

Dr Andrew Goodall
Ysgrifennydd Parhaol
Permanent Secretary



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Chair, Petitions Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

10 September 2024

Dear Chair

Petition P-06-1390 Stop all subsidies on food in the Senedd and for Welsh Government staff in general

Thank you for your correspondence in relation to the above Petition.

Catering services are available at four offices on the Welsh Government's administrative estate and the catering provider is required to satisfy a complex and challenging set of operational criteria including exemplary standards in contract catering – especially in respect of the core contract objectives:

- The use and promotion of Welsh food and beverage products and Welsh food producers and suppliers;
- Health and wellbeing; and
- Support for Fairtrade.

The Welsh Government's catering contract is subject to robust competitive tendering to ensure it delivers value for money for both the Welsh Government and service users.

The Welsh Government contributes towards the cost of the catering service in order to maximise the wider positive social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being benefits to Wales whilst also being competitive with comparable services on the high street and affordable for service users. The contribution towards the cost of the service is in recognition of the importance of driving the wider social and economic benefits as opposed to discounting the tariff as a perceived staff benefit.

The catering contract is a conduit for Welsh SMEs to get their products accredited with recognised food distributors providing a gateway for them to supply other contracts



Parc Cathays • Cathays Park Ffôn • Tel 0300 025 6935
Caerdydd • Cardiff PS.PermanentSecretary@gov.wales
CF10 3NQ Gwefan • Website: www.gov.wales

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(both in Wales and outside of Wales) and this also creates business opportunities with other companies using the food distributors.

Currently, expenditure on catering-related products and services which deliver wider benefits for Wales is around 80% of total contract expenditure. The catering contract also provides employment opportunities in the locality of our four offices with on-site catering – Cardiff; Merthyr Tydfil; Aberystwyth and Llandudno Junction.

If the Welsh Government were to cease contributing towards the cost of its catering service this would inevitably have a negative impact on the wider benefits it currently delivers for Wales – including the possibility of redundancies. The subsidy itself is not a means of securing cheaper deals for staff and those who use the contract, but for securing the best possible outcomes for small to medium enterprises across Wales by ensuring that money spent on the administrative estate is channelled towards them.

Catering services at the Senedd operate independently under the Welsh Parliament's catering contract and as such, they will need to respond in relation to their service.

Yours,
Andrew Goodall

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Ysgrifennydd Parhaol/ Permanent Secretary
Llywodraeth Cymru/ Welsh Government



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