

Agenda – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: 29 November 2016

Meeting time: 09.00

For further information contact:

Graeme Francis – Committee Clerk

Kath Thomas – Deputy Clerk

0300 200 6565

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1 Introduction, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(Pages 1 – 20)

2 New petitions

2.1 P-05-719 Welsh Assembly Funding of Services

(Pages 21 – 27)

3 Updates to previous petitions

Environment and Rural Affairs

3.1 P-05-713 The Wildlife Warriors

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3.2 P-05-715 A Ban on the Manufacture, Sale and Use of Snares in Wales

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3.3 P-04-519 Abolition of Park Homes Sales Commission

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3.4 P-04-481 Close the Gap for deaf pupils in Wales

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Economy and Infrastructure

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

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The following three items will be considered together

- 3.6 P-04-475 Wanted – Buses for Meirionnydd (Page 48)
- 3.7 P-04-513 Save the Wrexham/Barmouth X94 bus service (Page 49)
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4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the following business:

Item 5.

- 5 P-04-668 Support Yearly Screening for Ovarian Cancer (CA125 blood test) – Private Discussion under 17.42 (vi) (Pages 51 – 57)

Document is Restricted

Agenda Item 2.1

P-05-719 Welsh Assembly Funding of Services

This petition was submitted by Harry Hayfield, having collected 21 signatures.

Text of the Petition

We, the undersigned, call on the Assembly to fund critical services in Wales that receive no government funding (such as the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals).

Additional information

In 2015, the RNLI saved 9,763 people from the waters of the United Kingdom (of which 1,029 people were saved in the waters of Wales). The RSPCA received across the UK over a million calls to their helpline in 2015 and secured nearly 1,800 convictions for animal cruelty and yet receive no funding from the Westminster Government despite having to enforce Westminster Government laws.

I believe that in 2016 this is wrong and that the devolved institutions should fund the hard work that these organisations do for the people of Wales.

Assembly Constituency and Region:

Ceredigion

Mid and West Wales

Funding of services

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 15 Tachwedd 2016

Petitions Committee | 15 November 2016

Research Briefing

Petition number: P-05-719

Petition title: Welsh Assembly Funding of Services

Text of petition: We, the undersigned, call on the Assembly to fund critical services in Wales that receive no government funding (such as the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals).

In 2015, the RNLI saved 9,763 people from the waters of the United Kingdom (of which 1,029 people were saved in the waters of Wales). The RSPCA received across the UK over a million calls to their helpline in 2015 and secured nearly 1,800 convictions for animal cruelty and yet receive no funding from the Westminster Government despite having to enforce Westminster Government laws.

I believe that in 2016 this is wrong and that the devolved institutions should fund the hard work that these organisations do for the people of Wales.

Background

Third sector organisations ('third sector' mainly refers to charities, but excludes trade unions, political parties, etc) receive funding from numerous sources, including fundraising, lottery funding, earned income, grants from charitable trusts, private sector, and government funding (either from local, Welsh Government, UK Government or the EU).

Currently around 33% of third sector income in Wales comes from public funding, but the First Minister has [indicated](#) that this is likely to decrease as the Welsh Government wants the sector to become less reliant on government funding.

[Figures from the Wales Council for Voluntary Action \(WCVA\)](#) show that the **estimated income of the third sector was £2 billion in 2013-14**, an increase of about £400 million on the estimate for 2012-13 (largely due to an increase of £350 million in the estimated rental income of housing associations).

The Welsh Government's [Third Sector Scheme Annual Report 2014-15](#) shows that **the third sector received £290 million in direct funding from the Welsh Government in 2014-15**. Welsh Government grant funding has decreased from £350 million in 2010-11 to £208 million in

2014–15, a decrease of more than 40% in five financial years. Part of this is due to a shift in the funding mechanism used, from grants to contracts.

Welsh Government funding

The Welsh Government published a revised version of its [Third Sector Scheme](#) in January 2014. This scheme is a statement of Welsh Ministers' intent in taking forward their relationship with the third sector. An annex to the Third Sector Scheme includes the Welsh Government's [Code of Practice for Funding the Third Sector](#). The **Code of Practice for Funding the Third Sector sets out the key principles that underpin Welsh Government funding for the third sector**, and what the Government expects from the third sector in return. The Welsh Government also publishes a [Third Sector Scheme Annual Report](#) which provides an overview of Welsh Government engagement with the third sector.

