

Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:
Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date:
10 January 2012

Meeting time:
09:30

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



For further information please contact:

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Agenda

- 1. Introduction, apologies and substitutions**
- 2. Discussion of evidence from Minister for Health and Social Services**
 - 2.1 P-03-136 Parking in Heath and Birchgrove (Page 1)
 - 2.2 P-03-221 Improved NHS Chiropody Treatment (Pages 2 – 3)
 - 2.3 P-03-222 National Osteoporosis Society (Page 4)
- 3. New petitions**
 - 3.1 P-04-351 Recall LDPs (Pages 5 – 6)
 - 3.2 P-04-352 Save Roath Steam Laundry (Page 7)
 - 3.3 P-04-353 Anti-hate Crime Campaign in Wales (Page 8)
 - 3.4 P-04-354 Public statement of support for Bradley Manning (Page 9)
 - 3.5 P-04-355 Cymru not Wales (Page 10)
 - 3.6 P-04-356 A Call to Review the Issues Set Out in the 2007 Report on Football in Wales (Page 11)
 - 3.7 P-04-357 Allocating social housing in Wales (Page 12)

3.8 P-04-359 Problems With The NHS For The Deaf (Pages 13 – 15)

4. Updates to previous petitions

Local Government and Communities

The following two items will be considered together

- 4.1 P-03-227 Against the proposed Metrix access road in Llanmaes (Pages 16 – 17)
- 4.2 P-03-252 Opposing RAF St Athan Northern Access Road (Boverton residents) (Pages 18 – 20)

Health and Social Services

- 4.3 P-03-318 Cross Border Maternity Services (Pages 21 – 38)

Housing, Regeneration and Heritage

The following three items will be considered together:

- 4.4 P-03-308 Save Gwent Theatre (Page 39)
- 4.5 P-03-311 Spectacle Theatre (Pages 40 – 41)
- 4.6 P-03-314 Save Theatr Powys & Mid Powys Youth Theatre (Pages 42 – 44)

Environment and Sustainability

- 4.7 P-04-339 Enforcement of Animal Welfare Standards in the Puppy Farming Industry in South West Wales (Pages 45 – 72)
- 4.8 P-04-343 Prevent the destruction of amenities on common land – Anglesey (Pages 73 – 75)

Assembly Commission

- 4.9 P-04-330 A Welsh-language Record in our Assembly (Pages 76 – 78)

5. Minister for Local Government and Communities – oral evidence session 10.30–11.00

Minister for Local Government and Communities, Carl Sargeant AM
Jeff Collins, Director of Transport, Welsh Government
Ian Davies, Head of Network Operations, Welsh Government

- 5.1 P-03-144 Guide Dogs for the Blind – Shared Space (Pages 79 – 84)
- 5.2 P-03-162 Road Safety in Llanspyddid (Page 85)
- 5.3 P-03-261 Local Solutions to Newtown Traffic (Pages 86 – 87)
- 5.4 P-04-319 Newtown Traffic Petition (Pages 88 – 93)

6. Papers to Note

- 6.1 P-04-321 Arriva Trains Wales services between South West and South East Wales (Pages 94 – 95)

Agenda Item 2.1

PET(4)-01-12 p1a

P-03-136 Parking in the Heath and Birchgrove areas of Cardiff

Petition wording

We would ask the Welsh National Government to:

1. Advise the Cardiff and Vale NHS trust to:

- provide sufficient parking on site for its staff and visitors by seeking suitable areas for hospital parking on site and on land such as the derelict area north of the allotments opposite Heath Hospital on the other side of Eastern Avenue
- decentralise some of the services already on the Heath site and
- cease selling hospital land in Cardiff and the surrounding area for housing.

2. Recommend Cardiff County Council to:

- refuse planning permission for further development on the Heath Hospital site unless a unit is removed from the site which has an equal traffic impact
- discourage multi-occupation development in the area and
- introduce limited time parking in streets within walking distance of Heath hospital.

3. Consider within the Assembly the introduction of a system which would allow local groups to appeal to the Assembly when the council gives planning permission for a development which residents consider will exacerbate the problem of parking in the area.

Petition raised by: Cllr. Ron Page

Petition first considered by Committee: 22 May 2008

Number of signatures: 500+

PET(4)-01-12 p1b

P-03-221 Improved NHS Chiropody Treatment

Petition wording:

We the Cynon Valley 50 plus Older People's Forum wish to present a petition for improved Chiropody Service (footcare) to be available on the NHS especially for Older People who are housebound in the RCT area:

Please sign our petition

Petition raised by: Cynon Valley 50 plus Older People's Forum

Petition first considered by Committee: 9 June 2009

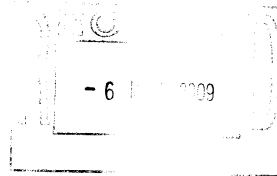
Number of signatures: 49

Supporting information:

Sian Jones
Forum Development Officer
Principality House
Rear of 31 Taff Street
Pontypridd
CF37 4TR.



Val Lloyd AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA.



5-5-09

Dear Val Laloyd

Re: Footcare in Cynon Valley

GDI

I am writing to you on behalf of the above, Fifty Plus Older People's Forum. We have petitioned in the area for better, affordable Footcare; which involves older people who are represented in the Forum, and those who are housebound.

David Davies one of our members highlighted this issue when he realised the NHS were referring to Toe Nail cutting etc: as a social need and not a medical one. This has brought the issue to our attention as we all currently pay for such a service in our own homes as it isn't readily available on the NHS.

After considerable research we find that some GP Surgery's offer Chiropody/Podiatry service in some part of Wales and even some parts of RCT. However, we feel once again this is a post code lottery, service for some and not for others.

We have met with Age Concern Cymru who have printed a document on this subject 'Little steps can make a Big Difference' and are carrying out some research to consider this issue. Falls Prevention – the new strategy takes into consideration that falls can happen if that person has long toe nails/hard skin/in-growing toe nails which are untreated. Routine foot care services are a simple and inexpensive way of preventing problems and avoiding the necessity of more expensive hospital based interventions. To prevent falls and improve foot care, more funding should be made available to voluntary organisations for example, the 'Wellbeing Regeneration' organisation in Burryport, who are a Social Enterprise offering an affordable service to house-bound older people.

PET(4)-01-12 p1c

P-03-222 National Osteoporosis Society

Petition Wording

The National Osteoporosis Society calls upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh government to fully implement the Falls and Fractures Standard in the National Service Framework for Older People, ensuring that patients with and at risk of fragility fractures are identified, assessed and treated by Fracture Liaison Services (FLS) in all of the new Local Health Boards. We would like a FLS to be linked to every hospital that receives fragility fractures, and ask that the Welsh government insists upon universal provision of FLS's across the NHS in Wales

Petition raised by: National Osteoporosis Society 7 July 2009

Petition first considered by Committee: 7 July 2009

Number of signatures: 22

Agenda Item 3.1

PET(4)-01-12 p2a

P-04-351 Recall LDP's

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh government to recall all Local Development Plans across Wales and to scrap the use of population projections issued by the Statistical Directorate that are used to inflate housing numbers in local development plans. We call for all LDPs at whatever stage of development to be halted immediately in order to bring the level of housing growth in line with genuine local needs.

We the undersigned view all LDPs guided by the Welsh Government's population projections as ill thought out, fundamentally flawed and detrimental to the communities of Wales.

This type of planning is not sustainable, is not needed and is not wanted by the people of Wales. In order to halt the damage that is already being done and to prevent further irreversible damage and devastation to our communities, environment and identity across Wales, we appeal to the Welsh Government to intervene immediately.

Petition raised by: Councillor Carrie Harper

Date petition first considered by Committee: 10 January 2012

Number of signatures: 2,471

Supporting information:

WAG's population projection formula is fundamentally flawed, relying heavily on trends of past in migration into Wales and not taking into account the issue of affordability. The use of this formula continues to lead to unnaturally high levels of housing and population growth which will be implemented via our LDPs. The implications of implementing such plans are huge, affecting many aspects of life across the country: Identity and human rights (in terms of Welsh identity, language, culture, character and expression). Environmentally (in terms of sustainability, ecology, natural habitat and the built environment) and societal sustainability (in terms of demographics, economics, politics and communities).

Local authorities have stated publicly they are fearful of deviating to any great extent from the figures issued by the WAG for fear of having their LDPs found 'unsound' by the Planning Inspectorate. This ensures that local opinion is sidelined during the LDP preparation process and our elected

representatives are left struggling to challenge unsustainable levels of housing growth.

Agenda Item 3.2

PET(4)-01-12 p3a

P-04-352 Save Roath Steam Laundry

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to save Roath Steam Laundry. Built in 1898, Roath Steam Laundry at 33 Marlborough Road is a unique landmark building adjacent to the Roath Mill Gardens Conservation Area. We, the undersigned, object to the demolition of this building which would lead to the further decimation of Cardiff's architectural and social heritage. Roath Steam Laundry should be conserved for the benefit of the whole community and should become an amenity which all could be proud of.

Petition raised by: Dave Green

Date petition first considered by Committee: 10 January 2012

Number of signatures: 145

PET(4)-01-12 p4a

P-04-353 Anti-hate crime campaign in Wales

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to condemn the rise in learning disability hate-crime and to urge the Welsh Government to create policies which challenge the negative perception of the value of people with a learning disability in Wales today.

Petition raised by: Wayne Crocker

Date petition first considered by Committee: 10 January 2012

Number of signatures: 336

Agenda Item 3.4

PET(4)-01-12 p5a

P-04-354 Public statement of support for Bradley Manning

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to issue a public statement of support for Welsh/US citizen Bradley Manning.

Petition raised by: Rev Christopher Trefor Davies

Date petition first considered by Committee: 10 January 2012

Number of signatures: 90

PET(4)-01-12 p6a

P-04-355 Cymru not Wales

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to formally drop the name "Wales & Welsh". Wales comes from the Anglo-saxon word *Waleas* meaning "foreigner" We find this word insulting and that our nation should only be known as its original name 'Cymru' (land of comrades or countrymen). After over a thousand years of being called "foreigner" we feel its time this degrading word should be relinquished.

Petition raised by: Dennis Morris

Date petition first considered by Committee: 10 January 2012

Number of signatures: 119

Agenda Item 3.6

PET(4)-01-12 p7a

P-04-356 A Call to Review the Issues Set Out in the 2007 Report on Football in Wales

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to review the issues set out in the 2007 Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee report 'Football in Wales - a review'

In March 2011 the people of Wales overwhelmingly voted for more powers to be devolved to Wales. One of these areas was sport and recreation. We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to use these powers that they did not have in 2007 and review the original report. The FAW needs to be accountable to the people of Wales and provide value for money to the people of Wales. We want the Welsh Government to work with the FAW and FIFA to ensure that this happens.

Petition raised by: Stuart Evans

Date petition first considered by Committee: 10 January 2012

Number of signatures: 96

PET(4)-01-12 p8a

P-04-357 Allocating social housing in Wales

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to address the flawed system for allocating social housing in Wales.

At present, a person who has never visited Wales can qualify for social housing ahead of someone born and bred in Wales. This is due to the points system giving preference to the homeless, those in unfit accommodation, those recently released from institutions, etc.

At first glance, commendable; but when applied on a UK basis we see an endless stream of people with 'problems' from outside Wales denying Welsh people social housing and, too often, blighting Welsh communities.

To remedy this problem we call on the Welsh Government to introduce a period of five-years' residency in Wales before anyone qualifies for social housing, exempting only political refugees and others escaping persecution.

Petition raised by: Royston Jones

Date petition first considered by Committee: 10 January 2012

Number of signatures: 115

Supporting Information:

Earlier this year members of a paedophile gang were given long jail sentences at Swansea Crown Court. This gang was housed in Kidwelly by the Gwalia Housing Group. But why was this gang, originally from London, and with previous convictions, ever inflicted on a small Welsh town?

Regrettably, the Kidwelly case is one of many examples of known criminals and other undesirables being housed in Wales. Leading to a growing suspicion that Wales is being used as a dumping ground by English local authorities and other agencies. Aided by bodies within Wales receiving premium payments for housing such people.

Given that social housing providers are both registered with and funded by the Welsh Government, the time has surely come to review the rôle, responsibilities and funding of Welsh social housing providers.

Agenda Item 3.8

PET(4)-01-12 p9a

P-04-359 Problems with the NHS For The Deaf

Petition wording:

We the undersigned call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to provide a better service for the hearing impaired (H.I.) in the NHS.

Petition raised by: Lisa Catherine Winnett

Date petition first considered by Committee: 10 January 2012

Number of signatures: 68

Supporting Information:

If a deaf person wished to contact their GP surgery to book an appointment, they are unable to do so, as Doctors surgery's don't have a mobile phone text service (Most H.I. don't use text phone, they use mobile phone). When they receive a letter from the Health Board asking them to telephone to book and appointment with a specialist, they are unable to as there are no facilities for them. When attending a hospital appointment, there is no loop system service for them, so that they can hear and answer questions. They say that they can arrange a translator. We have tried accessing this service to no avail. When in hospitals and Doctors' surgeries, H.I. people cannot hear when called, as there are no viewing boards for them to read that they can now go into the Doctors room. Staff 99.99% of the time never speak to the H.I. patient, they always speak to the translator. Lack of Deaf awareness is a problem. As sign language is an H.I. person's 1st language, English is a foreign language, and a H.I. persons English is very layman's. By implementing these changes, it would help with NHS targets, for example lower consultation times, correct diagnosis, saving repeated consultation time. It would help the H.I. with their independence, give them privacy when talking to a Doctor or Nurse. Banks and Post Offices have these services, so why doesn't the NHS have them.

Information supplied by the petitioner

The total number of deaf people in the UK aged 16-60 is 8,945,00. The total number of deaf children in the UK aged 0-16 is 34,000. The total number of deaf people in the UK over the age of 60 is 6,471,000. It is estimated that 1 in 7 people are deaf.

I have personally managed to negotiate a great price for the purchase of portable Loop Sytems. This firm supplied the Post Offices, and Bank in the UK with mobile Loop Systems. The price he has quoted me is £59.95 plus VAT & delivery per unit. Therefore the cost we are asking for to implement these changes in Wales is £151,074.00 inc VAT but plus delivery. The break down of this figure is as follows.

1. 475,000 over 16 year old deaf people in Wales
2. 520 GP Surgery's in Wales (1 Portable Loop System per Surgery)
3. 158 Hospitals in Wales (10 portable Loop Systems per Hospital)
4. Cost per deaf person in Wales to implement these changes is only 31p.

Obviously this cost can be brought down, as some Doctor's surgery's already have these in place, but many Doctor's Surgery's that I questioned didn't know how to use them!

By implementing these changes, it would help to lower consultation time, for example

1. Better communication with the patient (not having to use a chaperone). Therefore a faster consultation
2. Better Diagnosis, as the Hearing Impaired person can understand better what the Doctor/Nurse is asking them, therefore this will help reduce multi appointments for the same problem, due to communication problems.
3. It will help stop the problems that the Hearing Impaired have with lip reading medical professionals that originated from a different country to the UK, as their lip pattern is totally different to a UK person, and totally un readable for a hearing Impaired person.
4. When you request a chaperone, (in our personal experience) one doesn't turn up, as the hospital has forgot to ask for one. One isn't available for an emergency appointment.

5. Help with A&E appointments, especially when time is a major factor after an accident on whether a person lives or not. (Should have fixed loop systems in A&E)

6. Young female hearing impaired girls who want privacy to talk to their doctor about personal matters, they don't want to have a member of their family with them, they should have the freedom that a hearing young girl would have to talk about private problems with a doctor.

7. Hearing aids pick up background noise and override a person speaking to them, with using a Loop System, they can hear the person talking to them, and no background noise.

These mobile Loops Systems units, are only a little bit bigger than a piece of A4 paper, therefore they will not take up much storage space in a Doctor's Surgery or Hospital.

The other thing that we are asking for is a mobile text service and email service be provided for the Hearing Impaired to make appointments with their Doctor or Hospital. Yes there is such a thing as type talk and minicom, but the very large majority of the hearing impaired, DO NOT use this service. Type talk is very impersonal for the hearing impaired and also the recipient of the telephone call, as you have to talk to an unknown 3rd party, plus our experience of this is not very good, as the profoundly deaf persons spelling isn't very good, and the 3rd party struggles to understand. Text is better for the hearing impaired, due to being able to abbreviate words (text talk slang) the person. The hearing impaired always has to rely on someone to make appointments for them, which is taking their independence away from them. For example when your GP refers you to a hospital specialist, you receive a letter asking you to telephone to make an appointment, there are no facilities on this system for a hearing impaired person to make this appointment. This is so frustrating and it also knocks their self esteem, as they are unable to do simple everyday things for themselves, things that we take for granted.

With today's modern communications, why isn't a mobile text service or email available? This service would help almost 15 million Hearing Impaired people in the UK.

PET(4)-01-12 p10a

P-03-227 Against the Proposed Metrix Access Road in Llanmaes

Petition wording

We the residents of Llanmaes, Millands Park, and the surrounding rural areas object to:

- The proposed new northern access road for the proposed Defence Technical College
- The proposed new Tremains Farm housing estate

Objections to the above are for the following reasons:

1. it involves the destruction of green field site when brown field sites are available
2. it will create considerable noise, light and dust pollution
3. it will incur substantial ecological damage.

