36)
- 3.9 P-04-559 Secondary School Awareness of Self-Harm (Pages 37 – 51)

Economy, Science and Transport

- 3.10 P-04-562 Caernarfon Heritage Centre (Pages 52 – 55)
- 3.11 P-04-585 Changes to A494/A470 Junction Dolgellau (Pages 56 – 57)
- 3.12 P-04-594 Cilmeri Community Council Appeal for The Prince Llywelyn Monument (Pages 58 – 59)
- 3.13 P-04-599 Impact of Domestic Rating on Self Catering Accommodation (Pages 60 – 63)

Natural Resources

- 3.14 P-04-572 Grants for Flood Resilience (Pages 64 – 66)
- 3.15 P-04-579 Reinstate funding for Skomer Island's Guillemot monitoring (Pages 67 – 69)
- 3.16 P-04-583 Ban all Growing and Selling of all GM seeds / Foods and Animal / Fish Feed in Wales (Pages 70 – 74)

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Public Services

3.18 P-04-592 Democratically Binding Plebiscites at Local Government Level (Pages 78 – 79)

3.19 P-04-596 Save Porth Fire Station – SECONDS COST LIVES! (Pages 80 – 81)

P-04-597 Protect the future of Funky Dragon, the Children and Young People's Assembly for Wales

Petition wording:

We, the undersigned, call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to protect the future of Funky Dragon, the Children and Young People's Assembly for Wales by restoring core funding. Wales must have an independent, youth led, publically funded, national platform for children and young people, democratically elected at a local level, to give voice to their views and opinions and to hold the Welsh Government to account. The national platform must be empowered to work with all elected members to further children and young people's issues and to report directly to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child as Funky Dragon did so successfully in 2008.

Funky Dragon still believes that:

1. Young people, democratically elected at a local level, should have a National Platform to voice their views and opinions.
2. That platform should be called The Youth Assembly for Wales.
3. It should be able to work with all Elected Members including Assembly Members and Members of Parliament to further young peoples issues.
4. It should be supported to allow Welsh young people to report directly to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, in commenting on the last UK State report stated: Concluding observation 33. That governments' 'Support forums for children's participation, such as the United Kingdom Youth Parliament, Funky Dragon in Wales and Youth Parliament in Scotland should be implemented.

Petitioner : Catherine Patricia Jones

First considered by the Committee: 23 September 2014

Number of Signatures: 1,212 electronic signatures and 429 paper signatures. Total 1,641

By virtue of paragraph(s) ix of Standing Order 17.42

Document is Restricted

Agenda Item 3.1

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.

TC/JL
Your Ref: P-03-150

22 July 2014

Tracey Cooper
☎ Direct Line / Llinell Uniongyrchol: 029 2082 7652
Email / Epost: tracey.cooper3@wales.nhs.uk

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

Dear Mr Powell

Petition – P-03-150 National Cancer Standards

Further to your letter dated 30 April, and to the letter sent by my colleague Huw George on 1 July, please accept my apologies for this delayed response.

As Huw George explained in his original letter to you on 11 February, one of Public Health Wales' core functions is to provide information to the public about health. As such, I am able to respond to the questions raised in this area.

As the petitioner, Diane Raybould, notes, the Macmillan National Cancer Patient Information Strategy Project has provided specific recommendations to improve information for cancer patients in Wales from the point of diagnosis onwards. These include:

- Sharing content
- Quality standards
- Cancer information portal
- A skills framework for healthcare professionals
- Integration of community based services

The project recommendations were taken to the All Wales Cancer Implementation Group (which oversees the delivery of the Welsh Government Cancer Delivery Plan) in March 2014.

The Cancer Implementation Group has supported the recommendations in principle and asked for an action plan to be developed to take these recommendations forward. The group has also prioritised the need to improve patient information within its plans. The action plan will be presented to group's September meeting.

With regards to the petitioner's concerns about the implementation of the project recommendations, I believe that significant improvements to patient information could be delivered within existing budgets by better co-ordination of resources. To give three examples:

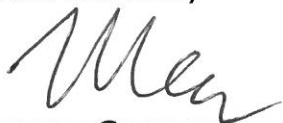
- The high quality third sector information resources available in a range of formats could be used more by hosting them on an all Wales website.
- There could also be more and better signposting to community based information services to complement the information provided by health care professionals.
- Additional support could also be provided to individuals who struggle to access and understand the information they require.

To ensure better co-ordination of resources, the Macmillan National Cancer Patient Information Strategy Project is closely aligned to the development by the Welsh Government of the key worker role and the assessment and care planning process.

The Wales Cancer Patient Experience Survey published in January 2014 provided significant evidence about patients' experiences of information and provides a useful baseline for the project. We hope that the survey will be repeated in two years time so that we can measure progress by health boards on this key area.

The petitioner also asks questions about waiting times for 'non-urgent suspected cancer'; about care plans and key workers. You will appreciate that Public Health Wales is not best placed to answer on these subjects and you may wish to address the questions to the Welsh Government.

Yours sincerely



Tracey Cooper
Chief Executive
Public Health Wales

Health and Social Care Committee – Inquiry into progress made to date on implementing the Welsh Government’s Cancer Delivery Plan

- [Details](#)
- [History](#)
- [Meetings](#)

The National Assembly for Wales’ [Health and Social Care Committee](#) is undertaking an inquiry into progress made to date on implementing the Welsh Government’s Cancer Delivery Plan.

The terms of reference for the inquiry are to examine the progress made in implementing the Cancer Delivery Plan in Wales including:

- Whether Wales is on course to achieve the outcomes and performance measures, as set out in the Cancer Delivery Plan, by 2016;
- Progress made in reducing the inequalities gap in cancer incidence and mortality rates;
- The effectiveness of cancer screening services and the level of take-up across the population of Wales, particularly the harder to reach groups;
- Whether patients across Wales can access the care required (for example, access to diagnostic testing or out-of-hours care) in an appropriate setting and in a timely manner;
- The level of collaborative working across sectors, especially between the NHS and third sector, to ensure patients receive effective person-centred care from multi-disciplinary teams.
- Whether the current level of funding for cancer services is appropriate, used effectively and provides value for money.

Additional information

[Additional information from the Minister for Health and Social Services](#)

Evidence from the Public

The Committee held a public consultation to gather [evidence on this topic](#).

Engagement activity

[Workshops, May 2014](#)

[Focus group event, 14 May 2014](#)

Storify

Click here to view our [Storify on our Inquiry into progress made to date on implementing the Welsh Government's Cancer Delivery Plan](#)

Documents

- [Inquiry into progress made to date on implementing the Welsh Government's Cancer Delivery Plan – Report – October 2014 PDF 691 KB](#)
- [Inquiry into progress made to date on implementing the Welsh Government's Cancer Delivery Plan – Summary – October 2014 PDF 552 KB](#)

Agenda Item 3.2

P-04-494 Robotic assisted laparoscopic prostatectomy must be made available to men in Wales now

Petition wording:

Robotic assisted laparoscopic prostatectomy is the 21st Century Gold standard. Wales as a nation must be at the forefront in offering this standard. We, the undersigned, are appalled by the fact that men in Wales with prostate cancer cannot be offered robotic surgery in Wales, yet in England ALL men have this choice with at least 40 locations offering this treatment and with men from Wales having to pay thousands of pounds to access this capability in these English NHS facilities (typically between £13-15,000). Clearly, many men in Wales cannot afford this. We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government together with the National Health Service of Wales to resolve this totally unfair predicament and serious lack of essential resource within our NHS in Wales without delay. It is vital that this technology, this 21st Century Gold Standard is offered to men in Wales. It simply cannot be right that such technology is available elsewhere and that men from Wales have to pay to avail themselves of it in an NHS facility in England.

Petition raised by: Professor Kevin Davies MBE

Date petition first considered by Committee: 16 July 2013

Number of signatures: 2090. An associated petition collected 1,000 signatures.

P-04-494 Robotic assisted laparoscopic prostatectomy must be made available to men in Wales now – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Clerking Team, 29.10.14

Dear Kathryn,

Thank you for this latest response. I have the following comments and would appreciate further feedback in due course.

1. I thank the Minister for acknowledging my letter and confirming that he has read it. I am pleased that he feels it is emotive and I am sure a significant number of Welsh men feel the same.

2. I am delighted that the Da Vinci Robotic system has been installed and that a number of Welsh men are at last benefiting from it. Can the committee confirm that the second consul for teaching is in place also as this is essential for future development of healthcare professionals. I understand that Mr Ed Rowe from Bristol is mentoring Cardiff based surgeons. This is welcome news also.

3. The petition has signatures from every constituency in Wales. Can the committee please confirm that men from all of Wales will be able to access this facility?

4. Can the committee conform that there will not be an inter-health board tariff applied for patients who are not in the C&VUHB catchment area. Clearly, this MUST be an all Wales facility if it is and is seen to be universally accessible. Comment from the committee please.

I very much look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Kind Regards Kevin

Professor K Davies MBE, RRC, TD

Agenda Item 3.3

P-04-540 Stop Sexism In Domestic Abuse

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to stop Domestic Abuse (DA) by treating it as a gender inclusive and human phenomenon in which many men and women share both suffering and responsibility.

Practical NOT Politics

The current proposal blames men, and only men, for all violence and puts a radical gender based prejudice before the real needs of women, men and children and where 97% of men do NOT fit this profile.

Fear of repercussions and lack of publicity in Wales have prevented open and vocal dissent.

This Petition invites an alternative approach that recognises that 86% of DA is the responsibility of both women and men. It also offers greater protection to children and removes the discrimination that arises solely from radical gendered prejudice against those people in same sex female relationships.

Petition raised by: Healing Men

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 11 March 2014

Number of signatures: 238



Llinell Gymorth Camdriniaeth yn y Cartref
a Thrais Rhywiol Cymru Gyfan
All Wales Domestic Abuse and Sexual
Violence Helpline

0808 80 10 800




Cymorth i Ferched Cymru
Welsh Women's Aid
Rhoi Merched a Phlant yn Gyntaf
Putting Women & Children First

October 2014

The Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Dear Chair,

RE: RESPONSE TO 'PETITION – P-04-540 STOP SEXISM IN DOMESTIC ABUSE' Sept 2014

Thank you for your letter seeking Welsh Women's Aid's feedback on the points raised by the Petitioner in response to our previous letter to the Committee.