In a [letter to the Chair of the Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister](#) in April 2016, Carwyn Jones stated:

'With regard to the issues you raise in relation to funding for the Third Sector, I consider it important the sector is helped to diversify its funding base and reduce its reliance on public funding...

'Nevertheless, it is important to note that the sector is far from being wholly reliant on public funding... research indicates that approximately 33 per cent of Third Sector income in Wales is from public funding. This does not seem to have changed very much in recent years.

'Some organisations are, however, more reliant on government support than others and given the present economic climate, our present level of funding is unlikely to be sustainable going forward... It is unclear at present to what extent other sources of funding will be able to replace reductions in public money, but it is clearly important to maximise the likelihood of this happening...'

Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI)

Similar petitions relating to the RNLI were submitted to the UK Parliament in 2012, [with 18 signatures](#) and March 2014 with [9 signatures](#). There is also an open petition calling for the RNLI to receive government funding, so far it has [22 signatures](#).

The [RNLI's website](#) states that one of the things it will not change is its independence of government, and that they **'do not seek funding from central government'**.

Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)

The RSPCA's [Annual Review 2015](#) shows that it had an income of £124.4 million in 2015. This was made up of a legacy income of £63.1 million, contributions and donations of £46.2 million, charitable activities of £8.7 million, other income of £5.1 million, investment income of £0.8 million and membership subscriptions worth £0.5 million.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

Mark Drakeford AM/AC
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a Llywodraeth Leol
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-719
Ein cyf/Our ref MD/05382/16

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
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29 October 2016

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your letter dated 10 October about the petition you have received from Harry Hayfield.

I recognise the important role Third Sector organisations play in providing services across Wales, and this is reflected in the Welsh Government's Draft Budget for 2017-18 which was published on 18 October. Despite pressures on the Welsh Government's budget next year, within the Communities and Children Portfolio, the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children has maintained funding for Third Sector Support Wales at the same level as in 2016-17.

Third Sector Support Wales is the collective term for the group of organisations, which includes the Wales Council for Voluntary Action and 19 County Voluntary Councils covering all 22 local authority areas in Wales, to provide advice, support and representation to both volunteers and volunteering.

In addition to the funding which is allocated to Third Sector Support Wales, other portfolios within the Welsh Government also provide funding to Third Sector organisations. This is provided as either grant-in-aid or in return for procured for services as required.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Pack Page 25

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

All Third Sector organisations are welcome to apply for funding from the Welsh Government. Many organisations benefit from a discussion with Welsh Government officials and initial enquiries should be directed to the Welsh Government's Third Sector and Community Grants Unit. Officials in the Unit will endeavour to ensure organisations are signposted to the most appropriate source of information and funding support from within the Welsh Government, should this be the appropriate route. Alternatively, officials will be pleased to direct organisations to other sources of information or potential funding.

Any organisation wishing to discuss this can contact thirdsectorqueries@wales.gsi.gov.uk in the first instance.

I am copying this letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children.

Best wishes,

Mark

Mark Drakeford AM/AC

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a Llywodraeth Leol
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government

11/11/2016

P-05-719 Welsh Assembly Funding of Services – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 16.11.16

I am grateful for the reply to my petition by the Minister, but fear that he has not understood the reason for the petition. The text was “We, the undersigned, call on the Assembly to fund critical services in Wales that receive no government funding (such as the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals)” and although the Minister mentions third sector organisations he seems to suggest that it should be local authorities that fund these organisations not the Welsh Government. If it is helpful to the Petitions Committee, I would be happy to speak to the committee about this petition, however due to the transport services in Ceredigion I would not be able to reach Cardiff until lunchtime (which I believe is usually after the committee have concluded their meeting).

Harry Hayfield

Agenda Item 3.1

P-05-713 The Wildlife Warriors

This petition was submitted by Lee Kabza, having collected 13 online signatures and 83 paper signatures.

Text of the Petition

Caerphilly Junior Forum works with children aged 7-11 years old in Caerphilly borough to give children a voice on issues which are important to children.

Each year the Junior Forum identifies a priority issue to address. The priority for 2015-2016 is to protect the natural habitat of wildlife.

Junior Forum members believe that every primary school in Wales should have an environment club called the "Wildlife Warriors" to help to protect the natural environment of local wildlife.

This club would:

- be different from schools eco committees as it would allow anyone to join at any age. Children would not need to be elected to the club.
- be active all year to help protect wildlife.
- be hands on in their community and do practical activities to help protect wildlife. These activities could include, cleaning rivers, building wildlife homes, planting flowers and trees.
- be flexible so different people can join at different times.