Petition raised by: Llanmaes Community Council

First considered by the Committee: June 2009

Number of signatures: 416

Supporting information:

As residents of Llanmaes we wish to submit the attached petition signed by 416 members of the community. These include signatures from all but six of the residences in the village, Millands Park and the community area.

Our concerns are particularly about the proposed Northern Access Road and the Service Family Housing Development, both of which are located on Greenfield sites, when there are many underused Brownfield sites available in the area. In addition, a new road in this position is unnecessary and difficult to justify, with alternative, less disturbing, options available.

These developments will have a major impact on our community, resulting in a trebling of the number of residences within Llanmaes. The lives of residents of Millands Park will be profoundly affected by the new road which will be adjacent to their homes. The road and housing development will also have major ecological and amenity implications for the community as a whole.

We address the petition to you as First Minister of the Welsh Assembly Government as we understand that these proposals and funding for

the road stem from the relevant departments of the WAG rather than from the Metrix consortium.

We would ask your planners to reconsider the possibility of locating the Access road via an enlargement of the West Gate entrance to the existing base. This would avoid the destruction of green field sites, the considerable traffic disruption and the noise and visual pollution. In addition it is likely to be less costly.

PET(4)-01-12 p10b

P-03-252 Opposing RAF St Athan Northern Access Road (Boverton Residents)

Petition wording

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to amend its plans for the proposed Defence Technical Academy at St Athan so that no northern access road is constructed and that the green field sites at Tremain's Farm, Picketston and Eglwys Brewis are preserved.

This would take into account the views of 95% of the 395 individuals consulted in Boverton.

Petition raised by: Boverton Residents

First considered by the Committee: October 2009

Number of signatures: This petition was raised by Boverton Residents, and it collected 3 signatures. In addition, the petitioner collected 377 signatures for an associated petition.

Supporting information:

Whilst we have no objection in principle to the regeneration of the airfield site, we believe it should be within current airfield boundaries. We further believe that the development should utilise current access routes, as have been used since 1938. No new road should be built to the detriment of local residents, particularly those residing in Boverton, or indeed those of surrounding areas, who will have to suffer adverse effects resulting from increased traffic and loss of amenity. These will include an unacceptable increase in traffic related and light pollution in addition to an unacceptable loss of green field sites. Nor should the taxpayers of Wales bear the imposition of such an unessential cost burden.

We believe that development outside the current airfield boundary is contrary to the principles of The Sustainable Development Scheme of the Welsh Assembly and Vale of Glamorgan UDP policies. We also consider that once the road and Service Family Accommodation are constructed precedent will be established for future development, the road providing access for the purpose.

Quotes from the report by the Vale of Glamorgan Planning and Transportation Department:

'Road Traffic: As there are planned new roads and junction improvements associated with the development and the development is

likely to lead to an increase in road traffic on the existing roads in the local area, emissions from road traffic in the area could also increase’.

‘predicted to experience a noticeable change in traffic flows and increases in ambient noise from traffic on new development roads affecting the amenity of existing and future site occupiers in close proximity’.

‘The existing dwellings that would lie closest to the NAR and remaining SFA sites are those at Millands Caravan Park, Millands Farm, Old Froglands, Froglands Farm, Splott House, Rose Cottage and Oaklands.’

Thus, there is clear recognition that there will be a significant increase in traffic and consequent environmental pollution.

Residences to the north/north-west of Boverton adjacent to the B4265, Monmouth Way, Denbigh Drive, Cardigan Crescent and Harding Close in particular, lie less than 60 metres from the proposed access road junction and 30 metres from the B4265 which will carry all additional local traffic. They are closer to the proposed junction than any of the sites referred to. They will be the most adversely affected of any in proximity to the development.

It has to be remembered that these areas already experience a degree of pollution and, should the development proceed, will have to bear an unacceptable increase in all resultant pollution. There has been no consideration of this and it is of particular note that no conditions have been placed on the granting of the Planning Consent to protect these residents from the permanent affects of the development.

It is planned to build the SFA’s, and indeed the NAR, on land previously designated in the plan as ‘recreational’. The site is on green field land that enjoys the protection of the Assembly and Vale of Glamorgan policies. Development of any description here, be it road or housing, will deprive the community at large of considerable amenity and be in contravention of these.

It is also feared that since planning permission has been granted future development will ensue, as precedent will have been set. This will be of further detriment to the area.

All but 9 signatories of a petition submitted to the Vale of Glamorgan Council Planning Committee objecting to elements of the planning application are residents of the area most likely to be affected. Ninety-five per cent of those asked to consider signing the petition did so with just 18 of the 395 residents contacted declining to sign the petition.

Edwina Hart MBE OStJ AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Busnes, Menter, Technoleg a Gwyddoniaeth
Minister for Business, Enterprise, Technology and Science



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-03-227/252
Ein cyf/Our ref

William Powell AM,
Chair – Petitions Committee,
National Assembly for Wales,

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

24 November 2011

Dear William,

Thank you for requesting an update on the proposals for the Defence Technical College at St Athan. I recall that the petitions were primarily concerned with the proposal for the Northern Access Road following representations from the local community.

The Secretary of State for Defence announced on 18 July 2011 that the Defence Technical College will not proceed in the form that was set out in Planning Application 2009/00500/OUT or indeed at St Athan. Consequently it would appear that the Northern Access Road can not be constructed under the current extant planning permission. Any future proposals for a northern access road would need to be the subject of a new planning application.

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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

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

Agenda Item 4.3

PET(4)-01-12 p11a

P-03-318 Cross-border maternity services

Petition wording

We, the undersigned, note the proposal to move the consultant-led maternity unit, neonatal intensive care unit and child inpatient unit from the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital (RSH) to the Princess Royal Hospital (PRH) at Telford.

We believe this would cause a great deal of hardship and stress for patients and their families travelling from Montgomeryshire. It would add an extra twenty minutes onto a journey which is already fifty minutes at best and ambulance response times will inevitably be significantly increased.

It is vital that these proposals are not considered in isolation to proposals in Wales and that the Welsh Government adopts a strategic approach to cross border health issues, to ensure that the needs of patients from Mid Wales are fully represented in any proposals at catchment hospitals.

We therefore call on the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to fully engage in the 'Keeping it in the County' consultation process, to ensure that patients from Mid Wales are not disadvantaged by any changes.

Petition raised by: Mrs Helen Jervis

Petition first considered by Committee: March 2011

Number of signatures: 164

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-03-318
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/07017/11

William Powell AM
Chair
Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

29th

November 2011

Dear Bill,

P-03-318 Cross Border Maternity Services

Thank you for your letter of 9 November on behalf of the Petition's Committee regarding the proposal to transfer the consultant led maternity unit, neonatal intensive care unit and child inpatient unit from the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital to the Princess Royal Hospital in Telford.

The Powys Teaching Health Board assessed the impact of different options set out by Royal Shrewsbury Hospital and provided a detailed response to the consultation on these services on 11 March. Following the consultation, the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust has decided to go ahead with their proposals, albeit with some antenatal services remaining in Shrewsbury.

The Health Board is responsible for ensuring their residents can access the health services they need, including services provided by English hospitals. Powys are now considering their options and, like all Health Boards in Wales, are currently reviewing their maternity services in the light of 'A Strategic Vision for Maternity Services in Wales' and developing a local delivery plan.

Powys Teaching Health Board will also be taking this into consideration in their strategic planning for future service provision.

I hope the Committee finds this information helpful. I am copying this letter to the Chair and Chief Executive of the Powys Teaching Health Board.

Regards
Lesley

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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

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Printed on 100% recycled paper

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Fax: 01743 261489

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

5 December 2011

Dear Mr Powell

P-03-318 Cross Border Maternity Services

Thank you for your letter dated 9 November 2011 regarding the petition relating to the provision of cross border maternity services.

Where we are now

In my letter in May I provided an overview of the context and reasons for the proposed changes to service in our hospitals, the challenges faced in sustaining safe hospital services, and the work that had taken place and continued to take place with clinicians and communities to address these challenges and agree a way forward.

This included tackling three dilemmas facing services in our hospitals:

- Making sure that we can continue to provide 24 hour acute surgery
- Making sure that we can keep our range of children's services
- Planning to move out of the deteriorating women and children's building at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital before this building fails

With clinicians and partners we agreed that the development of plans to address these dilemmas must:

- Make patient services safer now and in the future
- Make patient services sustainable now and in the future

The development of options for addressing these dilemmas and meeting these essential requirements was also framed by three reconfiguration principles:

- Keeping two vibrant, well balanced, successful hospitals in Shrewsbury and Telford
- A commitment to having an Accident and Emergency Department on both sites
- Access to acute surgery from both sites

At the time of my last letter we had concluded the "Keeping it in the County" consultation, the Boards of the Trust and the two local Primary Care Trusts had met to consider the outcome of consultation, and work was underway to develop an Outline Business Case based on Consultation Option 2. This

involves moving some services from Shrewsbury to Telford and some services from Telford to Shrewsbury.

Specifically:

- The Royal Shrewsbury Hospital will be our main centre for inpatient acute surgery
- The Princess Royal Hospital will be our main centre for inpatient women and children's services as well as for head & neck services

The Outline Business Case for the reconfiguration of Women and Children Services, Acute Surgery and Head and Neck Services was developed during the summer. It was approved by the Trust Board in August 2011, and by the Boards of NHS Telford and Wrekin, Shropshire County Primary Care Trust and the West Midlands Strategic Health Authority Board in September 2011.

We are now working to develop the Full Business Case for these changes and expect to submit this detailed and final business case to the relevant NHS Boards in Spring 2012. Alongside this we are developing detailed building plans and designs which will form the basis of a planning application in the near future.

Subject to the planning application and Full Business Case, building work for the new facilities would take place from 2012 with the new services opening in 2014. This gives us at least a further two years to continue to develop and strengthen our model of care, and to work with patients and communities to identify and address any concerns that they may have before the new women and children's services are in place.

What do these plans mean for people in mid Wales

We have continued to analyse these proposals in greater detail, and we can confirm that most services for most patients will remain the same.

This includes:

- 24-hour A&E services at both hospitals
- Most outpatients and diagnostics remaining unchanged
- Most day case procedures remaining unchanged
- A Children's Assessment Unit at both hospitals
- Midwifery Led Units provided by the Trust in Shrewsbury, Telford, Oswestry, Ludlow and Bridgnorth, and continuing to work closely with those provided by Powys Teaching Health Board in Welshpool, Newtown and Llanidloes
- Emergency medical patients being seen and treated at both hospitals (e.g. stroke, heart attacks and serious chest infections)

The changes – which relate to services such as inpatient care for children, consultant maternity services and inpatient surgery – will affect around 1 in 50 hospital contacts for patients from Wales. This means that around 49 out of every 50 patient contacts will continue as now.

I fully acknowledge the concerns of patients, the public and communities of the travel distance and time in the plans to move some services from Shrewsbury to Telford and, as mentioned in my previous letter, I am personally championing the programme of work being led by the Trust to ensure that cross-border implications continue to be central to the work going forward. I will return to this issue later.

There has been a long history of debate over many years without resolution on these challenges. Whilst making decisions about changes to health care services is never easy, the conclusions that we have reached mean that we are now able to take further steps to develop the services we offer. Associated with these plans, there are now major developments underway at the Royal Shrewsbury

Hospital (RSH), many of which are contingent on the conclusions of the "Keeping It In The County" consultation:

- The hospital is benefiting from improved facilities for cancer patients with a newly refurbished and extended Cancer and Haematology Centre due to open in 2012. These facilities are currently being built.
- The development of RSH as our main centre for Adult Inpatient Surgery means that we have been designated as a Trauma Unit within the new Trauma Network arrangements for the West Midlands region. This means that we will be able to continue to provide an enhanced level of life-saving trauma care, and further strengthen this service.
- The consolidation of inpatient vascular surgery onto a single site in Shrewsbury means that RSH will become a centre for the Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) Screening Programme in England which will commence from April 2012. I am aware that the AAA Screening Programme for Wales is also in development and will be provided during 2012/13. We are already talking to our partners in Wales to ensure that our services are aligned, especially for those patients on our borders.

As well as continuing to strengthen services at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital and ensure that it has a vibrant future, I am also leading discussions with colleagues on both sides of the border about opportunities through telehealthcare to bring more care closer to home for more patients. The national border can present some challenges both for patients and for the organisations such as ourselves providing their care, and I would welcome any support that you can offer to help us realise our shared aspirations to offer local, seamless care wherever possible.

Midwifery-led care in Wales

We are working closely with midwives across Montgomeryshire to ensure we continue to support midwifery-led care across mid Wales. Women in mid Wales will still be able to choose to have their baby at home, in our midwife-led units in Shrewsbury or Oswestry, or in one of the midwife-led units provided in Powys.

It is only if women need a consultant-led birth that they will be safely transported to the Princess Royal Hospital (PRH). Consultant-led births, or high risk births, include women having twins or those women with diabetes or other medical conditions that require medically led care during labour.

We already offer an exemplar maternity service through our model offering consultant-led birth alongside a network of midwife-led units. Through this model our clinicians have built up considerable experience and expertise around risk assessment, safe transfer and support for women and babies. We continue to build on this to develop the services that will be in place from 2014 once the new facilities are in place.

Transport and travel

During the consultation, and in the many meetings that have taken place since then, I have heard concerns from people in Wales about the time taken for ambulance services to respond to their call and to get them to the right hospital as quickly as possible. These issues also affect people in rural west Shropshire.

We have been working in partnership with our commissioning colleagues and with the Welsh Ambulance Service (WAS) and West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) to improve the current situation and plan for the future. WAS and WMAS now have a cross-border agreement in place which means the nearest ambulance will respond to patients irrespective of whether they live in Powys or Shropshire. The ambulance services have a number of service improvements underway and we are confident that, when taken together, they will mitigate risks associated with the additional travel distance for some patients for some services.

We already have considerable experience and expertise in transferring patients between our sites, and indeed to specialist hospitals out of county. We continue to review and strengthen these arrangements to ensure that we continue to transport patients safely and appropriately to the most appropriate hospital for their care. This means that if a patient arrives at one of our hospitals and needs to go to the other site, then this will happen safely, efficiently and as quickly as possible. These transfers already take place now, too often in an unplanned way because our staff are spread too thinly between our two sites. By providing strong inpatient facilities at each site we will be better able to ensure that patients are taken promptly to the best place with the right staff with the right expertise to provide the right care.

We also recognise particular concerns for families with children with complex and long term conditions. Ahead of the changes planned for 2014 we will ensure that all children with complex long term health needs who have more frequent access to the children's assessment services or inpatient ward have a personalised care plan so that parents and carers are clear and confident about how to access the health services they need.

We are continuing to talk with patients, carers and families about their concerns around travel and access so that we can develop solutions together. We are also working with our local and hospital clinicians, local authorities, councillors and Ambulance Services on travel and transport issues.

Based on these discussions we intend to public a Travel and Transport Plan for reconfiguration in summer 2012. This plan will draw together all our work on transport and transfers, not only in an emergency but in more routine situations and 'every-day' scenarios too. It will propose a shuttle bus between hospital sites, triage and transfer plans for children's services, and additional parking for patients and visitors. It will make recommendations and seek views on how we can reduce congestion on both sites. As mentioned above, we are also exploring wider opportunities to reduce the need for patients to travel to an acute hospital site through outreach services in community hospitals and the use of telehealthcare.

Communication and Engagement

Ongoing communication and engagement is central to this work, and I have recently attended Welshpool Town Council, Newtown Town Council, Powys County Council Montgomeryshire Area Committee and the Montgomeryshire Area Committee to account for our plans. I also recently met with the MP and constituency AM for Montgomeryshire, and my Chief Nurse attended Llanidloes Town Council. These provided an opportunity to describe how the valuable feedback we received from the people of mid Wales is being taken into account in the development of our plans. We will be returning to mid Wales for further meetings in the New Year.

Over the coming months, we will be engaging with lots of expectant and new mothers around the changes to maternity services. This includes visiting parent groups across Powys, producing a special 'Women Services' issue of our "Looking To The Future" newsletter which will be sent to primary schools, nurseries and mother and baby groups. We have also established focus groups for women's services, children's services, children's cancer services and surgery to help us shape and refine our plans.

In addition, we are working with Powys Teaching Health Board to organise health information events in Newtown, Welshpool and Llanidloes in the New Year. This will be a great opportunity for people to not only find out more and ask questions about the reconfiguration but also find out about other health initiatives in their area too.

We have also been meeting with the Chief Executives and Lead Directors of Powys Teaching Health Board, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and both ambulance Trusts to ensure our plans for improvements and changes to our health services are aligned and 'make sense' to the populations we serve. We are all committed to this 'Strategic Forum' and the group will continue to meet.

I have enclosed our most recent Board Paper on the reconfiguration programme, which had a special focus on communications, engagement and responding to the views and concerns raised by patients and communities.

Next steps

Over the coming months, we will therefore continue to work with patients, carers, the public and staff to develop our services and address the issues and concerns that have been raised as we work towards our Full Business Case.