In response to the Petitioner's concern that Welsh Women's Aid excludes men and boys, I can reassure the Committee that although our organisation's focus is to address the disproportionate suffering of women and girls from certain types of abuse, such as domestic abuse, we recognise the importance of ensuring access to services, protection and support for all victims of violence and abuse. We consider it a grave disservice to male victims to suggest – as the Petitioner does – that there is no state support for male victims; with the sole exception of refuges (which male victims tell us they don't want), state services like the police, health and social care services are available to all victims irrespective of gender. Strategically and operationally, we work closely with the leading men's domestic abuse service in Wales, the Dyn Project (part of Safer Wales), and are contributing members of the Male Domestic Abuse Network. Welsh Women's Aid also runs the All Wales Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Helpline, which is available for male and female victims and provides guidance, signposting and support to survivors in heterosexual and same sex relationships, whether they identify as lesbians, gay men, bisexual or transgender. Nationally, our healthy relationships education program for children, the S.T.A.R. program (Safety, Trust and Respect) and other work provided by our 'Children Matter' team is provided to both boys and young men, and girls and young women up to the age of 25 years. Locally, our member organisations (which are independently constituted) provide advocacy and support services for survivors (adults and children) and in some cases, work with perpetrators and other family members to achieve their goal of preventing violence and abuse.

Welsh Women's Aid's vision is a world free of violence and abuse, but in order to achieve this goal we cannot ignore the fact that specific groups within our society perpetrate and suffer violence disproportionately. Our work is based on the understanding that domestic and sexual abuse is gendered. By this we mean that most perpetrators are men, most victims are women and the gender of both victim and perpetrator influences behaviour, severity of risk, and harm caused. This approach is supported by the United Nations; by the Council of Europe; UK government, and Crown Prosecution Service amongst others. Welsh Women's Aid takes strong exception to the comment by the Petitioner 'Indeed, it is clear that WWA have a commercial imperative to ensure DA [domestic abuse] continues

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Registered Charity Number: 1140962 **Page 17** WWA REG No. 922 7943 07



Llinell Gymorth Camdriaiaeth yn y Cartref
a Thrais Rhywiol Cymru Gyfan
All Wales Domestic Abuse and Sexual
Violence Helpline

0808 80 10 800




Cymorth i Ferched Cymru
Welsh Women's Aid
Rhoi Merched a Phlant yn Gyntaf
Putting Women & Children First

in order to protect the £4,000,000 budget in Wales.' This is not only inaccurate, but an extremely offensive statement which, I hope you agree, does not warrant further consideration.

Suicide rates for both men and women are indeed distressing and warrant further attention and investment to aid prevention. Whilst men seem to commit suicide at a higher rate than women for various reasons evidence indicates that more women attempt suicide: one-third of women attending emergency departments for self-harm were domestic violence survivors; abused women are five times more likely to attempt suicide; and one third of all female suicide attempts can be attributed to current or past experience of domestic violence.¹In terms of any updates to our position, since our last response I am able to include new figures from the Crown Prosecution Services' Violence Against Women and Girls Crime Report for 2013/14 which shows continuing high rates of violence and abuse suffered disproportionately by women in England and Wales:²

- The volume of domestic violence referrals from the Police rose to 103,569 – a rise of 15,459 referrals (17.5%) from 2012-13 and the highest referral level ever;
- The domestic violence caseload has risen since 2012-13 from 8.9% to 10.7% in 2013-14;
- The volume of convictions reached 58,276 – a rise of 5,727 convictions (10.9%) since 2012-13;
- The volume and proportion of guilty pleas rose again – volume reached 53,620 – rise to 68.7% - 92% of all successful outcomes are as a result of guilty pleas;
- New stalking offences have been implemented and there has been a significant rise in prosecutions of harassment and breaches related to domestic violence – nearly a quarter more across 2013-14 compared with the previous year;
- The majority of defendants were men at 93%;
- The majority of victims, were women at 84% (as it has been since 2010-11);
- The majority of defendants were aged 25-59 (72%), but was of concern to note that just over 26% of defendants (20,572) were under 24 with 2,114 (3%) of defendants being 14-17 years old and 111 (0.1%) aged 10-13.

Welsh Women's Aid does not wish to pit one victim against another as all of our work is focused on preventing abuse in all its forms, but within the context of limited resources, our focus is on those who are at greatest risk from violence and abuse and who suffer most, which is disproportionately women and girls.

I hope that the information provided has addressed your queries, but please do not hesitate to get in touch if I can provide further clarification or information.

Yours sincerely,

Eleri Butler
Chief Executive Officer
Welsh Women's Aid

¹ Stark, E. and Flitcraft, A. (1996) Women at risk (London: Sage); Mullender, Audrey (1996) Rethinking domestic violence: The Social Work and Probation response (London: Routledge).

² http://www.cps.gov.uk/publications/docs/cps_vawg_report_2014.pdf

**P-04-540 Stop Sexism In Domestic Abuse – Correspondence from the
Petitioner to the Clerking Team, 04.11.14**

Dear Kayleigh,

Thank you for the copy of the letter from Welsh Women's Aid (WWA) in response to my letter dated 11th July 2014.

Firstly, I apologise unreservedly for the illconsidered comments concerning WWA's financial incentives. These remarks were wholly uncalled for and I sincerely apologise for the offence caused to the Committee members and to WWA.

Secondly, There are fundamental and serious issues raised and addressed in the WWA correspondence that I would very much like to bring to the attention of the Committee. I respectfully request some more time to properly prepare a considered and appropriate response and avoid the difficulties experienced with my earlier response that had to be prepared under very considerable pressure from deadlines. I would anticipate completing a full response in two weeks time.

Thirdly, I refer to the letter from the Committee to WWA dated 30th April and their response dd 19th June 2014 received by Healing Men on the 9th July. It has transpired that WWA did not receive the full supporting information to which the Committee referred in the letter to WWA dated 30th April 2014 requesting " .. [WWA's] views on statistics provided by the petitioner .." thus creating, in error, the misleading statement by WWA "... these figures are not referenced or explained" The complete supporting information was sent to WWA on the 11th July 2014 and WWA confirmed on the 31st October that they did not require any further information from Healing Men.

WWA point out that the petition contradicts the WWA "understanding" of the nature of domestic abuse. However, Healing Men's petition is fully referenced, covering many countries and has been established in highly respected academic institutions and by skilled and experienced practitioners over many years. How can this be ignored? How can the Welsh Government make just and effective laws without deeply considering all sound, established and respected research, evidence and practice especially when it draws existing practice into doubt? DA causes much suffering and those involved need rounded, effective, "best practice" responses. I respectfully suggest that a full and carefully considered critique of the statistical

content of Healing Men's petition by WWA may grealy assist the review and consideration of the very important tragic issues raised in Healing Men's petition and correspondence from WWA.

Best wishes,

Tony Stott

Healing Men

P-04-570 Inequitable Access to Treatments That Have Not Been Nationally Appraised in NHS Wales

Petition Wording

We the undersigned call on the National Assembly for Wales to review the use of the "exceptionality rule" in determining whether a patient can access a treatment through the Individual Patient Funding Request process.

Additional Information: To access treatments through the IPFR process, a patient population must demonstrate its exceptionality. For common illnesses, it may be possible to identify a subset of patients within the larger population who are more likely to respond to a particular therapy. For rare disease patients, demonstrating that you are a unique patient when you are part of a small group of patients whose condition is considered rare is practically impossible. The exceptionality criteria place an onus on clinicians to provide evidence that the patient's clinical condition is significantly different to the general population of patients with the same condition and is likely to gain significantly more benefit from the intervention than might normally be expected. This evidence requirement is too onerous to apply to patients with rare diseases due to small patient numbers within rare disease populations. Patients with great clinical need are prevented from accessing life-changing/ life-saving treatments.

Petition raised by: Genetic Alliance UK, Tuberous Sclerosis Association, Association of Glycogen Storage Disorders

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 15 July 2014

Number of signatures: 1089

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-04-570
Ein cyf/Our ref MD/03174/14

William Powell AM
Assembly Member for Mid & West Wales
Chair Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

31 August 2014

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 14 August on behalf of the Petitions Committee, regarding Petition P-04-570 - Inequitable access to treatments that have not been nationally appraised in NHS Wales.

As you are aware, I announced a review of the IPFR process on 16 October last year. The review group produced a report which concluded the current IPFR process in Wales supports rational, evidence based decision making for those treatments which are not routinely available. They also made a number of recommendations aimed at strengthening the process. On 30 April 2014 I issued a Cabinet Written Statement regarding access to medicines, including the recent IPFR review, which can be accessed at:

<http://wales.gov.uk/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2014/?lang=en>

The Written Statement also announced we will have a new appraisal system specifically tailored to address those medicines that treat rare diseases; often referred to as orphan and ultra orphan medicines. I will be issuing a further statement on access to new medicines in September.

I hope this information is helpful and clarifies the current position.

*Best wishes,
Mark.*

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400
Correspondence.Mark.Drakeford@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailwylchu (100%)
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Mr William Powell AM
Assembly Member for Mid and West Wales
Chair Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
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CF99 1NA

05 November 2014

Dear Mr Powell,

[Response to letter from the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the Petition P-04-570 – Inequitable access to treatments that have not been nationally appraised in NHS Wales](#)

In his letter dated 31st August 2014, the Minister for Health and Social Services, Mark Drakeford, outlined his response to a petition supported by Genetic Alliance UK, Tuberosus Sclerosis Association and Association of Glycogen Storage Diseases, and signed by over 1,000 individuals and patients which called for a review into the use of the 'exceptionality' criterion when determining whether a patient with a rare condition is able to access a treatment through the Individual Patient Funding Request (IPFR) process.

In his response, the Minister referred to the recent review of this process by the National IPFR Review Group in October 2014. The remit of that review did not include a consideration of the appropriateness of the exceptionality criterion, and instead focused on improving the transparency and consistency of the process. Genetic Alliance UK sat as a member of that review group and at no point was the appropriateness of the exceptionality criterion to IPFR applications from rare disease patients discussed or considered.

While we accept that the IPFR process is not designed as a means through which rare disease patients can access the medicines their clinician's agree they need, due to a lack of alternative options this route is the only one available to them. The exceptionality criterion is a barrier that prevents them from being able to take these medicines as a result of deficiencies within the rest of the system.

As our petition states, a review of the current IPFR criteria by the Health and Social Care Committee, including an investigation into the use of the exceptionality criterion when considering IPFR applications from patients affected by rare conditions, is necessary to finally address this issue.

Yours sincerely,

Alastair Kent OBE, Director of Genetic Alliance UK and Chair of Rare Disease UK

Registered charity numbers: 1114195 and SC039299
Registered company number: 05772999

Why are so many patients with rare conditions making IPFR requests?

Currently, many rare disease medicines have not been through a national health technology appraisal. As Genetic Alliance UK's recent work revealed, this is a particular issue for patients affected by rare conditions because the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has historically appraised very few rare disease medicines: less than 10% of the 47 rare disease medicines launched between 2002 and 2013 for the treatment of non-cancer indications were appraised by NICE¹. This is unlikely to change in the future as NICE's new process for appraising highly specialised technologies only has capacity to appraise three medicines a year². The duty of evaluation of the vast majority of medicines for rare diseases will pass to AWMSG in Wales.

As a result of these factors, no national commissioning policy exists for many rare disease medicines and so patients in Wales currently have no alternative but to try to access potentially life changing medicines through the IPFR process.