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-713
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/06135/16

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11 October 2016

Dear Mike

I wrote to you on 18 September regarding Petition P-05-713 The Wildlife Warriors. I referred to a new initiative by the Action Plan for Pollinators Task Force, Bee Friendly/Caru Gwenyn, designed to encourage more organisations and communities to take action to help pollinators in Wales, and said I would send a web link to the Bee Friendly/Caru Gwenyn documents.

The documents are now available on the Wales Biodiversity Partnership website:

<http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Wales-Action-Plan-for-Pollinators>

<http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Cynllun-Gweithredu-Cymru-ar-gyfer-Pryfed-Peillio>

Regards

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

P-05-713 The Wildlife Warriors – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the clerking team, 14.11.16

Hello Kayleigh.

I have spoken to the Junior children who submitted the petition.

They were very pleased the petition had been discussed and were grateful to receive feedback on the issue. All the participants within the group (9 children) were aware of the eco schools initiative, some have been involved within this group in their schools. The children felt it is important to highlight they see the importance of the eco committees.

However the children view the wildlife warriors project as a more inclusive project. Children stated the positions within eco-committees are elected, which they feel excludes many children from participating in valuable education regarding wildlife and environmental issues. Pupils reported the positions on eco committee were occasionally chosen, not elected which meant many children whom are interested did not have the opportunity to be involved in protecting wildlife and engaging in environmental projects within the school. The children reported that Year 1, reception and nursery pupils were excluded from elections for the eco committees. The children whom submitted this petition request the remit within the eco schools initiative is expanded to include areas highlighted by wildlife warriors.

This would ensure the eco committees: are more inclusive, enabling children from a younger age to participate; democratically elected; facilitate larger events for the school to be able to participate in environmental projects.

The children felt it was important to state they were not aware of any projects to become involved in such issues within the community

Regards.

Clare Jones

Cydlynnydd Fforwm Ieuenctid | Youth Forum Co-ordinator

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Caerffili | Caerphilly County Borough Council

Agenda Item 3.2

P-05-715 A Ban on the Manufacture, Sale and Use of Snares in Wales.

This petition was submitted by the League Against Cruel Sports, having collected 1,405 signatures.

Text of the Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ban the manufacture, sale and use of snares in Wales.

Additional information

Snares are thin wire nooses designed to trap 'predator' species. The nature of their design means that – despite supposedly being used as a restraining device – they cause severe injuries to those animals they catch. These injuries include limb amputation, strangulation and often death.

According to Defra, up to two thirds of those animals caught are not even the target species. Most frequently snares are set to catch foxes, but in reality, they catch badgers, deer, and domestic pets. In Wales, some 370,000 animals are snared every year. That's more than 1,000 a day.

In 2015, the Welsh Government introduced a Code of Best Practice on the use of snares, but compliance with the Code is voluntary and there are no checks in place or penalties for those who do not comply. Even a Code-compliant snare is a crude, indiscriminate device, more likely to cause injury or death than to restrain an animal.

The Welsh Assembly has the power to end this practice, and lead the way for animal welfare in the UK by banning the manufacture, sale and use of snares in Wales.

Constituency and Region

- Gower
- South Wales West

Agenda Item 3.3

P-04-519 Abolition of Park Homes Sales Commission

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly For Wales to urge the Welsh Government to remove from Legislation the right of Park Owners to demand commission on the private sale of park homes now that they are no longer involved in the selling process.

Petition raised by: Caerwnon Park Residents Association

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 10 December 2013

Carl Sargeant AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gymunedau a Phlant
Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-519
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/05824/16

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14th November 2016

Dear Mike

Thank you for your letter of 27 October sent in your capacity as Chair of the Petitions Committee. It concerned the ongoing consideration of P-04-519 - Abolition of Park Homes Sales Commission.

The report, *Understanding the economics of the Park Home Industry* makes four main recommendations. The first deals with the commission rate charges by a site owner of up to 10% on sale of a park home; the crux of the petition.

The report is quite clear in that a complete removal of the commission rate would have "a negative impact on the viability and sustainability of many Welsh park home operators." The potential consequences for residents on a site that is no longer viable could be catastrophic and must not be ignored. Any loss of income, which range between averages of 10 to 16% loss, dependent on the size of the park, would need to be recouped by other means. As the report points out, this would inevitably lead to an increase in pitch fees to mitigate this loss.