From Spring 2012, we plan to start putting these plans into place by building, training and developing staff and moving services. This will include establishing the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital as our main centre for inpatient acute surgery, whilst the changes to women and children's inpatient services can only take place once the new facilities are open in 2014.

From late 2013 there will be a major publicity drive relating to the planned changes to women and children's services, so that people know where they will go for their care and treatment when the new facilities and services are launched in 2014.

We are planning for all reconfigured services to be in place during 2014.

Once again, I hope that my response provides you with reassurance that careful consideration continues to be given to this important issue in the planning and leadership of the work, and The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust remains committed to providing the highest standards of care for our Welsh patients based on the contracts placed with us by Powys Teaching Health Board.

I and my senior clinicians would welcome the opportunity to meet with Welsh Assembly colleagues to discuss plans and developments at the Trusts, and how we can continue to work together for the benefit of patients and communities living on the borders between England and Wales.

Thank you again for your ongoing interest in this important development for our organisation and for our patients. Please do not hesitate to contact my office if you need any further information about this work.

Yours sincerely



Adam Cairns
Chief Executive

Enc. Future Configuration of Hospital Services update to the Trust Board on 24 November 2011

The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust

Trust Board
24 November 2011The Future Configuration of Hospital Services Programme:
Engagement and Communication Report, April to November 2011

Executive Lead	Adam Cairns, Chief Executive		
Author	Kate Shaw, Future Configuration of Hospital Services Programme Manager Adrian Osborne, Communications Director		
Strategic Domain	C. Quality and Safety A. Financial Strength		
Organisational Objective	C3. Provide the right care, right place, right professional C4. Deliver services that offer safe, evidence, based practice A1. Development and implement sustainable clinical strategies		
Executive Summary	<p>This paper provides an update on patient and public engagement and communication following the "Keeping It In The County" public consultation and sets out the next steps for engagement and assurance.</p> <p>A comprehensive programme of engagement took place during the public consultation. This provided an opportunity to identify issues, benefits and concerns relating to proposals to reconfigure local hospital services. Following consultation, public engagement and communication has continued with the aim of: addressing risks and concerns identified during consultation; engaging patients and carers in the development of new care pathways and facilities; providing an opportunity to identify new issues and concerns; and, ultimately to ensure that future services are as good as they can be through patient and public involvement in their design and delivery.</p> <p>A range of legislation and policy sets out guidance and best practice for the NHS in engagement and consultation. The Trust's engagement and communications programme: fulfils statutory requirements; supports progress towards best practice within the resources available to us; and, mitigates risks to the deliver of the Future Configuration of Hospital Services programme. Our current self assessment against key requirements and best practice is as follows:</p>		
	Section 242 and Section 244 of the NHS Act 2006	GREEN	The Trust takes account of statutory requirements and puts plans in place to ensure compliance.
	Real Involvement: Working with people to improve services	AMBER	The Trust takes account of best practice. Whilst not all aspects of best practice are fully implemented, engagement priorities are agreed based on a clear assessment of risk (through the Project Board), and plans are in place to increase capacity and capability.
	The Secretary of State's four tests for service configuration	GREEN	The Trust takes account of the Lansley tests and puts plans in place to ensure compliance.
	Best practice guidance from the Independent Reconfiguration Panel	GREEN	The Trust takes account of best practice from the IRP and incorporates this into its engagement and communication plans.
	Equality Act 2010	AMBER	Shropshire County PCT and NHS Telford and Wrekin, in partnership with the Trust have undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment. The action plan in response to the Equality Impact Assessment is being developed.
Recommendation	The Trust Board is asked to NOTE the engagement and communication report for April to November 2011		

The Future Configuration of Hospital Services Programme

Contribution to Inspection, Registration, Assurance, Performance and Delivery

Risks and Assurance	The Future Configuration of Hospital Services (FCHS) Programme supports the local NHS to address risks to the clinical quality of services. The programme management arrangements provide assurance that due process is being followed, and there is independent review of the programme management approach through the Office for Government Commerce Gateway Review process. Specifically, a risk register is maintained and reviewed by the Project Board to ensure that risks in relation to delivery of the FCHS programme are identified and managed. The Project Board is chaired by the Chief Executive and reports to the Hospital Executive Committee, which is a sub-committee of the Trust Board.
Contribution to Key Performance Indicators	Not applicable
Compliance with Clinical and other Governance Requirements	The Future Configuration of Hospital Services Programme supports the local NHS to address risks to compliance with a range of clinical safety standards. This includes compliance with legislative and policy requirements in relation to consultation and engagement in service change in the NHS. This report forms part of the process of providing evidence and assurance to the Trust Board and to external bodies that these requirements are being met. It includes a high level assessment of current compliance with statutory and mandatory requirements and best practice guidance.
Engagement and Decision-Making Process for this paper	The Future Configuration of Hospital Services is overseen by a dedicated Project Board comprising the Chief Executive, clinical leads, other Executive Director, Associate Director of Estates and Facilities Management and the Programme Manager. The Project Board reviews and oversees engagement and communication activity. Engagement and communication activity is also informed by feedback from patients, communities and other stakeholders including the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Strategic Impact Assessment

Quality and Safety	The Future Configuration of Hospital Services Programme supports the local NHS to address risks to the clinical quality of services. The engagement and communications activities outlined in this paper are integral to delivery of the Programme.
Financial Strength	The proposals are not driven by financial considerations and will not lead to financial savings. Instead they aim to deliver safe, sustainable services within available resources. The engagement and communications activities outlined in this paper are integral to delivery of the Programme.
Learning and Growth	The engagement and communication plan for the Future Configuration of Hospital Services supports the delivery of organisational objectives for Learning and Growth.
Patients, GPs and Commissioners	The proposals that are being developed further during this phase of the Future Configuration of Hospital Services Programme will change the way that some patients access local hospital services, and the way in which GPs refer some patients to our services. A comprehensive programme to communicate changes with patients and GPs is planned to take place in 2013 ahead of the main changes to local services.
Equality and Diversity	The ongoing programme of engagement and communication supports us to address the recommendations from the Equality Impact Assessment. An action plan for responding to the Equality Impact Assessment is currently being developed with local PCTs.
Legislation and Policy	The Future Configuration of Hospital Services Programme supports the local NHS to fulfil legislative requirements for patient and public engagement and policy requirements as set out in government guidance on service configuration. A high level of assessment of current compliance with statutory and mandatory requirements and best practice guidance is included in this paper.
Communication and Marketing	This report will be published on the Trust website as part of the Trust Board papers and also within the section of the Trust website dedicated to the reconfiguration of hospital services.

The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust
The Future Configuration of Hospital Services Programme
Engagement and Communication Report, April to November 2011

1. Overview

- 1.1 This paper provides an update on patient and public engagement and communication following the "Keeping It In The County" consultation and sets out the next steps for engagement and assurance.

2. Background and Context

- 2.1 There has been a long debate over many years without resolution on a series of challenges to the safety and sustainability of hospital services at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital (RSH) in Shrewsbury and the Princess Royal Hospital (PRH) in Telford. This has focused on safety and sustainability challenges affecting a range of services including acute surgery and children's services. If these challenges are not addressed there are risks both to the ongoing quality and safety of patient services and to the sustainability of these services within our hospitals in Shrewsbury and Telford.
- 2.2 A programme of clinical leadership and patient and public engagement began during 2010 to agree and deliver lasting resolution to mitigate these risks. A key feature of this was the "Keeping It In The County" consultation between December 2010 and March 2011, led by Shropshire County PCT and NHS Telford & Wrekin with support from the Trust.
- 2.3 Proposals to change hospitals are always likely to rouse strong opinions, particularly where people perceive that services are moving further away. This presents a challenge for NHS organisations between responding to understandably strong feelings, and determining whether the proposals are an appropriate means of retaining safe and sustainable clinical services within the county, whether the risks of change have been identified and acknowledged and whether they can be satisfactorily mitigated.
- 2.4 The formal public consultation aimed to: share the challenges faced by the NHS; set out the solutions that had been identified to address them; seek views on whether any alternative solutions were viable; and, identify benefits and concerns relating to the proposals and alternatives. The issues and feedback from the public consultation were considered by local Primary Care Trusts alongside other programmes of engagement and assurance when making decisions on the way forward for local health services at their meeting on 24 March 2011.
- 2.5 The PCTs agreed to proceed with the preferred option set out in the consultation document. Following this the Trust has continued with a programme of community engagement to: continue to review and respond to the issues and concerns raised during consultation; involve patients, parents and patient representatives in designing new care pathways and facilities; continue to identify new issues and concerns that had not previously been raised; and, plan ahead in detail for implementation and for the publicity that will be needed to inform our communities of changes to their local services.

3. Legislation, Guidance and Best Practice in Consultation and Engagement

- 3.1 The primary reason for engaging with patients, carers and patient representatives is to ensure that the services we plan and deliver are appropriate to their needs. Bringing patient experience to the heart of service change ensures that clinicians and managers are viewing both the challenges and the solutions from the perspective of the people who use our services, rather than being driven solely by clinical, management or governance considerations.
- 3.2 Alongside this general principle, the NHS is also required to comply with a range of legislation and guidance that supports the devolution of decisions on service change to the local NHS working with local partners (and particularly the statutory health overview and scrutiny role of local councils in England, and community health councils in Wales).

3.3 Key guidance is set out in the table below, along with an assessment of the current compliance status in the Trust:

Guidance	Comments	Status of Requirement	Compliance Status	Compliance commentary
Section 242 and Section 244 of the NHS Act 2006	This is the main statutory guidance setting out the duty of the NHS to involve and consult. This includes the statutory duty to consult with local authority health overview and scrutiny committees on proposals for substantial variations or developments of health services.	Statutory requirement	GREEN	The Trust takes account of statutory requirements and puts plans in place to ensure compliance.
Real Involvement: Working with people to improve services	"Real Involvement" was published by the Department of Health in 2008 and sets out guidance to the NHS on implementation of the statutory duties set out in Section 242 and Section 244 of the NHS Act 2006.	Good practice	AMBER	The Trust takes account of best practice. Whilst not all aspects of best practice are fully implemented, engagement priorities are agreed based on a clear assessment of risk (through the Project Board), and plans are in place to increase capacity and capability.
The Secretary of State's four tests for service configuration	The Secretary of State for Health set out four tests for service configuration in the revised Operating Framework for 2010/11. All proposals for reconfiguration of services must demonstrate: support from GP commissioners; strengthened public and patient engagement; clarity on the clinical evidence base; and consistency with current and prospective patient choice.	Mandatory requirement	GREEN	The Trust takes account of the Lansley tests and puts plans in place to ensure compliance.
Best practice guidance from the Independent Reconfiguration Panel	Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees have a statutory right to refer contested decisions to the Secretary of State who may then request independent review by the Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP). The IRP publishes occasional good practice guidance based on learning from reviews.	Good practice	GREEN	The Trust takes account of best practice from the IRP and incorporates this into its engagement and communication plans.
Equality Act 2010	Sets out the requirements for public sector organisations to pay due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality.	Statutory requirement	AMBER	Shropshire County PCT and NHS Telford and Wrekin, in partnership with the Trust have undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment. The action plan in response to the Equality Impact Assessment is being developed.

4. Issues Raised During the “Keeping It In The County” Consultation

- 4.1 The “Keeping It In The County” public consultation on the proposal to reconfigure hospital services between the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital (RSH) and the Princess Royal Hospital (PRH) took place from 09 December 2010 to 14 March 2011¹. A detailed report on the consultation was presented to the Trust Board on 24 March 2011. This included an independent analysis of the feedback received during consultation², prepared by Merida Associates³ on behalf of the two local Primary Care Trusts. The full consultation report, and its summary, is available from the Trust’s website.
- 4.2 The following themes were highlighted in the executive summary of the independent consultation report:

What people like about the proposals

- Better building and facilities
 - Proposed location of services reflects population trends
 - Best use of limited resources
 - The retention of day time assessment at both hospital sites
 - Improved quality of service and better care
 - Improved access to services – older people and Stroke/Urology
 - Centres of excellence and specialist services would be created
 - Keeps skills and services in the County
 - The potential to modernise hospital sites
 - Consultants and other medical staff have been involved in drawing up the proposals and that there is a clinical evidence base
-

Concerns about the proposals

Travel time, distance and transport

By far the most widespread concerns expressed in the consultation are issues relating to travel, distance and transport. The most cited concerns are:

- Longer journeys for patients – both for routine appointments and in the event of an emergency.
- The potential risks to patients arising from longer journey times. People were particularly concerned about women in labour who needed to transfer from a midwife led unit and babies who need specialist care.
- Stroke services need to be close to home, people were concerned that any increases in travelling times may delay treatment and therefore affect recovery.
- Poor public transport services, poor road links and the additional costs of travelling further.
- Whether emergency services would be able to cope with the proposed reconfiguration. How communication between hospitals, ambulance services and paramedics will be managed to ensure that any changes to response times does not affect patient safety, particularly at peak travel times and in poor weather conditions.

¹ The Keeping it in the County consultation document and report are available via the reconfiguration pages on the Trusts website www.sath.nhs.uk/future

² “Keeping Hospital Services in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin: Public Consultation Findings Report” (Merida Associates, March 2011)

³ Merida Associates is an independent partnership, based in the West Midlands, with extensive experience of research and consultation within voluntary, community and statutory sectors. The partnership is an accredited consultancy with the National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO).

- The increased time spent travelling, particularly for families of sick children, would create additional difficulties for parents who had other children and family members to care for.
- Inpatient children and women in the consultant led unit may feel more isolated if the additional journey times/cost reduced the number of visitors they receive.
- Poor public transport links to Telford.
- The need for affordable transport between sites for families and staff.
- Car parking at both sites was raised as an issue, as was accessible, affordable accommodation for parents near to the PRH.

Location of services

Many people would prefer that services are retained at RSH.

Many people stated that they did not want services to change, many others shared instances (often from personal experience) where additional travelling time would have been dangerous. People from all areas were concerned about additional travel times and distance, particularly for people from rural areas and mid-Wales.

Many people identified with Shrewsbury as the County town, considering it the 'Hub' linked to 'spoke' towns and communities around the County and into mid-Wales.

Some stakeholders think that if services move from Shrewsbury, it may result in the eventual downgrading of the RSH, or that services moving from Shrewsbury would disproportionately affect some parts of the County.

There is considerable opposition to the proposed loss of 24 hour paediatric assessment at RSH.

Reassurance required

Nothing to change

Public transport and shuttle bus arrangements

Reassurance on travel times, transfer between sites and emergency transport

Clear clinical pathways and arrangements in place to mitigate risk

That clinicians support the proposals

That there will be sufficient trained and qualified staff to ensure that the proposals are sustainable

4.3 Following public consultation, continued engagement and communication has focused on:

- continuing to review and respond to the issues and concerns raised during consultation
- involving patients, parents and patient representatives in designing new care pathways and facilities
- continuing to identify new issues and concerns that had not previously been raised; and,
- planning ahead in detail for implementation and for the publicity that will be needed to inform our communities of changes to their local services
- and, ultimately, seeking to ensure that future services are as good as they can be.

5. Engagement and Communication Activity, April to November 2011

Public and Stakeholder Engagement

- 5.1 Key patient and public engagement activities between April and November 2011 have included:
- Specialty-specific Focus Groups to involve patients, parents and patient representatives in reviewing and shaping care pathways and facilities.
 - Attendance at Local Joint Committee and Town and Parish Council meetings across Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and mid Wales. These have featured presentations by the Chief Executive and Clinical Leads and Q&A sessions.
 - Attendance by the Chief Executive at meetings with Councillors from our three main local authorities.
 - Presentations and reports to the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, and to Montgomeryshire Community Health Council.
 - Public briefing sessions at RSH and PRH in August and November, advertised in local press.
 - Attendance by members of the project team and other Trust representative at meetings of local voluntary or community groups.
 - Providing information and asking questions through information stand at local events, including the National Childbirth Trust Nearly New Sale, the Shropshire Patient Participation Group county wide meeting, and the Trust's Annual General Meeting.
- 5.2 The valued and robust involvement and challenge of the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) has been maintained with a number of formal and informal update meetings. This has included updates against the JHOSC work plan, with a further presentation planned for December 2011.

Public and Stakeholder Communication

- 5.3. Ongoing public and stakeholder communication has included:
- Two editions of a new "Looking To The Future" newsletter have been sent to Trust members, other interested parties, GP practices and available through our hospital sites. Alongside this, two "special editions" have been published via the Trust website and issued at meetings attended by Trust representatives.
 - A two page advert in the local press outlined the changes, when they will happen and what this means for patients and their families.
 - The consultation website at www.ournhsinshropshireandtelford.nhs.uk has been archived, with news and information about the reconfiguration now available from a dedicated section of the Trust website at www.sath.nhs/future. This means that we now have a single dedicated web channel, integrated with wider news and information from the Trust. This includes a clinician blog section and a regularly updated Frequently Asked Questions from patients and the public.

Staff Engagement and Communication

- 5.4 Staff engagement has also continued. For example, clinicians, support staff, managers and members of the Women and Children's clinical teams have been engaged in the development of the plans for the Women and Children's Centre at PRH.
- 5.5 Wider staff engagement and communication has continued through staff briefings (two on each site held in August and November) and the Trust's new internal weekly bulletin for the programme community (The Future This Week).