In this context, it is clear how the 'exceptionality' criterion creates a barrier to medicine access for patients with rare conditions as in many cases it is a whole group of patients who are applying for access to a treatment and, by definition, do not differ from each other. In these cases it is the whole patient population that could benefit and a thorough appraisal of the evidence would be ideal. The urgency of the medical need and the risk of avoidable progression is great and therefore waiting for such an appraisal to be carried out is not an option.

Why do patients with rare diseases believe that the 'exceptionality' criterion is not appropriate?

The report published by the IPFR Review Group defines the term 'clinical exceptionality' as: 'the patient's clinical condition is significantly different to the general population of patients with the same condition and as a result, the patient is likely to gain significantly more benefit from the intervention than might normally be expected.'

Aside from the fact that in the absence of any commissioning policy the exceptionality criterion becomes a barrier to cohorts of patients accessing a treatment through the IPFR process as a last resort, there are two additional reasons why this criterion can disadvantage patients with rare conditions seeking to access medicines through IPFRs:

1. Rare diseases often vary in the nature and severity of the associated symptoms. It is therefore difficult to identify one patient as 'exceptional'.
2. The patient population affected by a single rare condition is small. As a result there can be little information about the natural history of the condition and/or limited evidence available. It can be difficult to prove that one patient is different from a population about which little is known.

Genetic Alliance UK is the national charity working to improve the lives of patients and families affected by all types of genetic conditions. We are an alliance of over 180 patient organisations. Our aim is to ensure that high quality services, information and support are provided to all who need them. We actively support research and innovation across the field of genetic medicine.

Rare Disease UK is a multi-stakeholder campaign run by Genetic Alliance UK, working towards the delivery and implementation of the UK Strategy for Rare Diseases, which was published by the Department of Health in November 2013.

¹ Genetic Alliance UK's Patient Charter on NHS England's commissioning of medicines for rare conditions (October 2014)
Accessed here: www.geneticalliance.org.uk/docs/hst-patient-charter_final.pdf

² Genetic Alliance UK's Patient Charter on NICE's Highly Specialised Technology Evaluation Programme (April 2014)
Accessed here: www.geneticalliance.org.uk/docs/hst-patient-charter_final.pdf

Agenda Item 3.5

P-04-586 All NHS Wales staff to be Paid at Least the Hourly Living Wage Rate of £7.65.

Petition Wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to recognise the vital work undertaken by staff working for the NHS in Wales, and urge the Welsh Government to implement the recommendation made by the NHS pay review body, and ensure that all NHS Wales staff are paid at least the hourly living wage rate of £7.65.

Additional Information:

NHS staff do some of the hardest jobs in the world – saving lives, caring for people, and helping us stay healthy. It is essential that NHS staff are rewarded appropriately for the work that they do as they are undeniably worth it. The UK government has decided not to implement the recommendation made by the Pay Review Body (PRB) and UNISON believes that this is an insult to staff in England. We believe that the National Assembly and the Welsh Government should do all they can to stand up for NHS workers in Wales, and that must include awarding staff the PRB recommendation and ensuring staff are paid at least an hourly living wage rate.

Petition raised by: UNISON Cymru/Wales

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 23 September 2014

Number of signatures: 174

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-04-586
Ein cyf/Our ref MD/05280/14

William Powell AM
Assembly Member for Mid & West Wales
Chair Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Petition@Wales.gov.uk

18 October 2014

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 30 September, on behalf of the Petitions Committee, regarding petition P-04-586 from Unison regarding implementing the recommendations of the NHS Pay Review Body and a £7.65 hourly 'Living Wage' for NHS Staff.

I can confirm that the recommendations of both the NHS Pay Review Body and the Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration were not accepted on this occasion in Wales in respect of directly employed staff. I have made it clear that my priority is to maintain jobs in NHS Wales and with pay accounting for more than sixty percent of the NHS budget, in an age of austerity, there is no choice but to consider some form of pay restraint to maintain those jobs and services.

Following the recommendations from the pay review bodies earlier this year, the Welsh Government has been keen to work with representatives from trade unions about how an equivalent sum to that made available in England can be distributed to NHS staff in Wales.

My announcement in July this year proposed that staff who currently earn less than the living wage of £7.65 per hour will receive a pay rise to bring them up to this rate. NHS employers and Agenda for Change trade unions are currently revisiting how best to distribute the 2014/15 and 2015/16 pay awards. The 2014/15 pay award aims to provide something for everyone, including the continuation of incremental progression arrangements and the introduction of the living wage.

At a time when there is ongoing financial pressure on the NHS, it is only reasonable that those with the broadest shoulders must bear their share of the burden and it is for this reason that I agreed that very senior managers will not receive an award this year.

I hope this information is helpful for your discussions.

Best wishes,
Mark

Mark Drakeford AC / AM

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

Agenda Item 3.6

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 Committee, 18.10.14

Dear Mr Powell and all at the petition panel,

I'm grateful for the opportunity to respond to Mr Carl Sargeant's latest reply of the 3rd of September 2014 to the proposed deposit for first time home buyers petition.

I would like to reiterate, contrary to what Mr Sargeant states in his letter, that I believe the deposit petition is a very effective way of addressing the problems facing first time buyers with low earnings that are looking to purchase a new property in Wales. Access to affordable finance and securing a deposit are the two main factors acting as barriers to home ownership for low earners in Wales.

It is very troubling that Mr Sargeant makes the below statement in his letter:

“the underlying issue is an under supply of properties across the UK. For this reason, since I became Minister for Housing and Regeneration last year, my overarching priority has been to look at ways to increase the level of building activity in Wales across all tenures”

Mr Sargeant is here admitting that, contrary to what he is legally required to do under the Government of Wales act 2006, he is basing his new housing policy on UK needs and not Welsh ones. As Mr Sargeant knows, housing is a devolved issue in Wales. His remit through the Government of Wales Act 2006 is to act in the interest of Wales and Wales alone in this devolved areas. Mr Sargeant has therefore publicly stated that all of his work as Housing Minister has been concerned with the UK and not Wales.

I am afraid that this statement confirms the concerns of many that there is no genuine housing policy for Wales but rather an 'UK policy'. This UK policy projects unsustainable new housing onto Wales and caters for the whole of the UK rather than Wales specifically as the case should be and as is set in legal statute.

This also confirms that the housing projections, Local Development Plans for Wales and the Housing bill are therefore not fit for purpose and need to be frozen, re-evaluated and a root and branch inquiry conducted into how the mishandling of this devolved issue has been allowed to happen.

A previous Sovereign Wales petition pointed out that household projections for Wales were massively overly projected. Since then the 323,009 new households previously projected have been brought down to around 190,000 by 2036 according to the Welsh Government. The original 323,009 figure did not even match the Welsh Government's own projection process or census data. This 190,000 figure, although a more sustainable sum, is still exuberantly high, is purely assumptive and still cannot be properly justified. And as can now be seen, this present 190,000 figure is based on UK, not Welsh need.

There are obviously housing needs in Wales but the Welsh Government's housing plans are not proportionate to existing and sustainable Welsh needs. This statement by Mr Sargeant sadly explains why this is so; houses are presently being built in view of UK needs and are not catered for the natural gradually occurring population increase within Wales as well as a gradual level of inward migration in-line with work opportunities and public services capabilities.

In a previous letter Mr Sargeant claimed the Sovereign Wales petition for a deposit for first time buyers would be 'difficult to pursue' but invited suggestions for ways risk could be mitigated. I replied in detail stating that the deposit plan was far less risky and required far less investment than the Welsh government's proposed Help to Buy scheme. In my view the deposit scheme would also be far more effective and cost efficient as it would be a repayable loan rather than the far riskier Help to Buy guarantee scheme proposed by Mr Sargeant. Mr Sargeant seems to have ignored this and has now presented another reason why the petition cannot be considered which is that he is catering for UK housing needs rather than solely Welsh need.

The purpose of this petition is to urge the Welsh Government to develop a simple but effective scheme that would help first time buyers. I still believe this scheme would be very beneficial but I also believe Mr Sargeant's statement on UK housing over Welsh housing means that the whole housing and planning policy of the Welsh Government is now under question.

The Ministerial code issued by the First Minister on behalf of the Welsh Government states accountability as one of the seven principles of public life and states that: "Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office"

Standing Order 1 / 1.10 (iv) clearly states that: “members should not misrepresent the basis on which they are elected nor the area they serve..”

Mr Sargeant himself has offered that “Welsh Ministers who fail to adhere to fairness, openness and impartiality may be liable to challenge in the Courts”

I would suggest that Mr Sargeant, as Housing Minister and a political representative, is not working within the devolved remit of Welsh housing as he has stated his concern is housing in the UK, not Wales. I would also suggest that the Welsh Government cannot possibly carry on with their present housing and planning work in light of Mr Sargeant's statement.

It is of general serious concern for the citizens of Wales if their representatives and Government are not working within the legal remit for which they were elected as representatives and public servants. I would like to ask the panel if they can advise what should or can citizens do in light of such a situation.

Thank you again for your time and patience in reading this,

G.Meredith

Agenda Item 3.7

P-04-598 Disability Awareness Training

Petition wording:

We want to make disability awareness training compulsory across any organisation providing face to face customer service. So that staff know how to assist and support a disabled person confidently, safely, effectively and equally. The Equality Act 2010 states that all organisations should make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person, however there are many organisations that are unsure how to do this correctly and reasonably. Therefore we would like to see a more inclusive society and a law put into place so that people are aware of disability and raise the quality of customers experiences for disabled people or currently know how to support disabled people.

The training should incorporate adequate time of each element of disability separately. Mental health, visual impairment, learning, hearing and physical. I recommend half day training per element. This training should be renewed every 3 years to keep up to date.

Petitioner: Visualise Training and Consultancy

First considered by the Committee: 23 September 2014

Number of Signatures: 62

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cymunedau a Threchu Tlodi
Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-598
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/05158/14

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

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

13 October 2014

Dear Bill,

Thank you for your letter of 30 September regarding the petition from Visualise Training and Consultancy, which calls for compulsory disability awareness training across any organisation providing face to face customer service.

As the petition acknowledges, those who provide services to the public are already under a duty to make reasonable adjustments in how they provide services, to ensure disabled service users are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with non-disabled users of those services. This duty covers private and public sector service providers.

The law largely leaves it to service providers themselves to find the best way of ensuring they and their staff are able to make reasonable adjustments in the particular context in which they provide services. This may be through training, though may be through other means, depending on the nature of the service.

The Assembly has powers to legislate about equal opportunities in relation to the devolved Welsh public sector, while the Welsh Government has powers under the Equality Act 2010 to place duties on devolved Welsh public authorities which help them to meet the public sector equality duty in section 149 of the Act.

The Welsh Government has used the latter power to require devolved Welsh public authorities to make such arrangements as they consider appropriate for promoting knowledge and understanding of the public sector equality duty, and for using any performance assessment procedures they have for identifying and addressing the training needs of their employees in relation to the duty.