Pitch fees, according to the report, would need to be increased by an average of 14%, which works out at between £13 and £22 per month, per residence. This is likely, as the report points out, to "impact negatively on a group of people that typically have limited financial resources." I am yet to be presented with any evidence that discontinuing the commission rate would not have negative consequences for park home residents. It is for this reason that I am against any abolition of commission payable to a site owner on sale of a park home.

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The Committee will note that the report does contain options other than abolition of the commission rate. I will be looking very closely at these proposals and seeing whether there are any recommended courses of action which may be implemented other than a complete abolition of commission.

Yours sincerely



Carl Sargeant AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gymunedau a Phlant
Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children

**P-04-519 Abolition of Park Homes Sales Commission – Correspondence
from the Petitioner to the Chair, 18.11.16**

CAERWNON PARK RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

18th November 2016

Dear Chairman,

I find it difficult to believe that the Welsh Assembly Government has spent £45,594 of taxpayer's money on a survey of the "Economics of the Park Home Industry" without including sight of the park owner's audited accounts. It is even quoted on page 24 of the report:

"Furthermore, financial information by both operators and residents has not been validated and therefore its accuracy may be impacted by reporting error and/ or misrepresentation. Validation of financial information would require the review of audited accounts of park home operators, however, this was outside of the scope of this research project"

When it was decided to remove the park owners from being involved in the selling of private properties because of the intimidation and unfair practices by some of the park owners, we the home owners were very relieved indeed, but to then find out that some of the park owners who you had already found unfit to be involved in the selling process have now been consulted by PACEC concerning the impact of the abolition of the charge without any sight of their audited accounts, their word has now been accepted without any proof, to say that we are amazed must be the understatement of the year.

Although the report itself is professional there are many items in it that are extremely debatable, for instance:

1. Several parks did not receive the questionnaire.
2. Meetings with residents on their parks did not materialise.
3. The lists of residents to be consulted was not taken from up to date council tax records but from site licence information which can be very out of date and led to many being unable to have their say.

Please give us the opportunity to meet and speak to the Minister so that he is able to hear first hand our concerns before making a decision that will affect thousands of middle aged and elderly people.

We have spoken to our A.M. Ms. Kirsty Williams and highlighted our concerns but we feel a meeting with as opposed to correspondence with the Minister would be much more beneficial for both parties.

If for one moment I thought that removing the commission charge would damage the park home industry our residents association would not have raised the petition in the first place.

The commission charges have been an issue in the park home industry for many years, the 10% for over 30yrs, please, before a final decision is made, accept that being able to have sight of the audited accounts of the park owners is vital.

Yours sincerely

Bob Mounford

Chairman Caerwnon Park Residents Association

Agenda Item 3.4

P-04-481 Close the Gap for deaf pupils in Wales

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to develop a national strategy to Close the Gap in educational attainment between deaf pupils and their peers.

The National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) Cymru presents this petition today as it is both Deaf Awareness Week and two years since 55 AMs pledged to take action to Close the Gap for deaf pupils.

Still, Welsh Government statistics demonstrate significant attainment gaps between deaf pupils and their peers. In 2012, deaf pupils were 26% less likely to achieve 5 GCSEs at A*-C, and 41% less likely to achieve A*-C passes in core subjects English/Welsh, Maths and Science.

Our video petition asks the experts (deaf pupils themselves) what matters most. They told us:

- We need appropriate support in school and college
- We need all classrooms to have good acoustics
- Some of us use sign language. Help us encourage our hearing peers and teachers to learn sign.
- We need more teachers and pupils to be deaf aware.

Too many deaf pupils are facing barriers in these areas. A national strategy is needed to address the barriers and Close the Gap!

Additional Information

Our video petition and an accompanying report can be downloaded at www.ndcs.org.uk/ClosetheGapWales

The video petition was produced with the help of eight deaf young people outlines the four things that they feel are most important to deaf pupils at school and college.

The accompanying report outlines the barriers that many deaf pupils in Wales are facing in these areas. It also makes suggestions on how a strategy could help to overcome these barriers.

Petition raised by: NDCS

Date petition first considered by Committee: 14 May 2013

Close the Gap Petition

Update from NDCS Cymru



November 2016

About us

The National Deaf Children's Society is the national charity dedicated to creating a world without barriers for deaf children and young people.

We represent the interests and campaign for the rights of all deaf children and young people from birth until they reach independence.

In referring to deafness, we refer to all levels of hearing loss, from mild to profound and including unilateral and temporary.

