

Concise Minutes – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

This meeting can be viewed

Video Conference Via Zoom

on [Senedd TV](#) at:

Meeting date: Tuesday, 23 June 2020

<http://senedd.tv/en/6374>

Meeting time: 09.04 – 10.15

Attendance

Category	Names
Assembly Members:	Janet Finch-Saunders MS (Chair) Neil McEvoy MS Jack Sargeant MS Leanne Wood MS
Witnesses:	
Committee Staff:	Graeme Francis (Clerk) Mared Llwyd (Second Clerk) Ross Davies (Deputy Clerk)

1 Introduction, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

Apologies were received from Michelle Brown MS.

2 Debating petitions with 5000 signatures

The Committee considered various petitions relating to COVID-19 with more than 5000 signatures and agreed to write to the Business Committee to request that time be made available before the summer recess for a debate on petition [P-05-967 Welsh Government to amend its NDR relief policy to help keep Debenhams stores open in](#)



[Wales](#). The Committee also expressed a desire for debates to be scheduled on issues not related to COVID-19 as soon as possible.

3 COVID-19 petitions

3.1 P-05-964 Extend covid-19 financial support and paid leave to vulnerable and pregnant NHS wales bank workers

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to await a formal response from the Minister for Health and Social Services to the petition, in the hope that this may contain further information in relation to the reconsideration that the Welsh Government has requested from health boards.

3.2 P-05-967 Welsh Government to amend its NDR relief policy to help keep Debenhams stores open in Wales

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to:

- write back to the Minister for Finance to ask for an update on any further discussions which have taken place with Debenhams or other major retailers, and ask what options for support the Welsh Government is considering; and
- write to the Business Committee to request a plenary debate before the summer recess.

4 New petitions

4.1 P-05-952 Revert to Welsh language spelling of place-names

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to await the view of the petitioner on the response provided by the Minister for International Relations and the Welsh Language before considering whether or not to take further action.

4.2 P-05-961 Lower the age for breast cancer screening in Wales from 50 to 30

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to await the view of the petitioner on the response provided by the Minister for Health and Social Services before considering whether or not to take further action.

4.3 P-05-963 Require supermarkets to donate excess food to charity

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write back to the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs to seek further details about the Welsh Government's current assessment of its powers in relation to surplus food distribution, and the powers being sought by Welsh Ministers through the UK Environment Bill.

5 Updates to previous petitions

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

On the basis that the campaigners have succeeded in their aim to have the flood risk reassessed prior to any work further being done in the park, and as Natural Resources Wales does not intend to undertake further work at the current time, the Committee agreed that there is no further action that it can take before the end of this Senedd term. The Committee congratulated the petitioners on their success and closed the petition.

In doing so, Members agreed to write to urge Natural Resources Wales to share their reassessment of the final phase of the Roath Flood Scheme with the petitioners at the earliest convenience.

5.2 P-05-815 Control Rapidly Expanding Intensive Poultry Industry in Wales

The Committee considered further correspondence and noted that work is ongoing to review and, where opportunities are identified, strengthen planning requirements around intensive agriculture. The Committee agreed to note the serious concerns expressed by the petitioners throughout this process but concluded that, in light of the responses received from the Minister, Natural Resources Wales and the petitioners, there is little further that it could achieve at this time. The Committee agreed to close the petition and to write to the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee to ask if they can continue to monitor developments as part of their work into land use and biodiversity.

5.3 P-05-895 Rosa's Legacy: Introduce a scheme to help people access veterinary care for their companion animals

The Committee considered further information and agreed to:

- await a further update from the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs once she has been able to undertake further discussions with the Animal Welfare Network Wales and the British Veterinary Association; and
- write to the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons to seek their views on the issues raised by the petition and in the petitioner's subsequent comments.

5.4 P-05-933 Ban Goldfish from being given away at funfairs. #OperationGoldfish

The Committee considered further information and agreed to write back to the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs to:

- ask for an update as to whether the meeting of the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Group has taken place, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, and to ask again for clarification over the potential to address this issue through the forthcoming Regulations to introduce a licensing scheme for Animal Exhibits; and
- share the information provided by the petitioner and the RSPCA in response to the assertions made by the Showmen's Guild.