Beyond the above provision, at this time the Welsh Government's view is devolved Welsh public authorities should continue to be allowed discretion and flexibility in how they ensure their staff are equipped to comply with equality legislation, which of course covers a number of protected characteristics. We do not consider prescriptive training requirements would be able to take account of the variety of services which are provided by a range of different public authorities, or the ways in which particular services need to be adjusted to make them accessible to disabled users.

Equal opportunities outside the devolved Welsh public sector is not a devolved area.

Regards
Lesley Griffiths

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cymunedau a Threchu Tlodi
Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty

Agenda Item 3.8

P-04-516 Make political science compulsory in education

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to make political science a compulsory part of the school curriculum.

Petition raised by: Mark Griffiths

Date petition first considered by Committee: 26 November 2013

Number of signatures: 12

INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF ASSESSMENT AND THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

William Powell AC /AM
Cadeirydd/Chair
Y Pwyllgor Deisebau/Pettitions Committee
Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru /National Assembly for Wales
Bae Caerdydd/Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd/Cardiff
CF991NA
Stephen.George@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Your ref: P-04-516

20 October 2014

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter dated September 2014 ,sent on behalf of the Petitions Committee. The letter refers to a petition that the Committee has been considering from Mr Mark Griffiths on making political science a compulsory part of the school curriculum.

I am very grateful to the Committee for bringing this to my attention, and for sharing with me the findings of the recent survey on teaching political science in schools. I will certainly consider the summary of the survey - which has been provided by your research service as part of my evidence base when formulating my recommendations for the Minister for Education and Skills.

Unfortunately, my diary is heavily committed over the coming months and I am unable to meet with the petitioner at this time. However, listening is at the heart of my review, and should the petitioner wish to provide me with any further information in relation to this issue I would be more than happy to receive it. Any further information can be sent to me by email to CurriculumReview@wales.gsi.gov.uk or by post to the Review of Assessment and the Curriculum, Welsh Government, Cathays Park 2, Cardiff, Wales, CF10 3NQ.

Yours sincerely



Professor Donaldson

Agenda Item 3.9

P-04-559 Secondary School Awareness of Self-Harm

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to put in place more educational programmes (specifically in Secondary Schools) to counteract many people's misunderstanding of self-harm.

A growing issue amongst teenagers in Wales, 43% of people know somebody who has self-harmed according to a BBC survey. In the same survey, it was reported that 41% think that self-harm is selfish.

Additional Information: Due to the sheer volume of occurrences in self-harm among teenagers in Wales, I feel that there should be more awareness and approachability of the subject. Why should a teenager suffer in silence? This is why I believe that as a country we should provide more substantial resources for a sufferer to find free assistance in battling self-harm.

Petition raised by: Eleanor Price

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 17 June 2014

Number of signatures : 12



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-559
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/01610/14

William Powell AM
Chair Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

6 August 2014

Dear William

Thank you for your letter dated 23 July informing me of Eleanor Price's petition on the subject of increasing the number of education programmes regarding self harm in Welsh secondary schools.

As part of the school curriculum in Wales, personal and social education (PSE) prepares learners to be personally and socially effective by providing learning experiences in which they can develop and apply skills, explore personal attitudes and values, and acquire appropriate knowledge and understanding.

The PSE framework for 7 to 19-year-olds in Wales sets out the aim to provide the foundation for a broad, balanced holistic approach to PSE which features a range of experiences to promote the personal and social development and well-being of learners. This framework is the key document that schools should use in planning their personal and social education programme. A copy of this framework can be found from the attached link below:

<http://learning.wales.gov.uk/resources/personal-and-social-education/?skip=1&lang=en>

The five key themes identified in the PSE framework are: Active Citizenship; Health and Emotional Well-being; Moral and Spiritual Development; Preparing for Lifelong Learning; and Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship.

Through the Health and Emotional Well-being theme, learners can be helped to maintain their emotional and physical health, sustain their growth and development, and know how to keep themselves safe. Learners are given opportunities to understand the short and longer term consequences when making decisions about personal health and how to access professional health advice and personal support with confidence.

The delivery of the curriculum is delegated to schools and decisions on the precise content, materials and resources of a school's PSE programme rests with head teachers and their governing bodies, to ensure that it meets the needs of children and their local community.

As part of their work for the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes (WNHSS), schools will be looking at all aspects of mental and emotional health and well-being. They will identify areas of concern in their school, and may choose to develop a programme to deal with the issue. Although self harm is not specifically mentioned in the WNHSS guidance, this does not preclude schools from dealing with this issue.

In March, I announced the appointment of Professor Graham Donaldson to lead a wide ranging, independent review of the national curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales, which includes PSE.

The full terms of reference for Professor Donaldson's review are available from the link below:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/curriculuminwales/curriculum-for-wales/terms-of-reference/?lang=en>.

Listening is at the heart of Professor Donaldson's review, and I will forward a copy of your letter to him. If you would like further information on the review please contact: CurriculumReview@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

I hope that this information demonstrates that the Welsh Government is committed to working with secondary schools to develop programmes, policies and guidance aimed at tackling the issue of self harm in secondary schools.

Yours sincerely



Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills



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NHS
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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Hywel Dda
University Health Board

Ein cyf/Our ref:	TO	Swyddfeydd Corfforaethol, Adeilad Ystwyth Hafan Derwen, Parc Dewi Sant, Heol Ffynnon Job Caerfyrddin, Sir Gaerfyrddin, SA31 3BB
Eich cyf/Your ref:	P-04-559	
Gofynnwch am/Please ask for:	Teresa Owen	
Rhif Ffôn /Telephone:	01267 239729	
Ffacs/Facsimile:		Corporate Offices, Ystwyth Building Hafan Derwen, St Davids Park, Job's Well Road, Carmarthen, Carmarthenshire, SA31 3BB
E-bost/E-mail:	teresa.owen@wales.nhs.uk	

William Powell AC/AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Dear Mr Powell

Petition Title: Secondary School Awareness of Self Harm

Thank you for your letter to Mrs Karen Howell, Interim Chief Executive, dated July 2014, regarding the petition "Secondary School Awareness of Self Harm".

On behalf of Hywel Dda University Health Board, here is our response:

There are a number of services available to support young people as well as a formal approach to their GP. All secondary schools have a named school nurse and local authorities provide a School Counselling Service. In addition all schools have Pupil Support Officers. All these services provide support for a wide range of student concerns many of which are associated with self harming behaviours.

Although these resources are available they can only help where young people in distress acknowledge their issue and seek help.

The Healthy School Initiative as well as supporting pupils and teaching staff to adopt healthy lifestyle approaches such as good nutrition and exercise also provides a range of materials and training to enable school communities to engage in open discussion about difficult issues such as self harm. The intention is to give teachers and pupils the confidence to recognise and offer support to friends and pupils in distress who find it difficult to seek help themselves.

Self harm is not an easy area to tackle and can lead to individuals being stigmatised by their peers. It is often the result of low self esteem which itself will make it difficult for an individual to seek help. Recently a DVD "Get the Low Down" has been produced by our Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service that provides material to help generate the discussion. Training for teachers to be able to use this material is essential and is underway in some schools which will add to the



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Hywel Dda
University Health Board

resources available to tackle self harm.

Yours Sincerely

Teresa Owen
Director Public Health



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NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Caerdydd a'r Fro
Cardiff and Vale
University Health Board

Ysbyty Athrofaol Cymru
University Hospital of Wales
UHB Headquarters
Heath Park
Cardiff, CF14 4XW

Parc Y Mynydd Bychan
Caerdydd, CF14 4XW

Eich cyf/Your ref:
Ein cyf/Our ref: AC-bt-07-3894
Welsh Health Telephone Network:
Direct Line/Llinell uniongychol: 02920 745681

Adam Cairns
Chief Executive

31st July 2014

Mr William Powell AC/AM
Cadeirydd/Chair
Petitions Committee
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Response to be sent to Stephen.George@wales.gov.uk

Dear William,

Re: Provision of IBD Services in Wales

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the petition relating to more educational programmes in school for young people who self-harm. This is indeed a growing problem amongst our young people and we are working with other agencies in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan to try and understand and address the issue.

The Health Board has established a partnership group which aims to improve outcomes for Emotional and Mental Wellbeing in Children and Young People and I understand that within the schools in our catchment area there is a significant amount of multiagency work being undertaken. This includes projects such as; a National Behaviour & Attendance Review (NBAR) project which supports early identification and monitoring of emotional and social wellbeing; other school based interventions including Emotional Learning Support Assistants; the Healthy Schools scheme which actively encourages schools to adopt a whole school approach to mental and emotional wellbeing.

Our partners in education locally have identified that the biggest issue of concern for schools is the growing incidence in self-harm, and they have established a working group which includes members of the Public Health team and Primary Mental Health Services, to develop training for teachers and parents and agree how this can be implemented. One option being discussed is online training through school websites.

We also have services such as Primary Mental Health where schools can refer young people for support and programmes, such as Families First which supports families

I hope this is helpful, in answering some of your queries.

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Response from BCUHB Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service Board to the Petition re Secondary School Awareness of Self Harm

29th August 2014

Petition Title: Secondary School Awareness of Self-Harm

The Petitions Committee has received the following petition from Eleanor Price which collected 12 signatures:

Petition Wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to put in place more educational programmes (specifically in Secondary Schools) to counteract many peoples misunderstanding of self-harm.

A growing issue amongst teenagers in Wales, 43% of people know somebody who has self-harmed according to a BBC survey. In the same survey, it was reported that 41% think that self-harm is selfish.

Additional Information: Due to the sheer volume of occurrences in self-harm among teenagers in Wales, I feel that there should be more awareness and approachability of the subject. Why should a teenager suffer in silence? This is why I believe that as a country we should provide more substantial resources for a sufferer to find free assistance in battling self-harm.

The Committee considered the petition for the first time at the meeting on 17 June and would be very grateful for your views on this matter.

Response

We very much welcome that this important issue has been highlighted at a national level, and thank you for seeking our views. A summary of the current situation in North Wales, our goals and current work plan is provided below. If any further information is required, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Current situation in North Wales

Young people who harm themselves currently get a very varied response from schools and other front line community services across North Wales. This can range from little or no response at all to immediate urgent referral to local specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), regardless of need. In addition, and of equal concern, in some areas, universal services hold cases that have not previously met criteria for specialist CAMHS and some of those professionals report being relatively unsupported in this task.

There is a high level of variation in the level of knowledge skill and confidence in knowing how to respond to concerns about self harm and expression of suicidal thoughts in schools and other multi-agency front line services. In response to national drivers, there has been a steady increase in the number of (largely uncoordinated) training courses in self harm and suicidal behaviour in recent years. These have been and continue to be provided by health, social care and third sector agencies, targeting front line staff, including teachers and other school based staff who work with children, young people and families. These courses are mainly one-offs, are often delivered by trainers who do not know the local service context, and mainly focus on increasing awareness and early recognition with advice to respond kindly and with compassion, and to refer all presentations on to specialist services.