History of our Close the Gap Petition

In May 2013, we submitted our *Close the Gap!* petition to the Welsh Assembly's Petitions Committee. The petition highlighted **significant gaps in attainment between deaf pupils and their peers at every Key Stage in Wales**. It called for a strategy to address the barriers that deaf young people face in reaching their full educational potential and outlined key barriers as identified by deaf young people themselves. These barriers were as follows:

1. We need all classrooms to have good acoustics.
2. We need more teachers and pupils to be deaf aware.
3. We need appropriate support in school and college.
4. Some of us use sign language. Help us encourage our hearing peers and teachers to learn sign.

The former Petitions Committee asked NDCS Cymru to prioritise these four aspects of our petition. In consulting with the young people who submitted the petition, they told us that addressing barriers on acoustics and deaf awareness

would be their top priorities. The Petitions Committee subsequently decided to focus on acoustics.

Welsh Government statistics demonstrate that these barriers remain an issue as there is still a significant attainment gap between deaf pupils and their peers.¹ Following the appointment of a new Petitions Committee, NDCS Cymru wanted to take this opportunity to update the Committee on key developments in relation to each of the four areas.

In returning to the petition, we would urge the new Committee to consider whether it could assist with both of the young people's top priorities (deaf awareness and classroom acoustics.) Indeed, as outlined within this briefing, we feel that current policy developments would support this stance.

1. We need all classrooms to have good acoustics

Noisy, echoing school buildings create a barrier to learning for *a//* children, but present a particular barrier for children with a hearing impairment (including those who use assistive listening devices). Although there are specific building regulations on acoustic environments in schools, these regulations are too easily ignored.

NDCS Cymru formerly worked with the Welsh Government to ensure that new school builds and refurbishments under its 21st Century Schools Programme were contractually obliged to meet acoustic standards. Following announcements that new funding is to be made available under this programme, we have been in touch with key officials. Although we are pleased to see that acoustics is specifically mentioned in the revised letters to grantees, we are in the process of liaising with officials and seeking assurances that the acoustics requirements have not been weakened in the latest funding tranche of the programme.

As previously identified, NDCS Cymru is keen for the Welsh Government to extend its commitment to good acoustics by strengthening the law. Upon the devolution of building regulations, 39 Assembly Members signed a New Year's

¹ For more details, visit http://www.ndcs.org.uk/professional_support/national_data/index.html

resolution to show their support for good acoustics in school and college buildings. A change to make the building regulations themselves stronger would address the problem at its root cause and could ensure all future school, nursery and college buildings meet acoustic standards regardless of how they are funded.

NDCS Cymru would also welcome the opportunity to work with the Welsh Government to raise awareness about some of the measures schools can take to improve acoustics in existing buildings.

2. We need more teachers and pupils to be deaf aware.

A lack of deaf awareness among teachers and pupils remains a significant barrier for deaf young people, causing them difficulties in accessing the curriculum but also in relation to social isolation. Indeed, this was one of the areas that the young people involved in creating the petition identified as a top priority.

Ensuring that general teaching staff are deaf aware is of great importance since the vast majority of deaf children and young people attend mainstream schools. It is also of note that 80% of all children will experience glue ear before the age of ten which can cause extended periods of temporary hearing loss.

In light of recent policy developments around teacher training, we would urge the new Petitions Committee to consider whether it could assist us in ensuring that deaf awareness is on the wider agenda as teacher training is reviewed.

NDCS Cymru recently responded to the Welsh Government's consultation, *Draft Criteria for the accreditation of Initial Teacher Education programmes in Wales and the proposal for the Education Workforce Council to accredit initial teacher education*. This consultation indicates that course providers must provide details of "meeting the needs of pupils with additional learning or other special needs" in presenting their programmes for accreditation. However, we are concerned that this requirement is broad in nature and will not, by any means, ensure that deaf awareness is covered within training programmes.

NDCS Cymru is also aware of developments around training for ALNCos as part of the wider ALN reforms. We are keen to ensure that this training covers basic

deaf awareness and an awareness of the different specialist professionals available to work with deaf children and young people.

NDCS Cymru has previously worked with a local authority on a factsheet about deafness to provide Newly Qualified Teachers with key information. The project was funded by the Welsh Government but has, unfortunately, not been widely used. We would welcome moves to further utilise this resource.