6. Status Report against Issues Raised During Consultation and Ongoing Engagement

Issues raised	Examples of how patient and public engagement is influencing the future shape of services	Current position and next steps
<i>Issues highlighted in the summary consultation report</i>		
Better buildings and facilities The potential to modernise hospital sites	Public briefings to share early plans for new facilities at PRH ahead of the Outline Business Case, more detailed proposals included within the Outline Business Case and continued engagement through focus groups in designing and shaping the new facilities. Ongoing work with patients, carers and communities to design new cancer facilities at RSH.	Engagement in the proposed building designs at PRH ahead of submission of planning application. Continued patient/carer/parent involvement in ongoing design of new facilities – see below for more information.
Best use of limited resources	Outline Business Case builds on feedback from patients, communities, staff and other stakeholders to develop affordable proposals for safe and sustainable services.	Continue development of Full Business Case.
Retention of daytime assessment at both sites	Work with focus groups, clinicians, Paediatric Triage and Transport group and others to develop model for paediatric assessment at both hospitals.	The group will continue to work to develop the protocols and procedures needed within the reconfigured children's service.
Improved quality of service and better care	Patient and clinical involvement in development of new care pathways where services are changing.	Continue work to develop and refine care pathways.
Improved access to services	See "Travel Time, Distance and Transport: Concerns about travel and transport – both for routine appointment and in an emergency / Concern about potential risks associated with longer journey times"	
Centres of Excellence and specialist services would be created Keep skills and services in the County	Work programmes underway to deliver additional benefits that build on the reconfiguration proposals, such as Trauma Unit designation at RSH and AAA screening centre at RSH. Building designs for PRH due to be submitted for planning application shortly, and these have been developed with patient, carer and parent involvement. Discussions continue with NHS partners on opportunities to further strengthen local services "e.g. through repatriation from regional centres).	Continue trauma unit and AAA screening developments. Engagement in the proposed building designs at PRH ahead of submission of planning application. Continue discussions with NHS partners re: opportunities to build on model of reconfigured services to strengthen local services
Clinical involvement and leadership	Clinical involvement and leadership has continued through the FCHS work programme. More information has been included in previous reports to the Trust Board.	Continue to ensure clinical leadership and engagement for FCHS programme.
Travel Time, Distance and Transport: Concerns about travel and transport – both for routine appointment and in an emergency / Concern about potential risks associated with longer journey times	Local cross-border travel and transport group established with involvement of local councillors. West Midlands Ambulance and Welsh Ambulance Services cross-border memorandum of understanding ensuring that the nearest ambulance attends to patients either side of the border. Paediatric Triage and Transport Group – developing guidelines and policies for the safe transfer of children from RSH to PRH should they need an inpatient stay. Neonatology – learning and development project to review best practice from elsewhere in the NHS and provide training and support to midwives in the identification and management of risk. Options for hospital shuttle bus being developed. Further detail about the proposals will be included in the Travel and Transport Plan. Options for additional car parking at the Princess Royal Hospital to be included within the planning application.	A draft Travel and Transport Plan will be published in 2012. This plan will draw together all elements of travel and transport, emergency and non-emergency into one plan. It will also describe the Trusts plans for parking, inter-site transfer and transport and signposts and entries.
Travel Time, Distance and Transport: Location of stroke services	Both hospitals will continue to provide acute stroke services, supported by a telemedicine network to provide specialist consultant input to support local decision-making on prescribing thrombolysis.	Continue to develop and evaluate telemedicine approach.

Issues raised	Examples of how patient and public engagement is influencing the future shape of services	Current position and next steps
Travel Time, Distance and Transport: Availability of public transport / transport links to Telford / affordable transport	Patient and carer views will influence the Travel and Transport Plan.	A draft Travel and Transport Plan will be published in 2012. This plan will draw together all elements of travel and transport, emergency and non-emergency into one plan. It will also describe the Trusts plans for parking, inter-site transfer and transport and signposts and entries.
Travel Time, Distance and Transport: Impact on emergency transport	Initial impact assessment indicates minimal impact from these proposals on emergency transport providers. Overall, around 1 in 50 patient contacts is affected by proposals.	Develop new emergency transfer protocols with ambulance service, care co-ordination centre etc. ahead of implementation of new services in 2014.
Travel Time, Distance and Transport: Concerns that additional travel may reduce visitors	Patient/carer feedback is influencing the design, look and feel of the new facilities including partner and family accommodation. Continue to use patient feedback to develop wider Travel and Transport Plan.	Relatives accommodation to be included in design of the new facilities. Travel and Transport plan to be published in 2012.
Travel Time, Distance and Transport: Car Parking	Outline plans for PRH development include additional car parking. In order to reduce impact on neighbouring residents, it is proposed that this will be ground level rather than multi-storey.	Include additional car parking at PRH in planning application.
Location of services: Impact on local hospital / concerns about risk of downgrading of RSH	The overall plans aim to maintain two vibrant and successful hospitals. Since consultation ended, two developments will support us to maintain and strengthen services at RSH – trauma network development across the West Midlands, and the establishment of AAA screening. The Trust has been given the go ahead for trauma unit status and an AAA screening centre at RSH (with screening also being delivered at locations across the county). The consultation proposals have strengthened our application for both developments.	Continue with plans to establish Trauma Unit and AAA screening centre at RSH.
Location of services: The impact of concentrating Women and Children's Services at PRH and Surgery at RSH would have on people's ability to access their local hospital	Development of model for Children's Assessment Unit at RSH adjacent to A&E. Development of options for re-provision of Midwifery-Led Unit, early pregnancy assessment service, antenatal clinics and day assessment, and children's outpatients at RSH. Continue to provide day cases and outpatient appointments at both sites. Analysis of overall impact of these proposals on where patients access services (these proposals will affect around 1 in 50 patient contacts). Continue to incorporate issues into the design and development of care pathways.	Development of the detailed operational plans for the Childrens Assessment Unit. Detailed design and planning for the relocation of services at RSH for inclusion in the Full Business Case.
Location of services: Concerns around the supporting infrastructure at RSH to accommodate surgery	Productivity and improvement projects are underway within the Trust to improve the outcomes and experience of patients including implementation of the Bed Bundle. Planning for the development of additional ITU capacity at RSH.	General and targeted engagement with all staff in relation to the Trusts transformational change programmes.
Location of services: Concerns about staff being able to access a surgical opinion at PRH	Patients engaged through a surgery focus group. Trust clinicians working to develop sustainable rotas, with appropriate scheduling and job planning to ensure the provision of 24 hour surgical support at PRH.	Theatre and outpatient mapping exercises underway to understand and agree future job plans to support new rotas.

Issues raised	Examples of how patient and public engagement is influencing the future shape of services	Current position and next steps
Location of services: Unhappiness about the transfer of the Rainbow Children's Cancer Unit from RSH to PRH	Paediatric oncology and haematology Focus Groups established with one over-arching group and three sub-groups (build/environment; access and transport; legacy). Meetings between the Trust, clinicians and parents to address concerns and develop plans. Development of a care pathway to reduce door-to-needle time to minimise the impact of additional travel time from Shrewsbury to Telford. Parent involvement in development of outline plans for the new services at Telford. Plans have been changed in response to parent feedback.	Parents to be involved in the design and environment of the new Children's Cancer and Haematology Unit at PRH. Clinicians and the Rainbow Unit team continue to be engaged in the development of the new unit. Engage local children in designing the look and feel of the new children's facilities.
Location of services: Concerns about children accessing RSH out of hours	The Paediatric Triage and Transport Group is developing guidelines to ensure that, as far as possible, children access the right service at the right time based on their clinical need. The workforce plans outlined within the Outline Business Case support a consultant on-call 24/7 at RSH should a child be brought in out of hours who requires a paediatrician.	The group will continue to work to develop the protocols and procedures needed within the reconfigured children's service.
Further issues identified as part of ongoing patient and public engagement		
Impact of building work: I live near PRH - what impact will the building work have?	Presentation to Hadley and Leegomery Parish Council as the host council for the PRH. Opportunities to reduce impact on neighbouring residential areas included within planning application process, and also in selection of Procure 21+ construction partner.	Drop in sessions to be held to provide an opportunity to review the proposed plans. Further environmental and noise impact to be included with planning application. Options for additional car parking to reduce risk of overspill to be included in planning application.
Practical issues associated with planned changes: Which hospital will I need to go to?	Key issues and concerns are being logged, and will shape a comprehensive plan for communicating what people should do will be implemented nearer the time of change	Commitment to develop an individualised plan for all children subject to ongoing/regular treatment and follow-up plans. Main communication of changes to take place in 2013.
Practical issues associated with planned changes: How do I get there, and where do I need to go to when I arrive?	Childrens and Childrens Oncology and Haematology Focus Groups have highlighted the need for clear signage; drop off/short stay bays; and dedicated entry points. Also the need for clear directions from western Shropshire and mid Wales, including alternative routes and public transport.	This is being incorporated into the plans for the new Women and Children's Centre at PRH
Telehealthcare development: How will telehealthcare be of benefit and reduce the need to travel to hospital?	The Chief Executive has highlighted the Trust's aspirations to use modern technologies to deliver more care closer to home and reduce the need to travel to Shrewsbury or Telford. A rural health conference was held in October 2011 for clinicians and staff from Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin and Mid Wales to hear about options for developing telehealth services locally.	Continue clinically-led discussions to develop agreed plans for telehealthcare implementation.

Issues raised	Examples of how patient and public engagement is influencing the future shape of services	Current position and next steps
<p>New Children's Cancer Unit: Will the new Children's Cancer and Haematology Unit fulfil the commitments made during consultation?</p>	<p>Some draft design plans shared with a parents focus group did not fulfil the commitments made during consultation. Feedback received at these meetings has led to improvements in the proposed layout, design and facilities for the new unit.</p>	<p>The play leaders from the Rainbow Unit will be working with children to get their views and thoughts on the feel and design of the new unit. The group will then come together to see what the children would like within the new unit. Their 'collage boards' will then be used alongside the parents' and staff 'collage boards' to shape the colours and feel of the new unit.</p> <p>Improve internal approval process to ensure that design plans continue to address consultation commitments.</p>
<p>Children with complex needs: Will the children's inpatient ward address the needs of children with complex needs?</p>	<p>Meetings with parents and families have been held and the Childrens Focus Group established. Feedback received has influenced the design and requirements of the inpatient ward.</p> <p>Consolidating children's inpatient services on one site provides ancillary benefits in that we can develop improved, dedicated facilities for adolescents. Views from parents and children are helping to shape these facilities.</p>	<p>The very practical and essential needs of patients raised by the group have been incorporated into the draft designs (e.g. the need for large changing tables, tracking hoists, sensory sensitive space). The group will continue to meet.</p>

7. Gap Analysis

7.1 A summary assessment against key legislation and guidance for patient and public engagement is included in Section 3. Engagement activity is focused on addressing statutory requirements, aspiring to best practice and addressing programme risks. Whilst improvements can be made to improve compliance and strengthen engagement, these need to be considered alongside other competing demands on the Trust resources. The Project Board keeps this under review and ensures that engagement is sufficiently prioritised within available resources and the principal risks are managed.

7.2 Key activities for the next phase of this work include:

- Reviewing and strengthening the distribution of the "Looking To The Future" newsletter
- Developing and agreeing with our commissioners a plan for addressing the recommendations in the Equality Impact Assessment
- Engagement in the plans for the new development at PRH, submission of planning application and ongoing engagement in detailed design of the new facilities
- Maintaining focus groups to engage patients and parents in designing care pathways and new facilities
- Establishing a stakeholder forum to engage partner organisations in shaping the future of health services.

7.3 A comprehensive engagement plan is being developed to respond to the issues raised by patients and communities, take forward the key themes and issues that they have raised, engage with stakeholders and plan for successful delivery of the new services. This plan will be agreed and monitored through the FCHS Project Board, which reports to the Hospital Executive Committee.

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 The Trust Board is asked to note the engagement and communication report for April to November 2011.

Agenda Item 4.4

PET(4)-01-12 p12a

P-03-308 Save Gwent Theatre

Petition wording

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure funding is continued for Gwent Theatre. The removal of this highly valued resource from the communities it has served for over thirty years deprives young people of a significant opportunity to engage with the Arts.

Petition raised by: George Davis-Stewart

Petition first considered by Committee: November 2010

Number of signatures: 1118

PET(4)-01-12 p12b

P-03-311 Spectacle Theatre

Petition wording

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure that funding continues for the award winning, Rhondda Valley-based, Spectacle Theatre Company. The Company has served schools and communities for over thirty years, and its loss will deprive people of a long-established, invaluable resource and, therefore, future opportunities to engage with local theatre and drama.

Petition raised by: Friends of Spectacle Theatre

Petition first considered by Committee: January 2011

Number of signatures: 2158

Supporting information:

The Spectacle Theatre company was established in 1979. The Arts Council of Wales has recently decided to cease its funding for the company, starting from the next financial year (April 2011).

Throughout decades of engagement with schools and diverse community projects in Rhondda Cynon Taf and other local authorities, Spectacle Theatre continues to produce high-quality theatrical work that addresses challenging social and other important issues. The company seeks to promote and enhance equality and a sense of citizenship, hence contributing to community cohesion. It seems clear that the ethos and work of the company has already internalised the spirit and practice of many, relevant elements of the *One Wales* document.

In a Cabinet statement on *One Wales Commitments to the Arts*, earlier in 2010, the Heritage Minister, Alun Ffred Jones stated that *Local communities matter, and providing arts for the people of Wales, wherever they live, to watch or participate in, is essential.*

Spectacle Theatre continues to achieve this aim in reality. For example, over the past twelve months, the company has engaged in a total of 385 performance and workshop sessions, reaching a total of 14,329 participants, of which over 12,000 were schoolchildren.

The Minister added,

By laying firm foundations at home, we also ensure that we have high-quality arts to take abroad as part of our work to secure the reputation of Wales overseas.

Spectacle Theatre's international credentials have already been recognised when, in 2007, they achieved a double-award from the Shanghai International Childrens' Theatre Festival. The entry, *The Lazy Ant*, won both the best production and script prizes. The play was later toured within Wales. Additionally, the loss of future funding for Spectacle Theatre will not only threaten the jobs of its six core staff, but also the potential employment and broad experience offered to many theatre workers (fifty over the past year).

Crucially, the Rhondda Valleys, already designated an area of 'need', together with other areas that the company embraces, will lose their English and Welsh language theatre provision for schools. Communities, too, will become all the more culturally impoverished if this extremely dedicated, professional, skilled and experienced company disbands.

P-03-314 Save Theatre Powys & Mid Powys Youth Theatre

Petition wording

Following on from the Arts Council of Wales decision to remove revenue funding from Theatre Powys from April 2011, we the undersigned call on the National Assembly for Wales to ensure Powys County Council funding is retained for Theatre Powys and MPYT. Failure to achieve this will result in the removal of both these provisions from the communities they've served for three decades; depriving young people of a significant opportunity to engage with the Arts. Mid Powys Youth Theatre is also one of a very small number of pastoral activities open to the youth of this area.

Petition raised by: Michael Chadwick

Petition first considered by Committee: March 2011

Number of signatures: 1152



WALES AUDIT OFFICE
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Wales Audit Office / Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru

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Date: 9 December 2011
Your ref: P-03-308 / 311 / 314 / 317
Our ref: HVT/1501/fgb
Page: 1 of 2

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

Dear Mr Powell

ARTS COUNCIL OF WALES INVESTMENT REVIEW

Thank you for your letter of 9 November asking me to include an examination of the Arts Council's Investment Review in my forward work programme.

I need to be clear that it is not within my remit to comment or pass judgement on the relative merits of decisions made by the Arts Council.

In response to correspondence received earlier this year about the Review and the Council's openness and accountability in reaching its final conclusions, my staff undertook some work to determine whether a more in-depth investigation was warranted.

I was already aware from my audit of its financial statements that the Council commissioned RSM Tenon to undertake a series of internal audit reviews to provide assurance in respect of the Investment Review process. Four reviews were completed at different stages and the internal auditors concluded favourably on each stage of the process reporting that *'the Council can take substantial assurance that the controls upon which the organisation relies to manage this area, as currently laid down and operated, are effective'*.

My staff also reviewed the Council's arrangements for dealing with appeals against its decisions. I was satisfied that, on the strength of these enquiries and the evidence of the Council's internal auditors, no further investigation was warranted. I remain of that view but if your Committee or its individual petitioners have any direct evidence that might lead me to reconsider this decision I would be happy to review it.

Direct Line: 029 2032 0510

E-mail: huw.vaughan.thomas@wao.gov.uk

Date: 9 December 2011
Our ref: HVT/1505/fgb
Page: 2 of 2

I have noted in particular your reference to discussions about the overarching direction of the arts agenda and its delivery of a value for money strategic approach. I see that the Government has committed to a review of the support for arts in schools including theatre experiences for young people. A value for money study ahead of the outcome of that review would, I think, be premature. However, I review my plans for value for money examinations annually to ensure its continuing relevance. I will bear your Committee's work in mind when I next consider the options for my forward work programme.