For children and young people, there continues to be on-going high referral rates of self harming behaviour into specialist CAMHS in the context of what appears to be a national increase in self harming behaviours. Referral on is not always the right response for the young person, and nor is it a sustainable response in light of growing numbers and finite resources at specialist levels.

In response to our growing concern about the levels of self harming behaviour in young people, in October 2013, the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service Board supported a proposal that specialist CAMHS services offer an informed and systematic North Wales approach to addressing the needs of children and young people at risk of suicide or self-harm who are identified in schools and other front line services. This approach needs to ensure that children young people and front line professionals gain appropriate and timely help, and that children and young people are assessed and referred into specialist services appropriately where needed.

Why do we need a more consistent approach?

- To improve the quality of support, advice and guidance offered to young people who self-harm, or who may be at risk of committing suicide
- To offer consistent support to children and young people no matter what the point of contact, and to standardise the response of agencies regardless of which agency
- To increase knowledge, skills and competence of staff in non-specialist services to recognise and respond appropriately when working with a young person who self-harms.

Service Delivery Context

Part 1 of the Mental Health Measure came into force 1st October 2012 – specialist CAMHS Single Point of Access arrangements are now in place in each county across North Wales. Plans are currently being made to ‘launch’ the new access arrangements in each county. All specialist CAMHS teams across North Wales are working hard to introduce new ways of working, which requires a shift in emphasis from routinely assessing all cases referred – which frequently and repeatedly leads to lengthy waits – to carrying out initial discussion and consultation to determine needs. Care is then ‘matched’ to presenting need through a range of possible modes of intervention:

- Advice and information and where necessary, training
- Signposting to alternative services or activities in the community
- Working alongside a professional through consultation where this is appropriate to the needs of the young person (sometimes this will be with the professional who refers, sometimes it will be alongside another professional)
- Access to universal or targeted evidence based intervention in the community
- Comprehensive mental health assessment.

Background

Prior to the introduction of the Mental Health Measure, Primary Mental Health practitioners in each county largely led the delivery of specialist CAMHS led training to front line staff on self harm as required under old AQF targets. In some counties,

this has also included the availability of regular consultation with specialist CAMHS practitioners. Where consultation has been consistently available, pathways have been agreed with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, which has led to a well received system of universal awareness training combined with targeted skills training, the goal of which is to equip selected school based and other front line staff to carry out rapid early first stage risk assessment in close collaboration with specialist CAMHS in order to determine next steps. Regular (once a term) meetings for multi-agency staff who have received skills training are also organised and led by specialist CAMHS to ensure access to appropriate support and information updates for these selected and trained professionals.

This approach adheres to principles from 'Talk to Me' and NICE in establishing sources of help at the first point of contact, quickly assessing risk, and establishing what's needed next. It also ensures that appropriately trained mental health professionals are providing the required level of consultation in collaboration with the professional who first becomes aware of a problem, in order to determine risk. This avoids delays in first stage assessment resulting from joining waiting lists, but ensures that those at highest risk are seen for mental health assessment as quickly as possible.

Connecting with People – Dr Alys-Cole-King

Selected staff from specialist CAMHS have trained as trainers in the Suicide Awareness module. We are currently liaising with Dr Cole-King to adapt the materials for delivery to staff who work with children and young people, as the content is focused on adults. It also focuses on suicide awareness only. We will be including self harm as well as suicide awareness into one jointly agreed module for school and other front line professionals – partly because there is considerable overlap in the messages contained in both awareness level trainings, and also because it is not realistic to expect school staff to attend two separate training courses on this subject. Once complete this jointly developed training module will form the first level of awareness training in the regional pathway of training offered to schools and other front line professionals.

What will a Specialist CAMHS training and consultation pathway look like?

1. Standardised locally delivered awareness-level training in self harm and suicide, available on a regular basis for any multi-agency front line professionals including schools
2. Standardised locally delivered skills-level training, including first stage basic risk assessment questions, available for selected multi-agency front line staff who will be linked to specialist CAMHS through each Single Point of Access. These people will be the first point of contact when self harm comes to light in the community. These trained staff will link directly in to specialist CAMHS and receive help in managing the situation, and will together carry out immediate first level risk assessment, and agree best next steps
 - Professional consultation outcome for those identified as low risk
 - Mental Health Assessment outcome for those identified as high risk
3. Regular (e.g. once a term) on-going multi-agency meetings to keep those trained in first stage risk assessment updated, connected with each other and to specialist CAMHS.

Where are we up to?

- Unanimous support for the development and delivery of the pathway at Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service Board 31st October 2013
- Work with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board is underway to ensure that the community components of the pathway are incorporated into the review of the regional protocol for managing young people who self harm
- Close liaison with Dr Alys Cole-King is underway and the jointly agreed adapted materials for the Suicide [and Self Harm] Awareness module for use with professionals working with young people are nearing completion
- Early stage plans are in place for implementation in four of the six counties across North Wales – close links are in place with local specialist CAMHS management structures to ensure that there is support for the delivery of the community pathway in each county – once this has been ratified with the regional multi-agency LSCB plans will be made to visit local multi-agency planning groups including where possible Secondary Heads Federation Meetings to agree local implementation
- Liaison will be maintained with the newly formed North Wales Talk to Me 2 regional 'network' to review it's terms of reference and aims and objectives – attendance will depend on the goals of the group.

Relevant additional Information



talktomee%5b1%5d
.pdf



T4MH delivery
plan.pdf

Talk to Me Action Plan 2009-2014

Together for Mental Health Delivery Plan 2012-2016

Links to NICE Clinical Guideline 16 (2004) <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG16> and NICE Quality Standards 34 (2013)

<http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/index.jsp?action=byID&o=14200>



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Aneurin Bevan
University Health Board

Our Ref: JP/RB/jr
Your Ref:

Direct Line: 01633 435905

1st September 2014

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

Dear Mr Powell

Petition Titles: Provision of IDB Services in Wales (Ref: P-04-560) and Secondary School Awareness of Self-Harm (Ref: P-04-559)

Thank you for your letters dated July 2014 and 21st August 2014 respectively, in relation to the above petitions. I noted from both petitions that they posed the same question, but that the first had attracted 664 signatures and the second had 12 signatures. Therefore, given that the wording was exactly the same for both petitions, I have taken the opportunity to provide a combined response to the two petitions. I should be grateful if you would find below a response from Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

Within the Health Board's Specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), we have seen a significant increase in the number of deliberate self-harm assessments within our acute hospitals. In 2011 we completed approx 60 assessments, this increased to 125 in 2012 (a change in the age threshold contributed to this), and in 2013 we had 230 assessments. In the current year, our first 4 months activity is just under 90 assessments, therefore, we can forecast that there will be in excess of 250 deliberate self-harm assessments conducted on under 18s within the acute hospitals across the Health Board during this year.

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Aneurin Bevan
Pencadlys, Ysbyty Sant Cadog
Ffordd Y Lodj, Caerllion
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Ffôn: 01633 436700 (prif switsfwrdd)
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Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
Headquarters, St Cadoc's Hospital
Lodge Road, Caerleon
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www.aneurinbevanhb.wales.nhs.uk

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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Aneurin Bevan yw enw gweithredol Bwrdd Iechyd Lleol Prifysgol Aneurin Bevan
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board is the operational name of Aneurin Bevan University Local Health Board

Of course this is only those young people who present to our emergency departments, therefore, we are not fully aware of the scale of the problem in our wider communities. To our senior clinicians working in CAMHS, however, self harm appears to be becoming part of the norm for struggling adolescents with a range of emotional difficulties. The Health Board believes that the subject of self harm is not well understood and young people engage in self harm for so many different reasons. Therefore, the increasing incidence of self-harm in young people has also been strongly noted within our services.

The population that carries the highest incidence of self harm are those young people in secondary schools and therefore it is our view that the petition request to target secondary schools by increasing the number of educational programs is entirely appropriate. Both pupils and staff would benefit from such an approach. Recently the organisation 'MindfullUK' (www.mindfull.org.uk) petitioned for mental health to be included as part of the national curriculum in schools. There can be no doubt that this approach would have a positive impact on the understanding of young people and ultimately would mean less referrals to mental health services as the capacity of schools to support young people more effectively would also increase through this proposed initiative.

It is important to state that there is already a Department of Health initiative available to the whole UK in relation to increasing the understanding of adults (those who work in any capacity with children and young people) of mental health issues. The web resource available at www.minded.org.uk was launched in March this year and was fully supported by a range of professionals and third sector organisations including all the main Royal Colleges in health care. There are nearly 200 modules of online training and these include those on suicide and self harm. The Health Board would therefore suggest that this is something that could be utilised effectively in training programmes and would come at no cost to the user. The Schools Assistance Programme (SAP) is a model that has provided help to schools on a number of issues, including self-harm, that has been delivered in many parts of Gwent as well as elsewhere in South Wales. This model might offer an alternative means of supporting the capacity of schools to appropriately manage issues such as self-harm.

I hope this information is helpful to you. Should you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me or Richard Bevan, Board Secretary on 01495 435938 or via richard.bevan@wales.nhs.uk

Yours sincerely



Judith Paget
Interim Chief Executive/Prif Weithredwr Dros Dro

Mel Evans, Chairman

Cadeirydd

Bob Hudson, Chief Executive

Y Prif Weithredwr

Phone: 01874 712643

Fax: 01874 712554

E-bost/Email :

Ffon: 01874 712643

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mel.evans2@wales.nhs.uk

bob.hudson@wales.nhs.uk



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd
Addysgu Powys
Powys Teaching
Health Board

Ref: BH/SA/sj
Your ref: P-04-559

10th September 2014

Mr William Powell, AM
National Assembly for Wales,
Cardiff Bay,
Cardiff,
CF99 1NA

Dear Mr Powell

Re Petition Title: Secondary School Awareness of Self Harm

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above petition.

The Welsh national strategy for suicide prevention and self harm reduction "Talk to Me" details a number of actions to be taken forward by organisations across Wales, including health boards, local authorities, schools and third sector organisations. This includes actions to address the issue of self-harm amongst young people. These actions, if implemented, will help to address the issues raised in the petition.

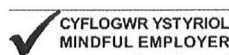
Local Health Boards and Local Authorities are required to respond to local population health needs and prioritise resources accordingly. As such, we believe that local areas should be able to allocate resources to this subject based on local need.

We have summarised below the actions that are already taking within existing resources in Powys, as we recognise the importance of addressing the issue of self harm and reducing associated stigma.

Suicide prevention and self harm reduction have been incorporated in the Powys Mental Health strategy and action plan "Hearts and Minds".

The Powys Children and Young People's Partnership has an Emotional and Mental Wellbeing subgroup, which enables partnership working to address issues including self harm.