In addition, deaf young people have helped NDCS to create teaching resources and lesson plans that can be used to raise deaf awareness among hearing pupils. We would welcome the Welsh Government's support in encouraging schools to use these resources.²

3. We need appropriate support in school and college

Accessing appropriate support in school and college remains an issue for many deaf children and young people.

NDCS Cymru has been closely watching the development of the proposed Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill. We welcome aspects of the proposed reforms but do have some serious reservations about how it will work in practice for deaf children and young people. We have met with the Minister and with key officials to highlight these concerns and suggest ways in which they might be overcome. We have also played a key role within TSANA (Third Sector Additional Needs Alliance) and its response to the reforms. We hope to continue to cooperate with leading officials and with the Children, Young People and Education Committee as the Bill progresses through the legislative process.

There are problems with the availability of specialist teachers of the deaf, specialist speech and language therapists and communication support workers with an appropriate qualification in BSL. We hope to work with the Welsh Government as it moves forward with its work on reviewing the SEN workforce in Wales.

² For more information on these resources, please visit <http://youngpeople.ndcsbuzz.org.uk/looksmilechat/>

4. Some of us use sign language. Help us encourage our hearing peers and teachers to learn sign.

NDCS Cymru is pleased to be working with the WJEC with a view to create a fingerspelling community challenge option for the Foundation Welsh Baccalaureate.

Our NDCS Youth Advisory Board is also in the process of developing materials to help deaf young people to teach others to sign.

NDCS Cymru would welcome any other moves to promote opportunities to learn to sign.

Conclusion

All four of the key points identified within our original *Close the Gap!* petition remain relevant today. Although some positive steps forward have been taken, a significant attainment gap between deaf pupils and their hearing peers remains.

NDCS Cymru would urge the Petitions Committee to revisit the two top priorities identified by the young deaf people who originally submitted our petition. While the other two issues remain relevant, NDCS Cymru is currently engaged in work with the Welsh Government in these areas. The top two priority areas are better classroom acoustics and raising deaf awareness among staff and pupils.

In order to help address these barriers, NDCS Cymru suggests that the following actions should be taken:

Improve classroom acoustics by:

- Strengthening Building Regulations on school acoustics to ensure that flimsy alternative standards are avoided and that teaching spaces are appropriately tested for compliance with standards. Regulations could also be extended to cover colleges and nurseries.

- Ensuring that the grantees receiving funding under the latest version of the 21st Century Schools programme will be contractually obliged to meet rigorous acoustic standards.
- Promoting the importance of good acoustics among head teachers and ALNCOs as well as some of the measures that can be taken to improve acoustic environments in existing school buildings.

Raise deaf awareness among teachers and pupils by:

- Ensuring that the current revisions to initial teacher training take account of the need to cover basic deaf awareness.
- Ensuring that the development of a training course for ALNCOs covers basic deaf awareness.
- Utilising NQT factsheets developed by a local authority, covering various disabilities including deafness.
- Encourage schools to utilise the free NDCS resources to improve deaf awareness among pupils.

Contact

NDCS Cymru would be happy to assist the Petitions Committee in its further consideration of our petition. For more information please contact campaigns.wales@ndcs.org.uk or call 029 20373474.

Thank you.

Agenda Item 3.5

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

Petition wording:

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

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

Additional Information:

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

Petitioner: Cilmeri Community Council

First considered by the Committee: 23 September 2014

Number of Signatures: 305

Ken Skates AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Seilwaith
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-594
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/06897/16

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee

government.committee.business@wales.gsi.gov.uk

5 November 2016

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your letter of 14 October regarding petition P-04-594 in relation to Cilmeri Community Council's appeal for signing to the Prince Llywelyn Monument.

We have received the sign face proposals from Powys County Council and agree in principle to the preferred design which displays the date of the battle.

*Yours ever,
Ken*

Ken Skates AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Seilwaith
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Gohebiaeth.Ken.Skates@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Ken.Skates@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Agenda Item 3.6

P-04-475 Wanted – Buses for Meirionnydd

Petition wording:

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

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

Petition raised by: Barbara Snowball

Date petition first considered by Committee: 30 April 2013

Number of signatures : 174

Agenda Item 3.7

P-04-513 Save the Wrexham/Barmouth X94 bus service

Petition wording:

Arriva Buses has announced that they will cut the X94 service which links the towns of Barmouth, Dolgellau, Bala, Corwen, Llangollen and Wrexham and 5 other bus services on December 21st this year. All of these bus services connect communities across Wales from north to south and east to west. We call on the Welsh Government to investigate how cutting these bus services might be avoided and what is the best way of securing and promoting national bus services that link the regions of Wales, especially where there is no equivalent railway service.