Yours sincerely



HUW VAUGHAN THOMAS
AUDITOR GENERAL FOR WALES

Agenda Item 4.7

PET(4)-01-12 p13a

P-04-339 Enforcement of Animal Welfare Standards in the Puppy Farming Industry in South West Wales

Petition wording

We call on the Welsh Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to stage an independent inquiry into the enforcement of animal welfare standards in the puppy farming industry in South West Wales.

This intervention and independent investigation is as a result of the widespread abhorrence at the ease with which the licenses are issued and subsequent lack of enforcement. This abhorrence is creating an extremely negative image of Wales throughout Wales, the United Kingdom and internationally. It is our contention that the setting up of an independent inquiry is the only way forward and will go some way in restoring the reputation of Wales throughout the UK and Internationally. Hopefully it will also curtail the activities of unlicensed puppy farmers & their reprehensible practices.

Petition raised by: Colin Richardson

First considered by Committee: October 2011

Number of signatures: 2169

Additional information for the e-petition

From our limited enquiries it has become apparent that there are large variances in the required criteria for licensing kennels and commercial breeders within the local authorities in Wales.

As all authorities should be taking cognisance of the relevant animal welfare legislation and other statutory requirements for the care and health of dogs there should be some uniformity in the granting of licences. This is not happening. We believe that the only way to determine why there are these variances is to have an independent enquiry into the processes and requirements of each authority.

At the present time the effect of the licensing of commercial breeders who in the opinion of several 1000s of people do not meet basic welfare and health needs only shows Wales in a negative light.

Wales has the reputation for being the centre of bad practices within both the councils, licensed and unlicensed dog breeders. In 2012 the battery farming of chickens is to be outlawed. How can it be correct to allow the continuance of what is in effect the battery farming of dogs?

A basic question has to be asked of local authorities as to why are licences granted when, by some of the local authorities own admission, there is insufficient staff to properly monitor the situation.

Unfortunately some authorities become entrenched and take on an almost siege mentality when questions are asked about the planning and licensing processes. It is our considered opinion that only by having an independent enquiry will mal-practice be recognised and hopefully a world class system can be initiated.

An independent enquiry will only enhance the reputation of Wales and show the UK and the rest of the world that the Welsh Government takes its legal and ethical responsibilities seriously and will not condone the ill-treatment of animals due to the inadequacies of a failing planning and licensing system.

Welsh Dogs Advisory Group

45 Great Western Avenue
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Email:enquiries@talyot.co.uk

Mr Bryan Thomas,
Director
Director of Environmental Services and Housing
Neuadd Cyngor Ceredigion,
Penmorfa,
Aberaeron,
Ceredigion.
SA46 0PA

6th October 2011

Dear Mr Thomas

We are a group of ethical dog breeders living in Wales who are concerned that legislation is not being enforced with regard to so called unlicensed 'puppy farms' and that there may be some divergence in the criteria for licencing puppy farm operations.

Our aims are:

- 1) To act as a conduit between responsible dog owners in Wales and the Welsh Assembly.
- 2) To work to improve the welfare of dogs in Wales
- 3) To provide expertise to any relevant body on dog related matters
- 4) To promote responsible dog ownership through education.
- 5) To help protect the rights of people and their dogs in legitimate leisure activities
- 6) To work with authorities to ensure legislation is practical, makes best use of resources and is capable of achieving its aims.

We have noticed that there is no uniform approach to licencing within the various local authorities in Wales. As can be seen from the above one of our aims #6 is "To work with authorities to ensure legislation is practical, makes best use of resources and is capable of achieving its aims."

To further our understanding of the licensing procedures and other criteria taken into consideration by your department for approving commercial dog breeders and, the enforcement processes and procedures, we would be grateful if your department could provide us with that relevant information.

If you need clarification on any point please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully



Colin Richardson

John Griffiths AC / AM
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd a Datblygu Cynaliadwy
Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-339
Ein cyf/Our ref JG/06772/11

William Powell AM
Chair Petition's Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA
committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

15 November 2011

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter in which you seek my views on the issues raised in the petition.

I announced on the 28th June this year that raising standards of animal welfare continues to be important for Government and dealing with unscrupulous dog breeders is regarded as a high priority. This is consistent with the objectives of the Animal Health and Welfare Strategy.

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 introduced the concept of the duty of care for pet animals – which has long been applied to farm animals and the introduction of the concept of the “five needs” - a suitable environment to live in; a healthy diet; ability to behave normally; appropriate company; and protection from pain, suffering injury and disease.

Included in the draft Regulations, on which we will be consulting shortly, is Ministerial Guidance to local authorities that clearly sets out the responsibilities they will be expected to follow in both licensing and enforcement. This will ensure a more consistent approach by local authorities to the licensing and enforcement of dog breeding premises.

Consequently I see no reason, at this stage, for an independent inquiry into the enforcement of animal welfare standards in the dog breeding industry.

Best wishes

John Griffiths AC / AM
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd a Datblygu Cynaliadwy
Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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

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



Response to petition questionnaire.

Questions you may wish to consider in responding

1. Do you feel that the Welsh Government (or another body) should investigate the enforcement of animal welfare legislation in the dog breeding industry in South-west Wales?

Yes, there should be a body to investigate or oversee enforcement of animal welfare in the dog breeding industry in South -west Wales. This body should be independent of any council and should NOT be connected to the Kennel Club.

The reason for a body to investigate is that Puppy Love Campaigns have presented evidence of cruelty and breaches in license conditions to both Carmarthen council and Ceredigion, and, have been met with either denial there is a problem or excuses for no action taken. We have helped 3 TV companies to make programmes showing the neglect yet still there was no decent enforcement or prosecution to follow exposure . The worst of these was in Ceredigion where we exposed an unlicensed breeder, on seeing our film Dogs Trust vet, Chris Laurence said on camera to BBC Wales they were the worst conditions he had ever seen in his long career.

The breeder held 92 dogs on an unmanned farm, conditions were disgusting. There were dogs needing veterinary treatment, serious eye conditions both in pups and adult dogs, skin complaints which meant the coats of some dogs were literally hanging off. There was also a lame dog and pup. The breeder was allowed by Ceredigion council to disperse dogs (possibly to other breeders) and to take some dogs for euthanasia. Thank fully a couple of the dogs were saved by vet and passed onto rescue. One dog needed an eye removed another had

lungworm and very bad hips.

In our opinion this breeder should have been prosecuted for cruelty but Ceredigion council gave him a license to keep 12 breeding bitches once he had cleaned up the hell hole the dogs were living in. He was still allowed to keep the dogs on unmanned premises and when we paid him a visit after license was issued conditions were not much better than before. Dogs had no water or food and some pups had eye conditions. We have film and photographs of this establishment which we can supply for you or if you can visit <http://www.puppylovecampaigns.org/investigations.shtml> this page of our website and view the first video from the BBC it will show you the case in full.

2. Do you feel that dog breeding licences are granted too easily? Do the requirements that need to be fulfilled before a licence is issued need to be tightened up?

Yes, licenses are granted far too easily, even before all license conditions are in place. If an unlicensed breeder is discovered LA's do their utmost to issue license as soon as possible. The case above shows how easy it is for breeders to get a license even after neglect and cruelty is uncovered.

Licenses are given to old sheds, pig pens, barns and even old metal freight containers from the backs of lorries. We know of at least one other premises in Ceredigion where 50 dogs are kept on unmanned property. This is totally unacceptable.

3. What are the barriers to the effective enforcement of animal welfare legislation in the dog breeding industry?

There is a lack of common understanding across licensing authorities of the specific issues relating to companion animal welfare. Some councils clearly regard dog breeding as a purely agricultural livestock business rather than a highly specialised activity in which the product is a domestic pet with a potential life expectancy of 12 to 14 years and where the outcome for the final purchaser is entirely dependent on the knowledge, care and practises of the breeder. Another consideration is the likelihood that some of these establishments are owned/operated by person/persons known to the LA

There also appears to be a predisposition in favour of the farmer, particularly in Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion. On a number of occasions, enforcement officers have been presented with photographic and video evidence of failure to comply with the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and license conditions, yet rather than acting promptly and with minimal advance notice to the breeder,

inspections take place days later and notice is given, unsurprisingly, improvements in standards are reported, albeit temporarily as no follow up is made.

Licences have also been readily granted to puppy farmers previously trading illegally as an adjunct to an existing agricultural business and where evidence of previous bad practise has been provided, but with no ongoing monitoring.

4. Do you feel it should be compulsory for all pups to be microchipped before sale?

Yes most definitely, traceability is a must

5. How big a problem is unlicensed dog breeding in Wales?

Very big, its estimated there are as many unlicensed premises as there are licensed . RSPCA has just made a statement which says there are 2000 breeding premises in Wales. Puppy Love think the majority of these are unlicensed. If and when these breeders are discovered if licenses are issued the problem will be even more out of control than it is today. This would be huge concern to campaigners and the general public alike.

Notes ; Puppy Love Campaigns are the largest and most active anti puppy farm campaigners in the UK . We take many reports from the public about sick or dead pups they have purchased from pet shops or small ads . Most of these pups have started their lives in Wales, among filth and disease and some are riddled with hereditary health problems. We would urge you to consider this petition very carefully before the name of Wales is tainted any further.

We have no objection to providing oral evidence we can also show video evidence if you so wish.

**Veronica Lambert
and the Team**

<http://www.puppylovecampaigns.org>









Response to questions asked by the Petitions Committee

Q. Do you feel that the Welsh Government (or another body) should investigate the enforcement of animal welfare legislation in the dog breeding industry in South-West Wales?

A. Yes, I strongly believe that the Welsh Government or an independent body answerable to the Welsh Assembly Government should investigate the enforcement of animal welfare legislation in South West Wales.

Q. Do you feel that dog breeding licenses are granted too easily?

A. Yes, dog breeding licenses are granted too easily allowing dog breeding to be carried out in premises that should not be allowed to be used for the purpose of breeding dogs and raising puppies. This is particularly noticeable if the dog breeder has a farming business, in the main livestock or arable farming. By doing so Councils are allowing dog breeders to accommodate dogs and puppies in premises previously used for livestock or storage, such as large agriculture sheds, agriculture barns, poultry sheds, pig sty's and even large containers such as one would expect to see on the rear of articulated lorries are considered by the Council to meet the standards required for licensing under the Breeding and Sale of Dogs (welfare) Act 1999.

These types of buildings are expensive to adapt for dog breeding and impossible to heat (the majority are never adapted but are used by the breeders for their dogs in the same condition as they would have used for their livestock). They are unsuitable to be used for the purpose of containing dogs for the purpose of breeding long term (from birth to eight years or more). This practice results in hundreds of dogs accommodated in isolation and often severe deprivation, in small, damp, concrete cubicles (previously used for calves/sheep). Many dogs and whelping bitches are not provided with adequate beds and bedding and many breeders do not supply a whelping pen or an isolation unit if a dog is unwell and contagious. Most do not have exercise areas attached to their sleeping quarters which would allow dogs during day time hours, to have natural daylight and free exercise, which is part of the licensing conditions but are accommodated indoors without natural light and isolated from human contact, other than when fed. Yet these dogs are producing puppies for the purpose of being sold to pet homes through the puppy trade but have no knowledge of humans or of being handled in the world outside their concrete cubicle or pen.

These buildings cannot meet the standards as intended or one would expect in the Dog Breeding and Sale of Dogs (welfare) Act 1999. Councils are applying the legislation very loosely and are lax in ensuring the standard as intended by the Act are met before granting a licence. If these buildings could not meet the standards required to be suitable for licensing under the Dog Boarding Establishments Act for owners who wished to board their dogs in kennels for short periods of time, (days or weeks) then they should not be considered acceptable by Councils for licensing as dog breeding kennels.

Individuals who apply for dog breeding licenses, to keep breeding dogs, (dams, sires) in these agriculture buildings are expecting to keep their dogs in confinement for a lifetime of breeding, which is eight years or longer and to accommodate and breed from as many dogs as the building will allow. This in many cases can only be described as the battery farming of dogs, with the approval of the Council who are responsible for granting the licence and in some instances planning permission.

Although it is not in the licensing Inspectors remit to ensure the premises have planning permission

for dog breeding prior to granting a dog breeders licence, it would make practical sense for the Council Public Protection/Environmental Health Department (responsible for issuing a dog breeders licence) to communicate with their own Planning Department to ascertain whether the premises have applied for planning permission or change of use from agriculture to dog breeding (if applicable) before they issue a dog breeders licence. Failure to communicate is no excuse for premises to be operating without planning permission or to increase the numbers of dogs from the number stated on the original planning application. An example can be highlighted here with additional information on my **blog: <http://batterydogfarmingdealerspetshops.blogspot.com/>**

One premises applied for planning permission in 1994 for the change of use of calf pens into dog kennels and approval was granted for 9 dogs. This permission required prior approval of the Local Planning Authority for any intensification of the business. Over the next 17 years the numbers of dogs on the premises had intensified until in the last 2 or 3 years the numbers reached 140 dogs, then 180 dogs but the current figure is now 196 dogs that the owner is licensed to keep on the premises. However, the owner never contacted planning during the 17 years to advise them of the intensification of his business. The owner, a sheep farmer now has in addition to 196 dogs, 120 acres of land, with another 100 acres rented, 850 breeding sheep and 200 followers. The sheep farmer/dog breeder employs 1 full and 1 part time staff, who is also the farmers wife and works full time for the local authority. In addition to their sheep, dogs and puppies they also have children to care for.

It was early this year that Puppy Alert contacted Carmarthenshire Council Planning (Enforcement) regarding an application by this sheep farmer for an agriculture shed on his premises (which had permission granted 'determined for agriculture use' a few months previously). With the knowledge that he was already the largest dog breeder supplying dealers and pet shops in S W Wales with puppies I had my suspicions that the agriculture shed was likely to be used, not for sheep and storage as the application stated but for accommodating dogs. This was found to be the case when the enforcement officer visited the premises.

The shed was fitted out with cubicles for dog breeding, ceramic tiled and with automatic drinkers for the dogs. At this time the premises were licensed (last inspection report 140) in fact 161 dogs counted. I asked the Enforcement Officer after his visit to the premises how many dogs he thought he may have seen and I suggested to him 140 dogs, he laughed and said, 'you can double that figure'. I was astounded and immediately contacted the department responsible for licensing the premises, who denied any knowledge or that the figure (double the licence number) was true. I was not believed and to make it necessary for the Council to take me seriously I suggested that they speak to the Enforcement Officer who could confirm to them what he saw. The licensing officer said he would need a statement from him (the Enforcement Officer) which I understand having spoken to him again later, he was prepared to give.

Puppy Alert asked for the support of the public asking them to write in to the Council objecting to the planning application on these premises for change of use from agriculture to dog breeding. By doing so it would mean the application for change of use should then to go before the planning committee rather than to be decided under delegated powers. The objections I believe were nearly 800 but the application was passed by the planning committee who were guided by their planning officer to vote for approval. This decision gave Carmarthenshire its largest licensed battery dog farm, now complete with planning permission for 196 dogs and their puppies and no staff to care for them. This is a very irresponsible decision and has set a precedent for others to follow.

I was astounded to realise there was another 'new shed' on the premises other than the one I refer to above, which came to my notice about 4-6 weeks prior to the application highlighted above going before the Councillors on the planning committee. Whilst I was concentrating hard on asking

people to object to ensure the application would go before the elected councillors on the planning committee, this other application for change of use from agriculture to dog breeding was swiftly determined without my being aware until too late (this was late 2011) by the planning department.

I then realized that what was referred to on a inspection report of 2008 as (new shed) was this earlier built shed that was for agriculture use too and again the applicant did not have planning permission for change of use either but was also being used to accommodate dogs. Again neither planning or licensing were prepared to take any action against the applicant, planning only suggested he put in a planning application for change of use (which he did in 2011) and Public Protection responsible for licensing did not take any action regarding the increase in numbers of dogs.

This has now set a precedent for other farmers or anyone with a farm holding number to follow, apply to the Council for an agriculture shed which will go under agriculture determined which is a formality, fill the shed with dogs (if you already have a licence) or apply later for one (the Council very rarely prosecute for unlicensed dog breeding, they give a slap on the wrist and then issue a dog breeders licence). Then the farmer, dog breeder apply for change of use from agriculture to dog breeding, no questions asked and you have yet one more licensed battery dog farm with planning permission. It is too easy for farmers to have a few breeding dogs, then for it to become a cottage industry, then before long it is an established business of breeding dogs for the pet trade with hundreds of dogs having litter after litter on a conveyor belt system. None of these dogs are health screened for known hereditary diseases under the KC/BVA health screening schemes for pedigree dogs. Many of these breeders do not regularly vaccinate and worm their dogs or visit a vet with them due to cost. Due to the fact that they sell litters of puppies to dealers they are never held responsible for all the puppies that due to poor living conditions, breeding practices become ill or die soon after purchase from a dealer or pet shop, they are never held accountable. Even when Puppy Alert has notified the Council that a puppy sold from one of their premises (if puppy sold with breeder details, this is rare) has died or is a carrier of a contagious disease, there is little interest.

The Council by ignoring the increase in numbers of dogs and re-issuing the licence each year for these premises have already failed in their duty of care, lacked integrity by not ensuring the welfare of the dogs were not going to be compromised by doing so. The Council must have been aware that the farmer did not employ staff specifically for the purpose of caring for the dogs and their litters of puppies, therefore why did they not ask he reduce the numbers of dogs or employ staff or revoke the licence? Why wasn't the farmer/dog breeder questioned over the yearly increase in numbers of dogs on the premises used for the purpose of breeding and producing litters of puppies that were sold to dealers and pet shops?