Pencadlys y Bwrdd Iechyd
Y Plasty, Bronllys, Aberhonddu, Powys LD3 0LS
Ffôn: 01874 711661 Ffacs: 01874 711601



Health Board Headquarters
Mansion House, Bronllys, Brecon, Powys LD3 0LS
Tel: 01874 711661 Fax: 01874 711601

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth Gymraeg
Bwrdd Iechyd Addysgu Powys yw enw gweithred Bwrdd Iechyd Lleol
Addysgu Powys



Pack Page 49

We welcome correspondence in Welsh
Powys Teaching Health Board is the operational name of
Powys Teaching Local Health Board

We have Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Primary Mental Health Workers in place across Powys. Working with all our secondary schools, they help teachers to support the mental health of children and to act as the link between schools and the CAMHS service. The Primary Mental Health Workers are seen in Powys as being pivotal to promoting good emotional health amongst young people, helping to prevent mental health issues and identifying potential mental health problems.

The Primary Mental Health Workers also work closely with the youth forum and are part of our cohort of workers who are able to deliver the Youth Mental Health First Aid course to those who work directly with children and young people.

In addition, we have the school counselling service present in all our secondary schools via face-to-face sessions with trained and accredited counsellors and our online service Kooth (www.kooth.com). Kooth provides a free online counselling support and advice service to young people across Powys. This service is anonymous, confidential and operates 24 hours a day, providing direct access to counsellors through messaging and chat room facilities. This ensures that our young people have equal access to services and are not disadvantaged by living in rural areas.

Mental health and emotional wellbeing is a core subject that is addressed through the Healthy Schools Scheme. This is achieved through various actions such as ensuring appropriate policies and strategies are in place that address issues such as bullying and sexual orientation and through activities that are inclusive and promote increased self esteem and well being.

Outside of the school setting, the Youth Intervention Service provides support to young people aged 11 – 19 years with a range of issues including confidence and self esteem.

Powys teaching Health Board has identified improving childhood resilience as one of the priority areas within the Primary Prevention workstream of its Integrated Medium Term Plan 2014-17.

Further information regarding the services available within Powys can be obtained from Clare Lines, Strategic lead for Mental Health, clare.lines@wales.nhs.uk or Sophia Bird, lead for mental health promotion, Sophia.bird@wales.nhs.uk.

Yours sincerely



Bob Hudson
Chief Executive

P-04-559 Secondary School Awareness of Self-Harm – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Clerking Team, 31.10.14.

Dear Kayleigh,

Thank you for the opportunity to further comment upon this petition.

Within other comments, it is noted by Mr Bob Hudson that www.kooth.com "operates 24 hours a day", however it should be noted that throughout a day, queues on this site are enormous and many young people are left waiting for hours before receiving the chance to talk to a counsellor within specified time limits.

Mr Huw Lewis also states that "As part of the school curriculum in Wales, personal and social education (PSE) prepares learners to be personally and socially effective by providing learning experiences in which they can develop and apply skills, explore personal attitudes and values, and acquire appropriate knowledge and understanding." This is truthful, however this education is not effective if not enrolled successfully within schools, with some schools opting out of providing this service to save time to prepare for examinations. This is sensible however can result in a lack of understanding of important issues such as self-harm. This is why more emphasis should be made on PSE lessons and teachers should be more adequately informed on how to teach these specific lessons.

In conclusion to increase acknowledgement and awareness of self-harm altogether would see the requirement of organisations to partake in activities with young people to boost understanding. The effectiveness of these activities would be dependant on how many schools these were enrolled in.

Kind regards,

Eleanor Price

Agenda Item 3.10

P-04-562 Caernarfon Heritage Centre

Petition wording:

We the undersigned call on the Welsh Government to fund a Heritage Centre in Caernarfon. The town deserves a centre to display its history and the history of its people, its industries, its language and its arts in an engaging building purpose-built in Caernarfon as a home for the treasures taken from it.

Close to 1,000 people – residents of Caernarfon and district and visitors to the area are calling for a resource of this nature in what is one of Wales' most ancient and significant towns. Visitors who take one of my tours around Caernarfon www.drodre.co ask, Where is the Town Museum?, to which the answer is that the town no longer possesses such a thing! This news is met with universal astonishment, given that history surrounds one at every turn.

Petition raised by: Caernarfon Civic Society

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 17 June 2014

Ken Skates AC / AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Diwylliant, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth
Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref KS/05148/14

William Powell AM
Chair Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

24 October 2014

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter about petition P-04-562 Caernarfon Heritage Centre which was sent to the Minister for Culture and Sport in July. I am sorry for the delay in responding.

The Welsh Government, through Cadw, has already invested significant resource into the presentation of the history and culture of Caernarfon, for example through Caernarfon Castle, part of a World Heritage Site, and Segontium Roman Fort. Caernarfon Castle itself attracts over 190,000 visitors a year to the area. The Castle site also houses the Royal Welch Fusiliers Museum which attracts over 90,000 visitors. Whilst not a purpose built centre, interpretation at the Castle includes information about how the town of Caernarfon has developed. The sites also support significant outreach work and community engagement. In addition, the Caernarfon waterfront regeneration project, a multi-agency partnership including Welsh Government, will present several opportunities for integrated heritage interpretation to capture Caernarfon's strong heritage through innovative and creative approaches. For example, proposals are being developed for a community arts regeneration project which tries to integrate the importance of Caernarfon's historic past.

Whilst I would be supportive of a new heritage centre in Caernarfon, I think this has to be led, and funded, locally in order for such a venture to be sustainable. I would be happy for my officials in Cadw and CyMAL to offer advice and guidance should the Civic Society wish to pursue this.

Yours ever

Ken Skates AC / AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Diwylliant, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth
Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff

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

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

4 September, 2014
Mr William Powell AM/AC
Chair of the Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff, CF99 1NA

[\(Stephen.George@wales.gov.uk\)](mailto:Stephen.George@wales.gov.uk)

Dear William Powell AM/AC,

Petition 562: Caernarfon Heritage Centre

Thank you for the letter sent on behalf of the National Assembly for Wales's Petitions Committee, which we received on 31 July 2014, regarding the petition to establish a heritage centre in Caernarfon.

For some years, plans have been discussed and enacted to better depict Caernarfon's heritage. Gwynedd Council is very supportive of the principle of developing Caernarfon as a heritage and cultural hub of the first rank, and it offers continuous support for notable developments to improve the town.

As part of the council's strategic plan for the 2014-2017 period, priority has been given to 'Building on our Strengths'. As part of this, plans will be enacted to develop the Caernarfon waterfront area near the castle World Heritage Site. Though aspects of the scheme will need to be confirmed and developed further, it is very likely that these will include heritage and cultural elements that will align with our vision for the town.

Recently, the council has invested about £60,000 in a new exhibition at the Oriel Pendeitsh gallery, titled 'Our Caernarfon', which depicts Caernarfon's history. The project was funded through the Cadw Heritage Project, which in turn is funded through the European Regional Development Fund. The exhibition is centred on a timeline that depicts the heritage highlights of Caernarfon and its environs from the prehistoric era through to today. In addition, a number of panels depicting Caernarfon's heritage were funded as part of the regeneration project that was funded through European Convergence funding.

In the wake of the interest shown in the 'Our Caernarfon' exhibition, we have now scheduled heritage exhibitions at the Welcome Centre in the Oriel Pendeitsh gallery, including documents of local interest that are stored at the Caernarfon archives.

At present, the partnership between Gwynedd Council and Bangor University is working on a project to redevelop the Gwynedd Museum and Art Gallery in Bangor. The £2.6 million project—funded via the Lottery Heritage Fund, the Welsh Government, Gwynedd Council, Bangor University, the Arts Council of Wales and other partners—is seeking to redevelop Bangor Town Hall as an open and

accessible museum that will depict Gwynedd's rich history and direct people to sites of interest across the county.

Our intention is to develop a series of satellites for the new museum across Gwynedd, and one of these will be located at the Oriel Pendeitsh gallery in Caernarfon. The aim of the satellites will be to showcase artefacts of local interest and to work with local communities to develop heritage projects. As part of the project, we are also collaborating with Cadw to implement community heritage projects specifically on the Segontium site in Caernarfon.

Although Gwynedd Council is very supportive of the principle of developing a heritage centre for Caernarfon, many towns and communities across Gwynedd are also trying to develop similar centres. We therefore need to manage expectations. Regrettably, in the current financial climate, it is not possible for the council to develop a heritage centre in every town in the county, but we are evidently willing to support sustainable projects that are developed by our communities. The council would therefore welcome the opportunity to collaborate on any efforts developed by the Welsh Government to bolster local heritage provision.

If you would like more information on the points cited above, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
Sioned E Williams
Head of Economy and Community

Agenda Item 3.11

P-04-585 Changes to A494/A470 Junction Dolgellau

Petition Wording

In the six weeks since the completion of changes to the junction of the A494/A470 at Dolgellau there have been three serious road traffic collisions, two fatalities, two seriously injured and two "minor injuries". Many people have expressed concerns locally and with the coming summer holidays and an increase to the traffic at this junction there are likely to be more such incidents. We call on the Welsh Government to consider, urgently, changes to this junction before more lives are lost or changed for the worse.

Additional Information:

This junction has always caused concern but in the six weeks of the changes people are very wary of using it and 'locals' change their routes to avoid it when possible. The deaths and injuries are a needless waste of life and lives will be saved if a clearer system is in place, maybe a small roundabout or at least, in the short term, additional signage.

Petition raised by: Kathryn White

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 23 September 2014

Number of signatures: 1,288 electronic signatures and 1,581 paper signatures collected. Total 2,869.

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-04-585
Ein cyf/Our ref EH/05284/14

William Powell AM
Petitions Committee
Chair

10 October 2014

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 30 September regarding petition P-04-585 Changes to A494/A470 junction Dolgellau.

I am aware of local concerns about the safety of the A470/A494 Dolgellau junction. I take matters of road safety very seriously and we are working closely with the police on continuing investigations into the recent incidents.

As an urgent measure, temporary signals have been installed to control the A470/A494 junction and these will remain in place in the short term. Temporary CCTV is also being installed at this junction and at the A470/A493 junction, to allow us to analyse driver behaviour. It should also be noted that the police have yet to conclude investigations into the cause of these incidents. Once concluded my officials will be able to determine what actions will be required in medium and long term to maintain the safety at the junction.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edwina Hart'.

Agenda Item 3.12

P-04-594 Cilmeri Community Council Appeal for The Prince Llywelyn Monument

Petition wording:

Due to the National importance of our Prince Llywelyn Monument we, the Community of Cilmeri call, on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to:

- Install locational signage boards, incorporating a brown signage battlefield icon, to denote the historical significance of our village, on the A483 at both main road entrances to the village;
- Work in partnership with Powys County Council, Cilmeri Community Council and CADW to help maintain the famous monument, so that visitors can enjoy our national historical amenity in a safe and befitting environment;
- Help identify resources to implement, in a phased manner, the Lloyd Brown Interpretation Plan (January 2013), commissioned by CADW.

Additional Information:

The interpretation plan highlights the fact that Llywelyn was the last native Welsh Prince to fall in battle, marking the effective end of the powerful dynasty of Gwynedd, which played an important role in forging a sense of Welsh nationhood and identity.