Petition raised by: Karen Dunford

Date petition first considered by Committee: 11 November 2013

Number of signatures: 494

Agenda Item 3.8

P-04-515 Increase Funding for Welsh Bus Services

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to provide increased funding to bus services so that it adheres to its own policy aims of reducing poverty and exclusion, ensuring that people across Wales are not socially or economically disadvantaged by their location.

Additional information: This petition aims to increase the level of funding given to hard to reach, and disadvantaged areas of Wales. A number of local authority areas have had to reduce the frequency and range of bus routes since the Regional Transport Services Grant was introduced. This has left some residents isolated, especially on weekends and bank holidays.

Petition raised by: Daniel Thomas

Date petition first considered by Committee: 26 November 2013

Number of signatures: 246

Agenda Item 5

P-04-668 – Support Yearly Screening for Ovarian Cancer (CA125 blood test)

This petition was submitted by Margaret Hutcherson, having collected 104 signatures.

Text of the Petition

We, the undersigned, call upon the Welsh Government to support yearly screening for ovarian cancer (CA125 Blood Test)

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Vale of Glamorgan
- South Wales Central



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-668
Ein cyf/Our ref RE/05542/16

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

SeneddPetitions@assembly.wales

25 October 2016

Dear Mike

Thank you for your letter about *Petition P-04-668 Support Yearly Screening for Ovarian cancer (CA125) blood test* following my attendance at Petitions Committee on 27 September.

Firstly, I thought it useful to attach links to the findings of the United Kingdom Collaborative Trial of Ovarian Cancer Screening (UKCTOCS) published in the Lancet in December 2015 and a Cancer Research UK blog to help you interpret these findings:

[http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(15\)01224-6/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(15)01224-6/fulltext)

<http://scienceblog.cancerresearchuk.org/2015/12/17/ovarian-cancer-screening-trial-a-tantalising-result/>

I can confirm the review of ovarian cancer cases was introduced into the 2015/16 GP contract and is continuing. The 2015 analyses were summarised by April 2016 and informed the development of practice and cluster plans this autumn. The ongoing work will update GP practice and cluster plans where appropriate. Through our collaboration with Macmillan we now have primary care cancer leads in health boards and each has a specific objective to support the collation of the learning themes to inform health board actions to improve early diagnosis. The work is also shared with the Cancer Delivery Group, which is supporting specific projects relating to pathways of care and access to diagnostics which were issues raised through the GP analysis.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has reviewed the evidence and developed guidelines on ovarian cancer recognition and initial management. This review concluded that around 1 in 100 women referred to secondary care following a positive CA125 blood test would have ovarian cancer. A 'false positive' is a test result which wrongly indicates that a particular condition or attribute is present - for this test that is 99 out of every 100 women.

It also reported that around 1 in every 2,000 women with a negative test result would turn out to have ovarian cancer - this is termed a 'false negative'. False negative results may provide inappropriate reassurance and it is important that a holistic assessment is undertaken which makes use of, but does not rely on, a single test.

The NICE review identified the CA125 blood test strategy as the most cost effective at a total cost of just over £1,500 per patient (within this figure the unit cost of a CA125 blood test was estimated to be £23). I attach a link to the NICE evidence review and guidelines for your information: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg122/evidence>

Finally, I can report the ovarian cancer awareness campaign undertaken in March 2016 cost Velindre NHS Trust approximately £4,700 but the production and distribution of the GP information packs was funded separately by Target Ovarian Cancer.

I trust that you will find this information helpful.

Kind Regards,



Rebecca Evans AC/AM

Gweinidog Iechyd y Cyhoedd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Social Services and Public Health



Mike Hedges AM
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

17th October 2016

Dear Mr Hedges,

Thank you for requesting Ovarian Cancer Action's views on the evidence the Petitions Committee received on 27th September with regards to "Support Yearly Screening for Ovarian Cancer (CA 125 blood test)".

We recently wrote to Vaughan Gething (Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport), about many of the issues raised during the petition committee on the 13th September. Ovarian Cancer Action's view with regards to the CA125 blood test are based on the latest research and are very similar to the evidence received by the committee on 27th September.