Why when Puppy Alert contacted planning enforcement earlier this year did they ignore the fact that the sheep farmer had never asked for planning permission to intensify his business and increase the numbers of dogs on the premises until after enforcement were notified? Why was an enforcement notice not served on the premises? Not just for one agriculture shed but as I later learnt for two!

It s interesting to read the licensing inspectors comments on visiting the premises in the preceding years.

14.08.2006: 95 dogs. Manhole covers to drains to have covers. Isolation pen change. Records ok need to be more specific for each breeding bitch. Stated he was in the process of getting records computerized. Possible overcrowding in some pens. Bedding, sawdust/ shredded paper. Will need to be inspected before next application!! Exercise facility – yard out front of buildings, needs

cleaning.

**Therefore no attached exercise facility and overcrowding in pens and no proper bedding, it was suggested another inspection before next yearly application but the next inspection visit was not until 11.05.2007.*

11.05.2007. 125 dogs. Slightly overcrowded in some pens but satisfactory to licence. Separate isolation (convert old garage) before next licensing visit in December. Bedding, shredded paper.

**Overcrowding, with 125 dogs there was even at this time a reason to reduce numbers of dogs. There was no isolation unit.*

14.08.2008. 116 dogs plus 15 litters. (New Shed) Mesh cages /pens in old shed need attention. Build up of cobwebs and sawdust, needs cleaning. Fire extinguisher's needed in new shed. Records well kept. If dogs use area outside 'new shed' as an exercise area then this needs to be void of hazardous materials. At present it could cause injury.

**Due to the condition in the area outside the 'new shed' it does not indicate to me it used for exercise for 116 dogs. Condition of pens cage needed attention. Needed cleaning. No fire extinguishers.*

Sorry, need to locate inspection report for 2009.

07.12.2010. dogs 161 plus 17 litters. More dogs from isolation pens should be clear at all times. Fire extinguisher and no smoking signs needed in new block. Keep an eye on cocker spaniel showing early type of stereotypical although assured us this was due to the presence of strangers and she does not do so all the time. Bedding shredded tissue paper. Temperature – low freezing temperatures outside, good inside heat lamps.

**Even more dogs, isolation pens not clear, query over mental behaviour of dog – kennel stress, going crazy? No proper bedding, no mention of beds. Very cold. Only puppies would have heating lamps and whelping bitches – other dogs would not only shredded tissue paper. Not adequate.*

From these inspection reports of the premises in question it does indicate the numbers and the concern over parts of the licensing conditions but it has not prevented the council limiting numbers dogs (no staff) but allowing the increase to today's figure of 196 dogs plus litters, no fire fighting equipment, an accident waiting to happen. Unlike dog boarding kennels (at least in England) and dog breeding kennels they are inspected by a fire officer. Why does this not happen in premises in Wales?

Waste: this is something that I felt should have been a consideration in all premises and this was something I communicated with the Environment Agency over. Some waste from dog kennels is hazardous waste but reading inspection reports the method of disposal is so varied, meaning many dog breeders are breaking the law but still it continues. In view of how many dog breeders do not appear to use a vet at all or only if a dog is unwell one has to question what happens to the dogs and puppies bodies that die or are still born etc on the premises?

The council does not ask these questions but with over 3,364 breeding bitches in nearly 90 licensed premises in Carmarthenshire capable of producing 16,820 puppies per annum with equally as many breeders operating unlicensed. Add this to the number of dogs in licensed premises in Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire resulting in breeders not complying with the Environment Act and acting responsibly due to the methods of disposal used by them. Yet the Council are not taking any action

to ensure the dog breeders comply with good practice to safeguard the environment in not allowing hazardous waste to go into water courses or into the air.*

Website: <http://sites.google.com/site/puppyalert/>

Puppy Alert has requested the yearly inspection reports of dog breeding premises over the last few years. It appears to me the re-issue of a yearly dog breeders licence is an automatic formality by the department responsible for licensing dog breeders. The Inspector questions the dog breeder, ticking boxes, making notes, sometimes even making constructive comments which do refer to none compliance with the licence conditions, then it appears returning to the office and filing the inspection report away until the following year without ever taking the dog breeder to task over none compliance. Is the senior environmental health officer responsible for licensing ever asked by the inspecting officer to take into consideration the inspection reports with a view to revoke the licence? It appears not.

When Puppy Alert has with valid reason complained to Carmarthenshire County Council regarding premises, particularly after TV programmes or undercover video film highlighting the appalling conditions for the dogs in some premises. My concerns have not been taken seriously but dismissed in some instances, as time wasting. The Council I feel is very protective of the dog breeders they licence or maybe it is because they do not like to be reminded of their own failings in granting licences to premises that are sometimes not fit to be licensed and are lacking in concern for animal welfare.

Time and time again the same comments are made on inspection reports such as the following, most contravene the dog breeding licence conditions:-

Record keeping.

Records of puppies sales not seen, although selling to London and Manchester pet shops.

Records incomplete.

Records not seen.

Records with the accountant

No records seen today

Records need to be kept up to date.

Some records missing.

Re- visit to check records – records checked lack details of purchasers.

How can the Inspector know if licence conditions relating to the breeding of the dogs are not ready for inspection, complete or inadequate? Such as the numbers of litters each breeding bitch produces, the one litter in 12 month period applies and can verify who the puppies were sold to, if the licence holder is not keeping records or fails to keep them up to date?

Exercise, the dogs are supposed to have an exercise area separate but attached to their sleeping area according to the licence conditions but a large majority of breeders do not supply an exercise area attached to the sleeping/kennel area. The Inspecting officer accepts the dogs breeders word that dogs are exercised in a yard or field and this is sometimes noted on the inspection form. But this is not what the legislation intended. It was intended that dog breeding establishments should have free access for the dogs to an exercise area attached to the kennel area. The licensing officer has no proof on a once yearly visit that the dogs are exercised in yard or field. Therefore why has the licensing officer and the vet during their initial licensing inspection said that an exercise area must be part of and attached to the kennel before a license is granted?

In view of many dog breeders stating they do not display their licence or anything that would identify them as dog breeding on their premises due to criminal damage by animal activists it is

highly unlikely they would exercise all their dogs outside in fields and yards (between 10 and in some cases 196 dogs each on nearly 90 different premises in Carmarthenshire) when they fear to be identified as dog breeders, as they put it by 'animal activists'.

Powys Dyfed police were unable to confirm but as Carmarthenshire County Council offer this as one reason for declining complete information on Freedom of information requests stating 'due to animal activist and criminality' together with data protection for obliterating names, addresses, telephone numbers etc from all inspection reports when they are requested by the public (Puppy Alert). Even when the request is for just one named premises it is refused as they say I would be able to identify the premises, of course I have to identify the premises to request the information in the first place. Therefore does not make any sense at all.

Kennel area, a few of the licensing officers comments in respect of the kennel accommodation such as:-

Incomplete work on sheds.

Clear clutter.

Pups need extra bedding.

General clean up.

Light in puppy pen artificial light, no natural light.

Some wooden beds to be replaced.

Power hose, green on some walls.

Wood in kennels and kennel runs.

Bird poo in kennels.

Flies using fly trapper lots of flies will use more.

Wooden matting needs to be replaced as only wooden sheet in some kennels.

Sharp edges on puppy walls.

Whelping shed need pressure wash change plastic beds.

Clear cobwebs. Cobwebs, bird excreta.

Disinfect kennels and thoroughly clean.

Rendering in top shed incomplete.

Isolation unit to be completed.

Isolation facility required.

Advised to clear out isolation in case required.

Ensure food bins are covered. Food to be kept in vermin proof bins.

Fire extinguisher still required.

Fire extinguisher and no smoking signs in new block.

Fire extinguishers require regular servicing.

Fire extinguishers advised maintenance.

Advised to purchase new fire extinguishers (2 or 3).

Check fire extinguisher needle on red.

In process of cleaning and replenishing water (water bowls soiled and empty)

Wooden platforms to be replaced.

One kennel lacking natural light.

No free access to exercise runs – let out in field when Mr ** is not at work * no evidence!!!

Water drinkers now removed from whelping pens.

Clear roof of main block to allow in more natural light.

Bird excreta particularly in whelping block a problem

General spring clean required.

Poor cleanliness in kennel pens.

Bird excreta in whelping area.

Unnecessary tins and objects in whelping area.

Isolation pen ok but not ideal.

Bones, advised check claims they were their leftovers from dinner and the dogs were fed scraps this morning.

Previously had pm on pup, results came back as parvo virus and some have died a few days after receiving their parvo jabs. No mention of this being followed up by Council Inspector, parvo virus is highly contagious.

Need exercise runs.

Clear out isolation

Increase number of pens or decrease number of dogs. Arrange vet inspection when has addressed the 'above'. The 'above' in this case was one boxers eyes not very good and red cocker spaniel treating with eye ointment from vets.

Sharp edges in barn (old cow shed) dark without artificial lighting. Old cow shed need more exercise facilities.

Bottom shed dogs let into alleyway for more exercise

Overcrowding in some pens

Rendering needed.

Isolation must be separate and comply with conditions (not the bathroom)!

Suggest warmer bedding material as currently sparse sprinkling of sawdust.

Dogs need clipping

Dog circling

Keep an eye on cocker spaniel as showing early signs of stereotypical behaviour.

Timid blue roan cocker spaniel hiding behind plastic bed.

Water bowls empty.

Unpleasant smell on approach to kennel, cleaning at time of inspection 3.30pm.

Lighting in kennels not efficient when top door to kennel block is closed.

No smoking signs.- Many times

Licence not displayed – many times some breeders stating due to animal activists.

Emergency sign – not displayed.

Fire evacuation notice – not displayed.

When asked of details of vets and if vet visited premises many could not name a vet practice and others said only if needed.

One breeder said vaccinated themselves – which is illegal unless under supervision of the vet.

These are a selection of the comments noted on Carmarthenshire County Council inspection reports, there are many more. The same comments apply from one year to next on some reports many of the comments are none compliance of licence conditions but they are never actioned.

It is known that agriculture barns have no heating and are impossible to heat in winter, other than sometimes small areas with infra red heaters for whelping bitches and puppies but the dogs are still contained within small concrete pens often without adequate beds or bedding. Some just have cow matting, often no bedding given and just wooden pallets or bakers plastic pallets.

Dog breeders should never be issued with a dog breeders licence when they do not live on the premises and the dogs are accommodated in a barn or shed a considerable distance from the dog breeders home. But licenses have been granted under these circumstances. This is totally unacceptable. Made even worse when the barn in question does not even have a door!

Q. Do the requirements that need to be fulfilled before a licence is issued need to be tightened up?

Yes of course they do. I have outlined some of the problems in my answers above. Another great concern of course is the number of dogs permitted on premises. The Council disregards numbers of dogs and year after year allows numbers to increase with total disregard of the dogs welfare. For example how many members of the family are responsible for the daily care of the dogs, how many

hours can they give to attending the dogs needs and importantly if prospective applicant own a farm that is their main business, are they going to employ staff to care for the dogs.

This has recently been highlighted when Puppy Alert contacted Carmarthenshire Council planning department (enforcement) please see link to my blog *

<http://batterydogfarmingdealerspetshops.blogspot.com/>

Staffing levels to be introduced and enforced and a ceiling for the numbers of dogs allowed in premises. Premises should not be able to increase numbers each year just by the inspecting officer noting numbers when visiting premises during the yearly inspection.

Q. What are the barriers to the effective enforcement of animal welfare legislation in the dog breeding industry?

The Council having low standards in compliance with legislation.

Inspectors not enforcing conditions.

Inspectors are making comments on inspection forms but they are just comments that lie dormant until the following year in other words a paper exercise. Maybe the barriers are the more senior members of staff who for whatever reason do not follow up on the comments made by inspecting officers and disregard the poor conditions known to prevail in some premises. I spoke to Mr D responsible for licensing with concern for a breeding bitch having to give birth to a litter of . puppies on concrete. He comment was that some breeding bitches prefer to give birth on concrete! The point I was making was that this breeding bitch had no choice but to give birth on concrete as no bed or bedding was provided by the breeder.

Inadequate number of licencing officers to check premises more than once a year.

Inspections are often pre-arranged with the breeder rather than always unannounced.

Q. Do you feel that it should be compulsory for puppies to be micro-chipped before sale?

Yes, for traceability and irrefutable identification of the puppy and breeder. As nearly two thirds of licensed breeders in S W Wales (possibly the same number unlicensed) sell their puppies to dealers and pet shops. Therefore puppies bred in Wales are being sold all throughout the UK. But it is exceedingly important that the breeders details remain with the microchip company and also that the microchip details including breeder details are passed onto the dealer and pet shop together with the puppy in a log book that is handed to the final puppy purchaser. At present licensed dog breeders are not complying with the current legislation relating to the puppy being sold to dealer and pet shop with a collar and tag. It is removed by the dealer or the dealer will not accept the puppy with collar and tag the same applies to the pet shop. The reason I feel is that dealers and pet shops can purchase litters of puppies from both licensed and unlicensed dog breeders and therefore they can mix litters. Also Welsh breeders supplying the pet trade by selling to dealers and pet shops do not like to be identified, I suspect in some cases due to tax evasion.

Q. How big a problem is unlicensed dog breeding in Wales?

It is thought it is equal in numbers as licensed dog breeders, therefore a big problem. This is due to the many factors, one is lack of premises being identified due to breeders being able to sell litters of puppies to dealers and pet shops (who can purchase and sell puppies by both licensed and

unlicensed breeders), when puppies are not identifiable they are not always traceable back to the breeder.

The availability of free ad sites on the Internet and Internet puppy trading. Breeders using mobile numbers and some free-ad sites allowing hidden contact numbers to be used that offer privacy to the breeder/seller.

Puppy Alert

Julie White response

An ending to puppy farming please, Wales should be taking the lead.
In the very least a humane approach which is well regulated.



**Kennel Club and Welsh Kennel Club Response to
the National Assembly for Wales Petitions Committee Consultation**

Submitted on 30th November 2011 by: The Kennel Club,

The Kennel Club and Welsh Kennel Club wish to respond to the following petition consultation as issued by the Petitions Committee of the National Assembly for Wales:

'We call on the Welsh Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to stage an independent inquiry into the enforcement of animal welfare standards in the puppy farming industry in South West Wales.'

This intervention and independent investigation is as a result of the widespread abhorrence at the ease with which the licenses are issued and subsequent lack of enforcement. This abhorrence is creating an extremely negative image of Wales throughout Wales, the United Kingdom and internationally. It is our contention that the setting up of an independent inquiry is the only way forward and will go some way in restoring the reputation of Wales throughout the UK and Internationally. Hopefully it will also curtail the activities of unlicensed puppy farmers & their reprehensible practices.'

1. Do you feel that the Welsh Government (or another body) should investigate the enforcement of animal welfare legislation in the dog breeding industry in South-west Wales?

The current legislation is enforced to a varying degree from local authority to local authority, with particular areas of Wales having a bad reputation for allowing known bad breeders to continue to trade. The Kennel Club would therefore welcome a country-wide review.

Many local authorities argue that current legislation is not adequate to take appropriate action against unscrupulous breeders. Prosecuting is also hugely expensive for authorities meaning that they are often wary of pursuing cases unless they can be sure of a conviction.

To this end the Kennel Club supports the proposal within the recent Dog Breeding Review Consultation giving inspectors the ability to both suspend and revoke a breeding licence. We consider that to be a significant improvement on current legislation.

Members of the Kennel Club Assured Breeder Scheme (ABS) are currently regulated to a higher standard than those set in current or proposed future regulation. These standards are in the process of being upheld and monitored by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS), an independent and recognised regulatory body. The Kennel Club therefore maintains that such breeders, who conform to a higher set of standards incorporated in a recognised breeding scheme that is properly accredited by an external body should continue to be monitored by scheme inspectors such as the Kennel Club's ABS Regional Breeder Advisors in order to free up already overstretched resources for inspecting breeders who fall outside such a regime. Relevant information could then be shared with local authorities including breeder details should they be suspended by any such schemes etc.

The Kennel Club's proposal is supported by Professor Patrick Bateson's recommendations within the Independent Inquiry into Dog Breeding 2010, which cited that the benefits of the Assured Breeder Scheme should include 'ultimately reduced level of Local Authority inspection'.

2. Do you feel that dog breeding licences are granted too easily? Do the requirements that need to be fulfilled before a licence is issued need to be tightened up?

As mentioned previously, the Kennel Club sees the problem in regards to breeding licences as centering around a lack of resources in local authorities and widely varying levels of enforcement from area to area. Local authorities have been known to reissue licences without reassessing the property or checking the welfare condition of the dogs; with local authority staff with little or no knowledge of dogs and breeding commonly being sent to inspect premises.

Poor quality premises where reasonable concerns have been raised should have an increased frequency of inspection. The Kennel Club also considers that the licence fee should be set annually by the Welsh Assembly Government. Licence fees vary hugely between local authorities even though the apparent costs are similar.