Petitioner: Cilmeri Community Council

First considered by the Committee: 23 September 2014

Number of Signatures: 305

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-04-594
Ein cyf/Our ref EH/05287/14

William Powell AM
Chair Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

16 October 2014

Dear William,

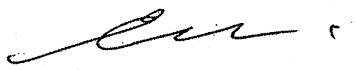
Thank you for your letter of 30 September regarding petition P-04-594 - Prince Llywelyn Monument at Cilmeri.

The A483 is trunk road and therefore we would need to agree any proposed changes to the village boundary signs. I have asked my officials to investigate whether it would be possible to provide tourist signing to the monument.

We are already working with Powys County Council and Cilmeri Community Council to help maintain the monument and we have made them aware of support and possible funding available through our Civic Initiatives (Heritage) Grant Scheme.

We have also been working with Abbey Cwmhir Trust and Powys County Council and have provided funding of around £10,000 for development of the Implementation Plan, putting up two interpretation boards and a replacement well cover at the site. The Council replaced the fence around the monument and alongside the steps down to the well. The work was completed before the annual commemoration ceremony in December 2013.

Implementation of the longer term recommendations, which include acquiring land for parking, new path, and seating are a matter for the Council to take forward. Some funding for further minor works may be available through the Civic Initiatives (Heritage) Grant Scheme.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. M.', written in a cursive style.

Agenda Item 3.13

P-04-599 Impact of Domestic Rating on Self Catering Accommodation

Petition wording

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

1. Undertake a thorough review and impact assessment of the Non Domestic Rating (Definition of Domestic Property) (Wales) Order 2010, with particular reference to:

a. the potential for adverse impact on new self catering tourism businesses, as they develop their marketing strategies during the first two years of trading;

b. the critical impact of severe weather events on marketing strategies and hence occupancy rates during a particular calendar year.

2. Have regard to the findings of such a review, specifically by instructing the Valuation Office for Non Domestic Rates in Wales to adopt a flexible and business friendly approach, including potential for the retrospective waiving of Council Tax, where there is clear evidence of a genuine case.

3. Review its overall tourism marketing strategy, to ensure that Visit Wales registered self catering businesses are not disadvantaged by disproportionate emphasis upon coastal tourism and serviced accommodation, such as cruising and hotels.

As well as fostering a positive climate for new self catering business, this would also serve to create a level playing field for business with England and the other nations of the United Kingdom – and ensure that the self catering sector, so vital to the Welsh tourism economy, is no longer marginalised.

Petitioner : Chris Harris

First considered by the Committee: 23 September 2014

Number of Signatures: 27

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-04-599
Ein cyf/Our ref EH/05282/14

William Powell AM
Chair Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

10 October 2014

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 30 September regarding Petition P-04-599, received from Chris Harris which seeks a thorough review of the Non Domestic Rating (Definition of Domestic Property) (Wales) Order 2010 and to review the Welsh Government's overall tourism marketing strategy for Wales.

I am aware of the issues that the Non Domestic Rating (Definition of Domestic Property) (Wales) Order 2010 Order has had on genuine businesses. As a result, I commissioned the Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation (IRRV) to carry out an independent review to look at the effects of the Order. The IRRV took into consideration the views of a wide range of the business community and owners of self-catering properties, as well as trade and other relevant organisations.

Following the publication of the report by the IRRV, a six-week consultation was launched and advertised via the Welsh Government's online consultation portal. The consultation sought the views of individuals, owners of self-catering properties and representatives of the self-catering trade. The consultation document and a summary of the responses received can be found here:

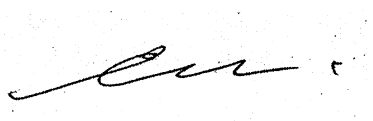
<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/localgovernment/non-domestic-rating-consul/?status=open&lang=en>

Following this initial review, work in respect of self catering properties in Wales is currently being undertaken which will be used to inform what action should be taken in relation to any potential changes in the legislation for this area, including whether any guidance should be issued to the Valuation Office Agency and Local Authorities.

The Welsh Government's marketing strategy, which currently covers all tourism in Wales, was produced following extensive consultation with the tourism industry and with other stakeholders. It recognises the importance of Wales's varied tourism offering and does not marginalise any particular sector. The strategy and marketing campaigns are monitored throughout the year with guidance received from the Tourism Advisory Board.

We meet regularly with representatives of the self-catering sector and discussions are currently ongoing with self-catering agencies regarding further promotion of the sector to the domestic UK family market as part of our January 2015 marketing campaign.

I am confident that the reviews which have been undertaken and the procedures that are currently in place are sufficient and no further action is required.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. I.', is located below the text. The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Agenda Item 3.14

P-04-572 – Grants for Flood Resilience.

Petition Wording

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to approve grants for properties that have recently flooded to fund work to make them more resilient to future flooding.

Petition raised by: Charles Edward Moore

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 15 July 2014

Number of signatures : 88

P-04-572 Grants for Flood Resilience – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 13.10.14.

Dear Committee

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to respond to the NRW correspondence.

I would firstly like to inform the committee of the potential for flooding in our area. Our properties are in a natural “bowl”, created by the primary/secondary sea defences and the coast road which is some 4 feet above the lowest point of our estate.

The potential for flooding is not only from the sea but from sustained rain, such as which as happened as recently as 20th July this year when properties at the lowest part of the estate were very close to flooding yet again. Imagine how residents, some of who had only recently moved back in after the December flooding, felt when they saw the water level rising and approaching their homes. I have received correspondence from Chris Ruane M.P. who states that the amount of rain which caused homes to nearly flood was a 1 in 6 year event and I believe that this figure falls within the NRW remit to supply individual flood protection.

There have been occasions over the last years when the Fire Brigade have been called out to pump rain water from the lowest point of the estate to prevent flooding of properties.

In 1990 most of our properties flooded due to a coastal flood. As far as I know, no improvements were made to the primary sea defences at that time in our area to prevent future flooding.

Denbighshire Council are in consultation at the moment to evaluate the best way to prevent future coastal flooding. I have no information as to whether any action has been proposed to prevent any surface water flooding. They say that no measures to improve the primary defences will be implemented until 2016 at the earliest. I assume that, as the defences are the responsibility of DCC, and further budget cuts are imposed that this is optimistic.

I note that NRW seem to contradict themselves in the figures they present. Firstly they state that flood resilience cost an average of £1,200 per property but further

the state that it would cost “a few thousand per property to make homes in Wales flood resilient”. Which is it?

For information to the committee I would like to state that I have approached my insurer, NFU, and asked how much effect of making my property more flood resistant would have on my property insurance. They were not interested and stated that there would be no effect. I have seen no evidence of anyone working with the insurance industry. By NRW’s own admission we are in a low risk flood area but the insurance industry don’t consider this at all. I cannot move insurance companies and my insurance has now increased from £370 to £970 per year with £7500 flood excess.

I still believe, taking all these factors into account, and if there is no resolution to both forms of potential flooding in the short term, that there is a strong case for grants to be made available to make the homes on our estate more flood resilient immediately.

Yours Sincerely

C E Moore

Agenda Item 3.15

P-04-579 Reinstatement funding for Skomer Island's Guillemot monitoring Wording

Natural Resources Wales have cut the £12,000 annual funding they provide for the on-going Guillemot monitoring study on Skomer Island. This is a hugely important study, and gives valuable insights into seabird life and what affects their populations. Not only is it a shame to end such a long running (and therefore valuable) data set, but the cut couldn't have come at a worse time, considering the huge impact the recent storms have had on seabird populations (current death toll 25,000 and rising). This is a very bad decision on the part of Natural Resources Wales, and we'd like to see it amended.

Petitioner: Cardiff University Ornithological Society

Considered first by the Committee: 23 September 2014

Number of signatures: 1687

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol
Minister for Natural Resources



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-579
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/05188/14

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

21st October 2014

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter dated 30 September regarding the Cardiff University Ornithological Society's petition about funding for monitoring of guillemots at Skomer Island.

Wales provides important areas for breeding seabirds including guillemots, and I recognise the importance of monitoring population variations. Natural Resources Wales has a contract with the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) to undertake annual surveys of the seabirds on Skomer Island, which includes guillemots.

I am aware that earlier this year Natural Resources Wales (NRW) decided not to renew a specific guillemot survey contract with Sheffield University. The long term increase in guillemot numbers at Skomer Island, and the fact that this species will continue to be monitored under the JNCC contract, reassures me that there will be no loss of data or information about these birds. NRW will of course keep monitoring needs and requirements under review.

My recent approval of boundary extensions and updated listing of species for three Special Protection Areas (SPA) for breeding seabirds now includes the marine areas which are vitally important for feeding, preening and other behaviours during the birds' breeding season. The sea adjacent to the nesting areas now enjoys the same level of protection as the nesting sites themselves. This gives both the colony the protection that will sustain the growth of guillemot and other seabird populations. The positive implications of these SPA extensions will also enhance the future visitor experience especially for those who enjoy

wildlife trips to these special places.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'C' followed by a vertical line and a small flourish at the bottom.

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol
Minister for Natural Resources

Agenda Item 3.16

P-04-583 Ban all Growing and Selling of all GM seeds / Foods and Animal / Fish Feed in Wales

Petition Wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to establish, as far as that is consistent with EU law, an Act banning all GM food, plants and seeds from being grown and sold in Wales, as well as GMO used in all animal, game and fish feed. Food sovereignty and health is a crucial issue to the future of Wales and the world and is something that will further positively distinguish Welsh food products in the worldwide market. As presented by the great work done by GM Free Cymru and by key scientists such as Irina Ermakova, Professor Vyvyan Howard and Malcolm Hooper, Dr Stanley Ewen, Dr Arpad Pusztai, Manuela Malatesta and colleagues at the Universities of Pavia and Urbino in Italy to name a few, there is now overwhelming evidence available about the inherent dangers of GM foods.

Additional Information:

GM Cymru's Dr Brian John states that "The European Commission appears to be intent upon issuing one contentious GM authorization after another, basing its decisions upon highly selective and biased research by the applicants themselves, and taking guidance from a despised European food safety authority which has lost the confidence of NGO's and consumer groups across Europe". Politicians are blindly promoting the merits of the large biotechnology companies such as Monsanto in spite of massive opposing public and scientific voices. Patenting nature and intervening through genetic engineering is also an act against nature itself and brings in to question morality, ethics, natural and human rights. An increasing number of countries such as Hungary, Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Japan, Switzerland, the Basque country and Peru, to name but a few, are now

expelling the chemical and bio tech giant Monsanto and eliminating all GM crops, seed, plants and foods from their country.