Ovarian cancer is the UK's biggest gynaecological killer, killing a woman every two hours. Women who are diagnosed early have a much greater chance of survival, and far too many women are still diagnosed at stage 3 of the disease. Unfortunately there is currently no proven, effective screening process for Ovarian Cancer which leaves awareness of the symptoms, both by patients and clinicians as the most effective tool for early diagnosis and better prognosis.

CA125 is a protein released by ovarian cancer tissue which is often found to be at high levels in the bloodstream in women with ovarian cancer. It is used to diagnose and follow up ovarian tumours before and after treatment. However, to date, it has not been shown to be effective at picking up early stage ovarian cancer, and levels of CA125 can be raised by normal tissues or other conditions, such as endometriosis. Different women have naturally varying levels of CA125, so the same reading could mean different results across patients.

In December last year the UK Collaborative Trial of Ovarian Cancer Screening (UKCTOS) published results on a trial on whether using CA125 as a screening tool could prevent deaths from the disease. While the data showed a possible benefit, the results of the trial concluded that the results were not statistically significant and that further analysis was needed.

Screening tests can have a range of unintended consequences from anxiety to unnecessary surgery in extreme cases. We believe that currently testing levels of CA125 is not yet specific or accurate enough to risk being used as a national screening tool. Funding would be better spent at this time on a national symptoms public awareness campaign.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or would like to meet to discuss this further.

Kind regards

Scientific Review Panel
Professor Robert Bast Jr MD, Professor Ian Hart, Professor Jonathan Berek MD, Professor Michael Bookman MD, Dr Kenneth Nephew, Dr Michael Seiden MD, Professor Anil Sood MD.

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**CANCER
RESEARCH
UK**

28 October 2016

Mike Hedges AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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theresa.lawler@cancer.org.uk
www.cruk.org

Dear Mr Hedges,

Ovarian Cancer Screening

Thank you for inviting us to submit information regarding the introduction of ovarian cancer screening. Cancer Research UK is supportive of the national screening programmes for breast, bowel and cervical cancer. However, we do not recommend the introduction of a national screening programme for ovarian cancer, as the evidence to date has not shown it can reduce deaths from ovarian cancer.

The results from the 14-year UK Collaborative Trial on Ovarian Cancer Screening (UKCTOCS) were published in December 2015. The results did not show a reduction in deaths from ovarian cancer in the women taking part in screening. While UKCTOCS represents an important step in ovarian cancer research, the scientists behind the trial plan to add more to the evidence by following participants for a longer period of time.

Research so far has shown ovarian cancer screening also carries risk, including psychological distress and unnecessary surgery for women who do not have ovarian cancer. There also needs to be more research into the harms of ovarian cancer screening, so they can be weighed against any benefits shown by further research. We also need a fuller understanding of how ovarian cancer develops and progresses to help inform any future interventions.

It is important to remember that screening programmes are meant for people who don't have symptoms: this is different to having a diagnostic test if you have symptoms. We advise people of any age who notice an unusual or persistent change to their body to tell their doctor.

We want women who present with ovarian cancer symptoms to be able to access the appropriate diagnostic tests quickly, so that optimal treatment is available to them. Cancer Research UK works closely with GPs and other healthcare professionals to ensure they are aware of the symptoms of ovarian cancer and know when and how to refer women for tests to increase the chances of early diagnosis.

Please do let us know if you need any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Sir Harpal S. Kumar
Chief Executive

Mike Hedges AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff, CF99 1NA

3 November 2016

Dear Mr Hedges,

Thank you very much for your letter regarding the potential use of CA125 in ovarian cancer screening in Wales and I am delighted that the Assembly is looking at this issue.

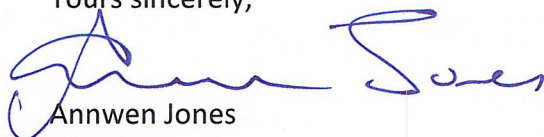
The UK Collaborative Trial of Ovarian Cancer Screening (UKCTOCS), which reported its interim findings last December, looked at two possible models for ovarian cancer screening:

- Ultrasound – women received an annual ultrasound with this repeated more regularly if there were any abnormalities.
- Multimodal – women received an annual CA125 blood test, using women's existing CA125 levels as the benchmark, with additional testing, including ultrasound, if levels of CA125 were found to rise.

Initial findings suggested that there was no significant impact on mortality as a result of screening in either arm. However, the study has been extended for a further three years to allow for the data to further mature.

I have attached a briefing that goes into UKCTOCS in greater detail and please let me know if I can provide anything further.

Yours sincerely,



Annwen Jones
Chief Executive

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