5.5 P-05-941 Biodiversity Remit for NRW

The Committee considered further information and agreed to write again to Natural Resources Wales to seek a response to the concerns raised by the petitioners, including in their most recent letter to the Committee.

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

Following the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services' commitment that the Ministerial Play Review will include consideration of funding arrangements and the correspondence received by the Committee, the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner for raising the petition. Committee Members commented that they would continue to review the ministerial review in their capacity as individual Members of the Senedd.

5.7 P-05-831 End the unfairness and discrimination in the financial support for victims of the contaminated blood scandals who were infected in Wales

The Committee considered further information and agree to await a further update following the planned meeting with Haemophilia Wales and the Cross Party Blood Group before considering whether it can take any further action.

5.8 P-05-905 Call for an Independent judicial Inquiry into the reorganisation of services within Cwm Taf Health Board

As the petition calls for an independent judicial inquiry into the management and implementation of the South Wales Programme, which has been specifically ruled out by the Minister for Health and Social Services, and in light of the recent decision to keep open the A&E Department at the Royal Glamorgan Hospital, the Committee agreed to close the petition and to congratulate those involved on the success of the campaign to keep A&E services in the hospital.

5.9 P-05-936 Offer Bowel Cancer Screening After the Age of 74

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to write to the Minister for Health and Social Services to ascertain:

- Whether any research has been, or will be, commissioned in Wales into the potential benefits or harm of bowel cancer screening for people over the age of 74, and the associated timescale; and
- an indication of the timescale for introducing screening for people in the 50 -59 age bracket.

5.10 P-05-862 Tackling school bullying

The Children's Commissioner has expressed her satisfaction with the statutory status of the new anti-bullying guidance, which contains requirements for schools to develop robust policies and to record and monitor. She has also indicated that her office will continue to monitor. On that basis, the Committee agreed that there is little further that the Committee could achieve at this time. Members agreed to thank the petitioner for raising this issue and close the petition.

5.11 P-05-880 Wales is Rapidly Losing its Musical Reputation and Heritage

In light of the fact that Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee will be monitoring further progress in relation to funding and delivery of music education services, following their previous report on this subject, the Committee agreed to share the petitioner's further comments with them, close the petition and thank the petitioner.

5.12 P-05-925 Don't leave Wales behind – teach menstrual wellbeing in schools

On the basis that the Welsh Government is clear that the new Curriculum for Wales promotes flexibility and will not present a detailed list of subjects that schools must teach, the Committee agreed that there is little further which could be achieved. It agreed to close the petition.

5.13 P-05-938 Make Welsh universities consider the Welsh Baccalaureate as an A Level

In light of the Minister for Education's position that it is for universities to establish the entry requirements for their courses, and noting the work underway respond to recommendations made previously by the Children, Young People and Education Committee, the Committee agreed that there is little further that the Committee could achieve. The Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner for raising this issue.

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

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to close the petition following confirmation that proposals to strengthen provision to expect baby changing facilities in both male and female toilets will be included in the Welsh Government's forthcoming consultation on changing places toilet facilities, and congratulate the petitioner on their campaign.

5.15 P-05-898 Ban the use of A boards in Wales

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to write back to the Minister for Housing and Local Government to ask what consideration is being given to

accessibility issues in relation to plans to configure public spaces to enable social distancing due to Covid-19.

5.16 P-05-913 Creation of Lôn Las Môn Multi-Use Path

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to:

- write back to the Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales to ask whether the Welsh Government's desire to maintain the potential for rail services to be reinstated in the future have been impacted by the effects of Covid-19 on public transport; and
- write to Network Rail to ask that they promote the importance of ongoing dialogue between all parties and to look for a solution that could potentially incorporate multiple uses for the line.

5.17 P-05-918 Improve disabled access to Treforest train station as a priority

Following the further clarity about the timescale of the works to improve access to Treforest train station, due to start in September, and the satisfaction of the petitioner, the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner for highlighting this issue.