3. What are the barriers to the effective enforcement of animal welfare legislation in the dog breeding industry?

Adequate funding for enforcement officers is essential to sufficiently implement animal welfare legislation. The Kennel Club would also like to

reemphasise the need for inspection officers to be trained so that they are able to differentiate between good and bad practice.

We also believe regulation should go further by requiring breeders to:

- Health test the breeding bitch and stud dog for any inherited genetic disorders relevant to the breed such as hip or elbow dysplasia and inherited eye diseases in certain breeds;
- Provide written advice on feeding, worming, socialisation and training specific to the needs of the particular breed;
- Provide reasonable post-sales advice to the puppy buyer; and
- Draw up an appropriate contract of sale to protect the buyer and seller.

These additional requirements would ensure that not only would the immediate health and welfare needs of the puppy be met but also inherited health problems would be, wherever possible, avoided. Puppy buyers would be protected from unscrupulous breeders by the provisions of the contract of sale. This latter point is of the utmost importance as the current regime allows puppy farmers to extract large sums of money from puppy buyers with very limited recourse to consumer law when things go wrong, for instance if the newly-acquired puppy requires immediate veterinary attention.

4. Do you feel that it should be compulsory for puppies to be microchipped prior to sale?

The Kennel Club broadly agrees that all puppies should be microchipped before leaving the breeding premises – so long as the puppy is not re-homed before 56 days of age. However we believe that some relief should be given for breeders of particularly small dogs at the discretion of a vet or where there is a compelling medical or welfare reason not to do so.

The breeder should also be the first registered owner of the puppy to ensure greater traceability and encourage better welfare standards.

The Kennel Club also believes that all dogs kept at the breeding establishment should be microchipped in order to enable better enforcement of the limit on the number of litters that may be bred from each bitch. However we recognise that some relief should be given to provide exemption for older animals.

5. How big a problem is unlicensed dog breeding in Wales?

Unfortunately by their very nature, unlicensed breeders often stay 'under the radar' and therefore it is difficult to estimate the scale of the problem. However, the Kennel Club would highlight that current problems in Wales do

not necessarily sit solely with unlicensed breeders. Many puppy farms are licensed and working to the bare minimum standards of the law meaning that local authorities are often powerless to take any action against them.

The Kennel Club regards it of utmost importance to note that the funding and number of enforcement officers available to enforce such regulations have been reduced significantly in recent years. The Kennel Club would therefore encourage the Government to carefully consider how effective enforcement can be assured, and if there is a danger that it cannot, to consider alternative inspection schemes if these are properly accredited by a body such as UKAS.

ENDS

The Kennel Club and Welsh Kennel Club would be prepared to give evidence in person.

Dogs Trust Response to Call for Evidence on Dog Breeding from the National Assembly for Wales Petitions Committee

Do you feel that the Welsh Government (or another body) should investigate the enforcement of animal welfare legislation in the dog breeding industry in South Wales?

Dogs Trust very much feels that the Welsh Government should investigate the enforcement of animal welfare legislation in the dog breeding industry, not just in South Wales, but in Wales as a whole.

It is generally accepted that the current legislation on the breeding of dogs is failing. This is largely because enforcement agencies find it difficult to detect many people breeding dogs and that the welfare of both the breeding stock and the puppies can be adversely affected as a consequence. There is therefore a general view that legislation should be reviewed.

Do you feel that dog breeding licences are granted too easily? Do the requirements that need to be fulfilled before a licence is issued need to be tightened up?

Dogs Trust would agree with the question that dog licences are granted too easily in Wales and that the requirements that need to be fulfilled before a licence is issued needs to be tightened up significantly. Currently, licences are issued by Local Authorities but quite often premises are not properly inspected, or inspected at all, before a licence is issued or renewed and the criteria that LA's are inspecting against often have no correlation to the conditions and welfare of the bitches being kept or puppies being bred.

In addition, many commercial dog breeders and puppy farmers are operating without a licence and therefore not coming to the attention of LA's. Puppy farms are establishments where dogs are bred intensively for profit with little or no consideration for their welfare. Puppies are treated as products, mass produced in order to create maximum profit for the breeder.

Conditions are often crowded, dirty and poorly lit. The dogs sleep on bare floors with little or no bedding. The breeding bitches have a litter at every season (two litters per year) and are kept pregnant on a continuous cycle, nursing litter after litter until they are physically exhausted.

The pups have minimal human contact. They are usually not vaccinated or treated for worms and likely to be taken away from their mother before they are 6 weeks old, which

is considered by most vets to be too early. This fast turnover is the key to ensuring that the breeder only has to spend the absolute minimum on feeding the pups.

It is this intensive breeding that typifies a battery farming operation. Not all puppy battery farms will be on a grand scale, and some may only involve a few breeding bitches. However, they will all share one characteristic; a willingness to compromise the welfare of the dogs in order to maximize profit.

What are the barriers to the effective enforcement of animal welfare legislation in the dog breeding industry?

The Breeding of Dogs Act 1973 was the first attempt to control dog breeding. The Act required any person with more than four dogs capable of breeding to be licensed. However many owners of multiple dogs had no intention of breeding, even though they had not had their animals neutered. Consequently enforcement of the legislation was ineffective.

In an attempt to improve enforcement a group including welfare charities, veterinary organisations and others sponsored a Private Member's Bill through parliament that became the Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999. The licensing requirement was changed to either operating a business or breeding more than four litters in twelve months in an attempt to detect and licence more breeders. With the increasing use of mobile phones for the sale of puppies, it is difficult to use these parameters to detect unlicensed breeders and to gain sufficient evidence to prosecute them.

It is therefore self evident that attempting to define a dog breeder is, of itself, one of the major bars to effective legislation and its enforcement. Animal welfare charities and others have for many years attempted to educate the general public about how to avoid poor quality breeders but the unlicensed industry appears to continue to thrive in spite.

If the detection of a selection of breeders is the major difficulty in enforcing legislation, then it seems that the only solution is that all breeders should be known to enforcement agencies. However it is clear that the better regulation agenda would not accept the licensing of occasional or accidental breeders as such a measure would be widely perceived as draconian. However Section 13 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 provides powers for the Assembly to differentiate different classes of breeders by enabling registration as well as licensing. The proposal is therefore that all breeders below a threshold should be registered whereas those above should be inspected.

Do you feel that it should be compulsory for puppies to be microchipped prior to sale?

It is essential that puppies can be effectively traced to their source. A failure to be able to do so is likely to reduce the efficacy of enforcement as Trading Standards are less able to provide effective advice. We propose that all puppies should be microchipped prior to sale and that failure to do so should be a specific offence. This is absolutely critical to any proposed legislation on dog breeding.

Another essential element of the proposal is a requirement to include the registration or licence number on any advertisement for puppies for sale or gift, wherever the

advertisement is placed. Such action would make the detection of all breeders easier for enforcement agencies. It also allows a simple message for the public purchasing a puppy – they must ask to see the breeder's registration or licence number. Such a simple message is easier to convey than advice to see the rest of the litter and bitch before purchase.

In addition, Dogs Trust is calling for compulsory microchipping to be introduced for ALL dogs because it enables the prompt return of strays and the traceability of puppies.

Permanent identification of dogs is primarily a welfare issue enhancing the return of stray dogs to their owner (only half of dogs found are returned to their owner and 35% of those using their microchip). But it also provides useful enhancement of identification of dogs and their owners for other existing legislation.

Compulsory microchipping, can for example, provide a societal benefit in assisting in:

- returning genuine stray dogs to their owners swiftly
- reinforcing owners' responsibility and may deter some irresponsible owners from purchasing a dog
- tracing puppy farmed dogs back to their breeders
- providing successful prosecutions in relation to dangerous dogs legislation and dog attacks, by helping to identify both the dogs involved and their owners
- dealing with ownership disputes
- reducing incidents of dog theft

How big a problem is unlicensed dog breeding in Wales?

The Companion Animal Welfare Enhancement Scheme (CAWES) data for dog breeding identifies nearly 2,000 establishments in Wales that are breeding dogs. The biggest growth in numbers is in the exempt category that is those operators/owners of breeding dogs that are exempt from requiring a licence as per the legislation.

Dogs Trusts believes that in addition to unlicensed, large scale puppy farms which are clearly already a huge problem, there is the potential for abuse of the system by those exempt from inspection that may be breeding 3 to 4 litters per year.

Agenda Item 4.8

PET(4)-01-12 p14a

P-04-343 Prevent the destruction of amenities on common land – Anglesey

Petition wording

We call upon the Welsh Government to examine ways to prevent the destruction of amenities on common land, including for example the Marian Common in Llangoed, Ynys Môn.

Petition raised by: JE Futter

Petition first considered by Committee: 15 November 2011

Number of signatures: 156

John Griffiths AC /AM
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd a Datblygu Cynaliadwy
Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-343
Ein cyf/Our ref JG/06946/11

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

2 December 2011

Dear William,

P-04-343 Prevent the Destruction of Amenities on Common Land

Thank you for your letter of 15 November 2011, asking for the views of Carl Sargeant AM, Minister for Local Government and Communities, on the issues raised by the following petition:

"We call upon the Welsh Government to examine ways to prevent the destruction of amenities on common land, including for example the Marian Common in Llangoed, Ynys Mon"

As issues relating to the control of works on common land rest within my portfolio your letter has been passed to me for reply.

It is not clear from the petition what 'amenities' are being destroyed on common land but my officials advise me that, from the reference to the Marian Common in Llangoed, it appears that the petitioners are concerned about works being carried out on common land and their effects.

There is protection under section 194 of the Law of Property Act 1925, where the consent of the Welsh Ministers is required to make lawful the erection of any building or fence, or the construction of any other work, which would impede or prevent access to common land in respect of which rights of common applied at 1 January 1926 (the commencement date of the 1925 Act). The relevant commons registration authority will be able to offer advice on whether any particular land was subject to rights of common on the 1st January 1926.

The Welsh Ministers cannot require an application to be made under section 194, but if a consent was required, or not obtained, the persons or organisation undertaking the works could run the risk of having the soil owner, the county (borough) council, community council or any other person applying to a county court to have the works removed and the land restored. Anyone considering this course of action would be advised to take their own

independent legal advice. The view of the Welsh Government is that action should be taken by those persons whose rights are directly affected by such works.

The provisions of the Commons Act 2006 are being implemented in phases and it is anticipated that those provisions relating to access to common land will be brought in to force sometime in 2012. The new provisions will result in controls being available over works on any registered common land rather than just land which was subject to rights of common on 1 January 1926.

Whether or not the 'destruction of amenities' which generated the petition was brought about by development that required planning permission is a matter for the relevant local planning authority in the first instance. If planning permission should have been sought, or was sought and not granted, then it would be open to the local planning authority to take enforcement action should it feel it appropriate to do so. The fact I have mentioned this course of action does not mean that the local planning authority would, or should, take action in this situation. I have mentioned it for completeness of information and any decision in this respect would, as I say, in the first instance be a matter for the local planning authority to consider.

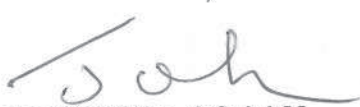
If planning permission were granted for the works then the developer would be able to implement the permission subject to compliance with any conditions that may have been attached to it. If any of those conditions were not complied with then the local planning authority could take action as indicated above.

A consent under section 194 of the Law of Property Act 1925 or under the forthcoming provisions of the Commons Act 2006 or a grant of planning permission would only provide the consents required under those pieces of legislation. To make any works carried out lawful would require all necessary consents and permissions to be obtained.

Other consents or permissions could include a screening direction required from the Welsh Ministers under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Uncultivated Land and Semi-Natural Areas) (Wales) Regulations 2007 – required by farmers carrying out agricultural improvements on uncultivated land or semi natural areas. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 protects animals, plants and certain habitats in the UK, including birds, their nests and eggs, and the carrying out of actions which could adversely affect them would be an offence unless a licence had been issued by the Welsh Ministers authorising those actions. If works are to be carried out on common land which is within a specially designated area eg a Site of Special Scientific Interest or a Natura 2000 site, then consent may be required from the Countryside Council for Wales.

Failure to obtain the consents required in the paragraph above can result in enforcement action and even prosecution.

In the light of the information provided above it seems to me that there is a wide range of controls over the use of common land and the carrying out of works on common land already in existence to protect the amenity of common land.

Youn,


John Griffiths AC / AM

Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd a Datblygu Cynaliadwy
Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development

PET(4)-01-12 p15a

P-04-330 A Welsh-language Record in our Assembly

Petition wording

We are concerned about the status and use of the Welsh language in the National Assembly. Welsh is now an official language in Wales, and we are very proud of this development. Nevertheless, the decision to allow the Record—a document of the highest symbolic importance—to become, essentially, a monolingual English document, after having been entirely bilingual since 1999, runs counter to this development and denigrates the official status of the Welsh language.

We therefore call on the National Assembly for Wales to return to a policy of providing a fully bilingual Record, so that the people of Wales can read the Assembly's proceedings in their own language, be that Welsh or English. This is a matter of principle and of respecting the fundamental linguistic rights of the people of Wales.

Petition raised by: Catrin Dafydd

Petition first considered by Committee: September 2011

Number of signatures: 1,334

Supporting information:

As an Assembly member you will be aware of the decision made during the third Assembly to cease the production of a fully bilingual version of the Record of Proceedings (Cofnod), and of the fact that the decision was unpopular among the public in Wales as well as with Assembly Members from all parties. I'm writing to you as a member of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg, to ask you to support the return to a policy of providing a fully bilingual Cofnod so that the people of Wales can choose to read the Assembly proceedings in their own language, whether it is English or Welsh. We have written to the Commission and the Llywydd on this matter and we would be grateful if you could add some extra pressure.

Welsh has now been confirmed as an official language in Wales through the Welsh Language Measure 2011, something we welcome most warmly, as do you I'm sure. The decision to let the Cofnod – a document of huge symbolic importance – to now become a mostly English-only document after it has been thoroughly bilingual since 1999 goes against this development and tramples the official status of Welsh in Wales.

We all heard recently that the level of Welsh spoken in the Assembly has deteriorated significantly, and I'm sure you would wish to address this

problem. We have no doubt that the lack of a bilingual Cofnod contributes towards this problem, since a bilingual context is needed in order for the use of Welsh to feel natural in the Chamber and elsewhere. There is a risk that the Welsh language will become no more than an ornament and a tokenism in the Assembly. This would undermine the language throughout Wales.

The lack of a bilingual record is a matter of concern to us and other people from all over Wales have said they wish to campaign on this matter. We understand also that the Welsh Language Board is investigating the matter under the Welsh Language Act 1993. If the Assembly itself cannot comply with its Welsh Language Scheme, what hope is there for other organizations throughout Wales?

We understand there is an intention to present a Bill to protect the Welsh language in the Assembly. This is a much-needed step and we will be keeping a keen eye on those developments. However, ensuring a fully bilingual Cofnod will be a basic requirement of the rhetoric of a 'truly bilingual organization' that is so often used with no consideration for what this means. A bilingual record is needed as a starting block, and other developments built upon that. This is a matter of principle, respecting the linguistic rights of the people of Wales at the most basic of levels.

Lastly, I would like to remind you: when the Assembly first stopped producing a bilingual Cofnod, members of all parties came together to voice their concerns and sought to ensure it would continue in a fully bilingual format. I therefore urge you to reverse the decision taken by the previous Assembly regarding this crucial matter.

**Extract from Assembly Commission Meeting Minutes
Thursday, 24 November 2011
Item 2**

At its meeting on 14 July 2011, the Commission agreed to consult on a draft National Assembly for Wales (Official Languages) Bill and Bilingual Services Scheme and to provide a translated Record of Plenary Proceedings subject to a sustainable arrangement being found at reasonable cost.

Following the pre-legislative public consultation, officials had analysed the responses, which related to both the draft Bill and Scheme. Respondents had suggested a number of revisions to both the Bill and Scheme. The effort made to encourage participation in the consultation was noted and the responses were welcomed by the Commission.

The Commission decided that a duty to provide a fully bilingual Record of Plenary Proceedings would not be included on the face of the Bill. The other proposed revisions to the draft Bill were agreed. The Commission considered the possible revisions to the Scheme and made a number of suggestions which they asked officials to reflect in the revised draft.

Consideration was given to the comments made during the consultation in relation to the Record, and to investigations undertaken into the latest technological developments to assist with translation services.

The Commission decided that from January 2012, the written record of plenary proceedings would be published, within five working days, with English language contributions translated into Welsh and vice versa. This would be achieved using a combination of machine translation and proof reading, with in-house control and editing to ensure that the published Record met the Assembly's existing standards in terms of style, consistency and quality. Precise cost would depend on a range of factors including the speed at which technological advance increases the accuracy of machine translation but would, in any case, not exceed £95,000 per annum.

The revised draft Bill, supporting Explanatory Memorandum, and proposed Scheme would be introduced in January 2012.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM was authorised by the Commission to be the Member in Charge of the Bill. Commissioners thanked Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM and officials for the work undertaken to date. Rhodri Glyn

Thomas AM also thanked the Welsh Language Board for the assistance it had provided.