Petition raised by: Gruffydd Meredith

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 23 September 2014

Number of signatures: 13

Rebecca Evans AC / AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Ffermio a Bwyd
Deputy Minister for Farming and Food



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-583
Ein cyf/Our ref RE/05122/14

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

23 October 2014

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 30 September about the Welsh Government's approach to GM policy in Wales. The Welsh Government has a long-standing policy that is to maintain a restrictive and precautionary approach to GM crop cultivation that is consistent with UK and EU law. This policy approach recognises that the Welsh Government cannot legally ban GM crops in Wales because we have to work within a European legal framework. GM crops are approved at the EU level following a full risk assessment and, therefore, any variety of GM seed on the EC Common Seed Catalogue is available for marketing throughout the EU.

However, the Welsh Government recognises that within the scientific literature and reports available about GM there remains no consensus on a range of issues such as animal and human health, environmental safety or socio-economic issues arising from the introduction of GM crops and the associated herbicide regime. Our policy approach is, therefore, one of caution and recognises the need to protect our investment in clean, sustainable agriculture and our unique environment and landscape.

The Welsh Government fully supports the European Commission's proposal to allow Member States the option to choose whether or not to grow authorised GM crop varieties on all or part of their territory. This proposal achieved political agreement at Environment Council on 12 June and has been formally adopted by the Council of the European Union on 23 July. The file has since been passed to the European Parliament for their consideration. When adopted I believe that this will provide us with greater control over the growing of any future GM crops in Wales.

We believe that a broader and more holistic evaluation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) should be undertaken before they are approved. The regulatory approval process should not only consider human health and the environment but also socio-economic issues. This is a view a number of Member States hold and has been recognised by the Commission. I therefore welcome the recent commitment made by the President-elect of the European Commission to review the current authorisation system for GMOs.

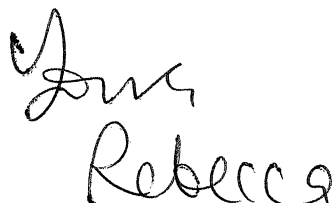
Turning to food and feed issues, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) has the UK policy lead for GM food and feed safety, and labelling matters. The FSA is neither for nor against GM: the FSA considers that GM products should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and only be allowed on the market if they have been shown to be as safe as conventional (non-GM) food or feed. The FSA considers that consumers should be able to make an informed choice about whether or not to buy GM food through accurate labelling.

The current procedures for evaluation and authorisation of genetically modified (GM) food and feed are laid down in Regulation (EC) 1829/2003, which came into force in April 2004. The safety assessments are carried out by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), according to its published guidelines for the assessment of GMOs.

Each application is reviewed on a case-by-case basis, including a detailed consideration of the potential for toxic, nutritional and allergenic effects. GM foods may only be authorised for sale if they are judged not to present a risk to health, not to mislead consumers, and not to be of less nutritional value than the foods they are intended to replace. In carrying out its evaluation, EFSA may consult the authority responsible for food safety assessment in one of the European Union (EU) Member States. In the UK this is the Food Standards Agency, which seeks expert advice on GM foods from the independent Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP) as appropriate. The FSA is content that the EFSA safety assessments are robust and provide a good basis for decision making. Consistent with Government stated policies, decisions on authorisation should be science based and be proportionate.

On the basis of these assessments, it is the FSA's view that there is no reason to suppose that GM feed presents any more risk to farmed livestock than conventional feed. GM feed, which is very unlikely to contain viable GMOs, is digested by animals in the same way as conventional feed. Food from animals fed on authorised GM crops is considered to be as safe as food from animals fed on non-GM crops.

The FSA supports the principle of consumer choice through accurate labelling, in recognition that some people will want to choose not to buy GM food, however carefully it has been assessed for safety.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rebecca', written in a cursive style.

Rebecca Evans AC / AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Ffermio a Bwyd
Deputy Minister for Farming and Food

P-04-583 Ban all Growing and Selling of all GM seeds / Foods and Animal / Fish Feed in Wales – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Clerking Team, 30.10.14.

Dear Kayleigh,

Please see my response to Rebecca Evans, Deputy Minister for Farming and Food dated October 23rd 2014:

It's very encouraging to see that the Welsh Government has a long standing restrictive and precautionary approach to GM crop cultivation, that it admits that there remains no consensus on a range of issues such as animal and human health, environmental issues or socio economic issues and that a broader and more holistic evaluation of GMO's should be undertaken before they are approved.

Given this I fail to see how the Welsh Government can or should agree with the FSA's view that GM feed "represents any more risk to farmed livestock than conventional feed and that food from animals fed on authorised GM crops is considered as safe as food from animals fed on non GM crops". Given that humans often eat animals that are fed with GM feed and that animal health is also obviously an issue, it seems obvious that it makes no sense to follow the FSA's advice given the other statements made by the Welsh Government as seen in the letter. The letter from the Minister for Farming and Food on behalf of the Welsh Governemnt therefore seems confused and contradictory. As demonstrated in my earlier reply there is an abundance of evidence from a wide variety of sources that GM is a danger to short and long term human and environmental health and is also ethically wrong and environmentally dangerous. Either the Welsh Government takes a precautionary approach to GM/GE/GMO or it doesn't is how I would summarise my points,

Maybe the Minister could clarify her position further on this crucial precautionary issue,

Thanks again,
G.Meredith

P-04-595 Foresight Pathway

Petition wording:

We the undersigned , call upon The National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to safeguard the vital future health and wellbeing of the people of Wales by making food security the direct responsibility of an independent person to ensure future overview of food production. He or she must be answerable to the First Minister. The security of food production is of the first order in importance to the people of Wales. Energy already is the First Minister's remit.

Additional Information:

Whilst acknowledging the significance of safeguarding our natural environment, we earnestly believe that food production must be funded by adequate inflation proof measures, to all sectors of Welsh agriculture and included within the First Ministers remit. This would serve to address the serious malaise and lack of confidence in the future of the industry which has afflicted Welsh farming in recent years. We are convinced that making the reliability and sufficiency of food supply a central objective of Welsh Government policy will ensure national survival in the turbulent years ahead.

Petitioner : David Hardwick

First considered by the Committee: 23 September 2014

Number of Signatures: 2 electronic signatures and 89 paper signatures collected.

Rebecca Evans AC / AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Ffermio a Bwyd
Deputy Minister for Farming and Food



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-595
Ein cyf/Our ref RE/05082/14

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

22 October 2014

Dear William,

Thank you for your recent letter to the Minister for Natural Resources, dated 30 September, regarding the petition from David Hardwick. I am responding as food security issues fall under my direct responsibility as Deputy Minister for Farming and Food.

Safeguarding the health and wellbeing of the people of Wales is central to the work of the Welsh Government. The sustainable management of our natural resources is critical to the future success of our economy and essential in creating a future for all our communities.

Wales is well placed to respond to food security challenges. Through '*Towards Sustainable Growth: An Action Plan for the Food and Drink Industry 2014-2020*', it is our intention to work closely with food security and food safety stakeholders in order to achieve a holistic approach to sustaining the food production base in Wales, and to protect consumers as a result. This will be part of the remit of the Food and Drink Wales Industry Board, which will be established shortly.

It is clear that we cannot act alone on these matters. The Welsh Government is already a partner and contributor to the Global Food Security Programme; a multi-agency programme which coordinates food security related research across government administrations in the UK, the UK Research Councils and the Technology Strategy Board.

As Food and Farming is one of the Welsh Government's priority sectors, the Rural Development Plan (RDP), as it relates to food, is aligned with '*Towards Sustainable Growth*'. RDP funding will play a key part in supporting food production through the Food Business Investment Scheme, the Supply Chain Development Scheme, and through the provision of advice and knowledge transfer.

I am confident therefore that we are currently well placed to deal with food security challenges which may arise in the future.

Yours,

Rebecca

Rebecca Evans AC / AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Ffermio a Bwyd
Deputy Minister for Farming and Food

Agenda Item 3.18

P-04- 592 Democratically Binding Plebiscites at Local Government Level

Petition Wording:

We, the undersigned, call upon the Welsh Government to legislate to allow for Welsh citizens to call plebiscites on issues at the level of Local Government, and for such votes to have the effect of, either [1] calling-in decisions made by Councils for reconsideration, or [2] allowing votes above a two-thirds majority to be democratically binding.

Additional Information:

Plebeian Laboratories is aware of an endless number of decisions made at Local Government Level, which negatively affect the lives of citizens, but over which they have very little direct control. In recent years, Direct Democracy has gained in popularity in many countries throughout the world, not least as a means to increase civic participation and Democratic Rights. Although we do not anticipate Assembly Members voting to enact direct democracy at Welsh national level any more than turkeys would vote for Christmas, a degree of limited direct democracy at Local Government level would bring Welsh democracy to life.

The creation of the National Assembly for Wales has permitted Welsh citizens a limited democratic voice over decisions affecting their lives, however Plebeian Laboratories is aware of an endless number of decisions made at Local Government Level, which negatively affect the lives of citizens, but over which they have very little direct control. In recent years, Direct Democracy has gained in popularity in many countries throughout the world, not least as a means to increase civic participation and Democratic Rights. Although we do not anticipate Assembly Members voting to enact direct democracy at Welsh national level any more than turkeys would vote for Christmas, a

degree of limited direct democracy at Local Government level would bring Welsh democracy to life.

Petition raised by: Plebeian Laboratories

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 23 September 2014

Number of signatures: 38

Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
Minister for Public Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-592
Ein cyf/Our ref LA /05066/14

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

petition@wales.gov.uk

14 October 2014

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 30 September seeking my views on a petition regarding plebiscites on issues at Local Government level.

In July, we published the Reforming Local Government White Paper, which set out our vision for the future of Local Government. I will be publishing a further White Paper on Reforming Local Government in the New Year. The emphasis of this paper will be on bringing Local Government closer to the people, empowering people and communities, and strengthening their influence over decisions taken by Local Authorities. Ideas such as those called for in this petition will be considered as part of the Reforming Local Government programme.

*Yours sincerely,
Leighton Andrews*

Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
Minister for Public Services

Agenda Item 3.19

P-04-596 Save Porth Fire Station – SECONDS COST LIVES!

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to review the proposal to close Porth fire station leaving the communities of Porth 10 – 15 minutes away from the nearest fire engine located at either Tonypandy or Treforest.

Due to the public sector cuts and the fire review cover being carried out, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service has made a proposal to permanently close Porth fire station. This will leave no fire cover within the Porth community

Petitioner : Gerwyn James

First considered by the Committee: 23 September 2014

Number of Signatures: 5 electronic signatures and in excess of 9,000 paper signatures.



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-596
Ein cyf/Our ref: LA/05065/14

William Powell AM
Chair Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA
committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

9 October 2014

Dear William,

I am writing in response to your letter of 30 September to the Minister for Public Services regarding a petition from Gerwyn James calling on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to review the proposal to close Porth Fire Station. I am responding in light of the Minister's constituency interests.

I am aware of the Review of Fire Cover South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority has undertaken across its whole area.

Fire and Rescue Authorities are autonomous, independent bodies. It is for them to maintain an appropriate level of services in their areas, based on the professional advice of Chief Fire Officers. The Welsh Government has no power to challenge or overturn such decisions, so there is no scope for us to become involved here.

Yours sincerely

CARWYN JONES