PET(4)-01-12 p16a

P-03-144 Guide Dogs for the Blind Petition Petition Wording

We, the undersigned representatives, petition the National Assembly for Wales to lay specific responsibility on local authorities to be aware of their duties under the Disability Discrimination Act and Disability Equality Duty, and comply with them by not creating town centres, high streets and residential streets with shared surfaces that discriminate against blind and partially sighted and other disabled people, effectively excluding them from the street environment.

Petition raised by: Guide Dogs for the Blind

Petition first considered by Committee: June 2008

Number of signatures: 10

Briefing for the Petitions Committee discussion on shared space
15.11.2011

From: The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association (Guide Dogs)

Prepared by:

Andrea Gordon
Public Policy Manager, Wales

The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
Building 3, Eastern Business Park
off Wern Fawr Lane
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Cardiff
CF3 5EA
Website: www.guidedogs.org.uk

Introduction

Guide Dogs' vision is for a society in which blind and partially sighted people enjoy the same freedom of movement as everyone else. Our purpose is to deliver the guide dog service and other mobility services, as well as breaking down barriers - both physical and legal - to enable blind and partially sighted people to get around on their own terms.

Shared surface streets are where the road and pavement are built at the same level, removing the kerb, and with cars, buses, cyclists and pedestrians sharing the same surface; sometimes controlled crossings (such as pelican crossings) are also removed. The scheme is said to work through reliance on eye contact to negotiate priority.

Guide Dogs believes shared surface streets create issues for many groups of people including -

- Guide dog owners and long cane users, who use the kerb as navigation clue to know where they are in a street, and who are unable to make eye contact with drivers of vehicles or cyclists.
- Disabled and elderly people, who have to share the same space with noisy and intimidating vehicles and bicycles,.
- Young children who no longer know where they can safely cross the road. I.e. without a kerb, how do they know where to stop?

Update on shared surface streets in Wales

Guide Dogs and our partners have had some success in raising awareness of our concerns around shared surface streets in Wales: In Cardiff, for example, we work closely with the council through its Access Officer, and the Cardiff Access Focus Group (CAFG). The CAFG is made up of local disabled people with a shared interest in the city, and in particular issues that affect their access to public facilities such as transport, shopping, libraries, and the many new developments in the city. This positive dialogue has resulted in some exemplars of inclusive environments such as the new layout in High Street, where tactile and colour contrasted paving has been used to separate areas where vehicles can go from those where they cannot, so pedestrians feel safe.

Sadly, however, this good practice is not common place, and in our recent submission to the Enterprise Committee, (below), we give examples of what happens when, in spite of excellent high level commitment to equality of opportunity and engagement, (and the new equality legislation), disabled people, and, in particular, blind and partially sighted pedestrians, are excluded from consultation processes and ultimately put in danger by changes to the public realm.

We wish to make the Committee aware that our work on shared surfaces continues, and that even in time of such financial constraint, retro fitting of measures to protect vulnerable pedestrians cannot be ruled out. We would, of course, recommend that this is avoided by a commitment from local authorities to early and inclusive engagement, and the development of streets that are safe and accessible to all pedestrians.

Extract from our submission to the Enterprise and Business Committee begins here:

Enterprise and Business Committee enquiry into the regeneration of Town Centres

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for the inquiry are:

- What approaches have been followed to successfully deliver and finance the regeneration of town centres in Wales? Are there lessons to be learned from elsewhere?

- How does the Welsh Government use the levers at its disposal to assist in the regeneration of town centres in Wales?
- How are the interests and activities of communities, businesses, local authorities and Welsh Ministers identified and coordinated when developing and implementing town centre regeneration projects?

Response to point 1 from Guide Dogs

1. The roles the Welsh Government and local authorities play in the regeneration of town centres.

In this regard, we would draw the Committee's attention to the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Strategy, "Turning Heads". This is an example of an over-arching strategy which should inform regeneration projects and so it is interesting to note what the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has to say about how this should happen.

"Turning Heads: A Strategy for the Heads of the Valleys 2020' outlines the vision for the Heads of the Valleys regeneration work, in the context of the Wales Spatial Plan. It defines Equal Opportunities as a core element of the work and makes a firm commitment to dealing '...proactively with barriers to participation and success' and to not discriminate against any individual or group."

The EIA goes on to say,

"All activities involve partnerships with different organisations. For example, town centre funding is directed through local authorities. Regeneration activity also takes place in partnership with the third sector and through consultants. Ultimately the stakeholders are the residents, potential residents and visitors to the area."

Unfortunately, we have examples of where consultation and engagement, within the Heads of the Valleys area, is not taking place. A public consultation on plans to regenerate the centre of Aberdare was undertaken by Rhondda Cynon Taff Council in June 2011. A month before, a meeting was held with a group of blind and partially sighted people where specific issues of concern were identified and minuted. The consultants engaged by the Council, Capita Symonds, were represented, and the minutes record heated debate about proposed shared surface areas for pedestrians and vehicles and unsegregated pedestrian and cycling routes through the town.

The proposal to reduce some kerbs to 25mm upstands met with strong opposition from the group. Blind and partially sighted people rely on kerbs to tell them where the footway ends and the road begins, so when kerbs are reduced to this extent, or taken away completely, as in shared surface streets, blind and partially sighted pedestrians can wander into the path of vehicles without being aware of the danger. The Capita Symonds consultant did agree to report back, but when the public exhibition was held the 25mm kerbs were still there on the plans.

To date, no specific feedback has been given to the group, and the engagement process, such as it was, is clearly flawed: The meeting referred to here was held far too late in the planning process; the plans presented were all in print with no accessible alternative versions even discussed; the public exhibition, which a local Guide Dog Owner went to on behalf of the group, was entirely inaccessible and based on complex plans displayed on boards attached to the wall of the church where the exhibition was held. This made explaining the proposed new development even harder: The detailed explanation required to describe the plans was hampered by the physical inaccessibility of the diagrams and pictures set up, as they were, for maximum visual impact.

We would therefore have no hesitation in stating that the consultation process was tokenistic and fruitless, and that engagement, as required under the Council's equality duties, failed. It is significant that no EIA had been considered, so it is hard to see what influence the "Turning Heads" strategy had on the process.

Sadly, there is a similar situation taking place in Abertillery, where changes to the town centre mean that local blind and partially sighted people are afraid to walk their usual routes unaccompanied.

“It’s a regular walk for me and my dog, and since they started working there the contractors have been very helpful, taking me around all the obstructions and lorries. Now they’ve moved to another spot, I can’t manage it on my own, and I have to get my wife to come with me. That’s ridiculous, I’ve got a dog to be independent, and I didn’t know they were turning it into a no-go area for me!”
Mr N, Guide Dog Owner, Abertillery.

We close this point with another extract from the “Turning Heads” EIA:

Consultation with Equalities Groups

“It is our responsibility to ensure that the views of men and women, disabled people, people from different ethnic backgrounds, with different religious beliefs (including non-belief) and different sexual orientation are taken on board and responded and used to influence our decision making. We recognise that there is a need to identify gaps in our activity where consultation or involvement with equalities groups is not currently taking place.

Those gaps may be filled by undertaking our own consultation activity or by involving disabled people as part of our work directly. However they may also be filled by working with Local Authorities or other partners to ensure that they are able to provide us with information about how they have sought the views of different equalities groups and responded to the different needs identified.

The evidence suggests that input from consultation activity with excluded groups should inform the development of,
Master Plans, Equality Statements (see SP1) and HARPS.

In addition to this all documentation including for example grant offer letters, project proposal forms should be reviewed for inclusion of productive equality and diversity actions. This would ensure not only that the issue of consultation and involvement is addressed but that the process is used to develop productive outcomes and that commitment to doing so becomes contractual.”

PET(4)-01-12 p16c

P-03-162 Road Safety in Llanspyddid

Petition wording

We, the undersigned, hereby petition the Welsh Assembly Government to improve road safety in the village of Llanspyddid, Brecon, Powys through implementation of traffic calming measures such as a reduction in the current speed limit, improved roadside lighting and improved signage on the A40.

Petition raised by: Llanspyddid Residents Association

Petition first considered by Committee: November 2008

Number of signatures: 67

Agenda Item 5.3

P-03-261 Local Solutions to Newtown Traffic Congestion

Petition wording

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to defer a decision on the proposed bypass of Newtown until it has developed and trialled a set of sustainable measures in the town itself to address traffic congestion.

Petition raised by: Gary Saady

Petition first considered by Committee: January 2010

Number of signatures: 37

Supporting information:

Two thirds of the traffic on the A483/A489 corridor in Newtown is local.

The measures to address traffic congestion on the A483/A489 should include those designed to make better use of road space, such as:

- traffic management measures to reduce conflicting movements at junctions
- dedicated lanes in Pool Road and Llanidloes Road for traffic turning right to industrial and retail premises
- co-ordination of traffic lights

They should also include measures designed to promote alternatives to car travel, such as:

- a redesigned town bus network serving supermarkets & industrial estates, and avoiding the A483/A489 where possible
- a 15 minute interval town bus service
- a footbridge across the River Severn connecting the Llanllwchaiarn river path to Pool Road
- promotion of cycling and walking

We recognise that there is currently a problem caused by high vehicles diverting through residential areas in order to avoid the low railway bridges on Dolfor Road and Llanidloes Road. This can be solved by the following measures:

- raising the railway bridge on the Llanidloes Road
- construction of a link road from Dolfor Road to Heol Ashley in the Mochdre Industrial Estate

P-04-319 Newtown Traffic Petition

Petition wording

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

1. Install a roundabout at the Kerry road junction and, if flow improves, reinstate a permanent roundabout.
2. Issue an early start date for construction of a Newtown Bypass and for works to be fast-tracked through to completion.

Petition raised by: Paul Pavia

Petition first considered by Committee: June 2011

Number of signatures: 10 (an additional petition collected approximately 5,000 signatures)

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Minister for Local Government and Communities



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-03-261
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/05003/11

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

29 July 2011

Committee. business@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Thank you for your letter of 29 June following receipt of a petition from Paul Pavia about traffic congestion in Newtown.

From our discussions with residents of Newtown and the area, on site observations and review of the CCTV footage, the signal system is generally working well. However, we do acknowledge that extensive queuing can occur at peak times, but this has always been the case.

We appointed consultants Arup to carry out a reappraisal of the work done to date in Newtown. It is considered that the reinstatement of a roundabout at the Kerry Road junction would cause capacity problems and would mean the remaining sets of traffic lights either side of the roundabout could not operate effectively or efficiently. If a localised improvement were observed at the Kerry Road junction, overall this would likely increase the journey times and delay through Newtown. In addition, the conversion to a roundabout would remove the controlled pedestrian crossings, and thus increase the risk of pedestrian collisions.

The SCOOT (Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique) system a tool for managing and controlling traffic signals in urban areas has recently been recalibrated, following the completion of Road Safety Audit works and traffic conditions have improved.

We are carrying out a "before and after" study, which will give a comparison between the current and previous situations. The final report is expected during the summer period.

Last October we announced new plans to ease transport congestion in Newtown, having held a public consultation and taken into consideration the comments received from members of the public. The preferred option comprises a southern bypass, the Orange Option, plus a package of improvements to local transport to tackle local congestion in the town.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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

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

Currently construction of the 'Preferred Route' is programmed to start in late 2014/early 2015 with an anticipated two year construction period. I will however be prioritising the objectives of the National Transport Plan over the coming months, and will publish a rescheduled delivery plan this autumn.

Any major road scheme is subject to the Welsh Government obtaining statutory consent to do so. This means, we publish draft Orders and an Environmental Statement setting out the justification for the Scheme, identifying the land requirements, and assessing the impacts, which we would then mitigate wherever possible. As part of the statutory procedures, once we publish the draft Orders, we give the public and relevant bodies the opportunity to comment, support or object to the proposals. If there are objections then we hold a Public Local Inquiry before an Independent Inspector.



Carl Sargeant AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Minister for Local Government and Communities

Paper from the Minister for Local Government and Communities

PET(4)-01-12 p16g

Petitions Committee

Date: 10 January 2012

Time: 10:30 – 11:00

Title: Evidence Paper to the Petition Committee on Petitions P-03-144 Shared Spaces, P-03-162 Llanspyddid and P-03-261 Local Solutions to Newtown Traffic Congestion and P-04-319 Newtown Traffic

Introduction

This paper provides information and updates the Committee regarding three petitions; P-03-144 on Shared Space, P-03-162 on Road Safety in Llanspyddid and P-03-261 on Local Solutions to Newtown Traffic Congestion.

P-03-144 GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND – SHARED SPACE

1. In June 2008 the Guide Dogs for the Blind submitted a petition asking the National Assembly for Wales to lay specific responsibilities on local authorities to be aware of their duties under the Disability Discrimination Act and Disability Equality Duty, and comply with them by not creating town centres, high streets and residential streets with shared surfaces that discriminate against blind and partially sighted and other disabled people, effectively excluding them from the street environment.
2. The petition has been kept open by the Committee pending the publication of Local Transport Note 1/11 – Shared Space – by the Department of Transport. This was published in October and focuses on shared space in high street environments and it places particular emphasis on stakeholder engagement and inclusive design.
3. This Local Transport Note is a guidance document for local authorities in England and other practitioners involved in the planning, design and provision of shared space streets. Its development was informed by a two-year research project in which a wide range of interested parties was involved, including the Guide Dogs for the Blind
4. In 2009, the Department for Transport published an appraisal report on shared space. It concludes that shared space schemes, including those with shared surfaces, as implemented in the UK have no more casualties than conventional layouts, or that particular groups,

including disabled people, are injured more frequently following their introduction.

5. Further research was carried out to build on the appraisal report and develop the guidance. This included a number of case studies of existing shared space streets.
6. The guidance has not been formally adopted by the Welsh Government as there are some important differences in the statutory equality provisions for Wales which need to be determined before we can endorse this advice note. Work on this is ongoing.
7. Until more evidence is forthcoming on the effects of the shared space schemes already implemented across the UK, the Welsh Government will not be developing such schemes on roads within our jurisdiction. We would expect local authorities to take full account of the needs of all stakeholders, especially vulnerable road users, in taking these schemes forward on their own roads.

P-03-162 – Residents of Llanspyddid - Road Safety in Llanspyddid

1. In November 2008 Residents of Llanspyddid submitted a petition asking the Welsh Assembly Government to improve road safety in the village of Llanspyddid, Brecon, Powys through implementation of traffic calming measures such as a reduction in the current speed limit, improved roadside lighting and improved signage on the A40.
2. Following the concerns raised by the community the Welsh Government undertook the Raglan – Llandovery Trunk Road A40 Llanspyddid Preliminary Investigations study which reviewed the trunk road environment through the village to determine if measures were required in accordance with highway authority guideline to improve safety. A copy of the report was submitted to the Petition Committee in October 2011.
3. The report recommended that there should be on the trunk road visually enhanced junction signing and lining, yellow backed junction ahead warning signs with “reduce speed now” plates and ARAF/SLOW road markings on a red patch 100 metres from the junction with the side road.
4. This work was completed in 2011. Road conditions will be monitored to assess the outcome of these improvements and to identify if further measures are required.
5. The need for improved lighting was considered as part of this study. The accident data available for Llanspyddid did not indicate any

specific road safety issues related to night-time collisions or lighting, therefore the study did not recommend changes to lighting.

P-03-261 Local Solutions to Newtown Traffic Congestion

1. In January 2010, Garry Saady, a resident of Newtown, submitted a petition of 37 signatures calling for the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to defer a decision on the proposed bypass of Newtown until it has developed and trialled a set of sustainable measures in the town itself to address traffic congestion.
2. In March 2010, the Petitions Committee considered an update to this petition as the petitioner had submitted additional information. In May 2010, the then Minister responded to the Petition Committee in detail to the specific points raised by the petitioner.
3. The preferred route was announced on 13 October 2010.
4. Subject to the successful completion of the statutory consent procedures and the availability of finance construction is programmed to start late 2014/early 2015.

P-04-319 Newtown Traffic

1. In June 2011, Paul Pavia submitted a petition of 10 signatures calling upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to:
 - a) Install a roundabout at the Kerry Road junction and, if flow improves, reinstate a permanent roundabout.
 - b) Issue an early start date for construction of a Newtown Bypass and for works to be fast-tracked through to completion.
2. In June, the Petitions Committee wrote to the Minister for Local Government and Communities asking for comments. The Minister responded in July 2011 with a letter outlining the concerns about reinstating a roundabout at the Kerry road junction.
3. Subject to the successful completion of the statutory consent procedures, and the availability of finance construction, the bypass is programmed to start late 2014/early 2015.

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Minister for Local Government and Communities



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-321
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/07005/11

William Powell AM
committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

 November 2011



Thank you for your letter of 9 November, on behalf of the Petitions Committee, about Arriva Trains Wales services between South West and South East Wales.

I note that the Committee has now closed this petition, and I hope that my letter to the Committee of 13 July was helpful to your Inquiry.

With regards to crowding on these services, and the provision of additional carriages, I am aware that some peak time services can be busy. Arriva Trains Wales will shortly be completing passenger train counts, following which we will then have a clearer understanding of demand and crowding levels on all services.

I have asked my officials to discuss this matter further with Arriva Trains Wales once this data is available, so that we can look to identify what solutions may be available to further strengthen services over and above those already funded by Welsh Government within the finite amount of rolling stock available.



Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Minister for Local Government and Communities

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
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Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

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