

Agenda – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: 19 September 2017

Meeting time: 09.00

For further information contact:

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Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales

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Agenda Item 2.1

P-05-769 South Wales Major Trauma Centre – Cardiff & Swansea Please

This petition was submitted by Hywel Ap John Griffiths, having collected 69 signatures online.

Petition text:

We call on the Welsh Government to provide major trauma centres at both the University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff, and at Morriston Hospital, Swansea rather than at a sole site.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Dwyfor Meirionnydd
- Mid and West Wales

Briefing for the Petitions Committee

Petition number: [P-05-769](#)

Petition title: **South Wales Major Trauma Centre – Cardiff & Swansea Please**

Text of petition: We call on the Welsh Government to provide major trauma centres at both the University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff, and at Morriston Hospital, Swansea rather than at a sole site.

Work is underway to develop trauma services in Wales. As noted in the Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport's response to the petition, the NHS Wales Health Collaborative has been developing proposals for a major trauma network, including a major trauma centre, to cover the region of south Wales, west Wales and south Powys (patients in north Wales are served by the Major Trauma Centre at Royal Stoke University Hospital).

Swansea's Morriston Hospital and Cardiff's University Hospital of Wales both submitted plans to house a major trauma centre. It has subsequently been [reported](#) that, based on an independent, expert panel's report, the Collaborative has recommended that the major trauma centre should be based in Cardiff, and that Morriston Hospital in Swansea should become a larger trauma unit as part of a wider major trauma network. Health boards will consider the recommendations this autumn. It's understood that the proposals will be subject to public consultation.

Background

The term 'major trauma' is used to describe serious and often multiple injuries that may be life-threatening.

There is evidence that outcomes for patients with major trauma are significantly improved when treated in a dedicated major trauma centre. These centres are staffed by a multi-disciplinary team of clinicians with access to the range of specialist facilities necessary to manage patients with severe, multiple injuries.

The July 2017 [interim report](#) of the review of health and social care in Wales highlights that centralising facilities for some specialised forms of care – so that expertise and equipment are utilised more effectively – improves quality of care.

The evidence is strongest for stroke, trauma, and heart attack services, even if this means patients travelling further to receive care.

The 2012 report [Best Configuration of Hospital Services for Wales – Quality and Safety](#) (the Longley Report) discusses the evidence re. specialist major trauma centres (see pages 12 – 19), referencing work carried out by the Royal College of Surgeons which highlighted that:

- regionalisation of care to specialist trauma centres reduces mortality by 25% and length of stay by 4 days;
- high volume trauma centres reduce death from major injury by up to 50%;
- time from injury to definitive surgery is the primary determinant of outcome in major trauma (not time to arrival in the nearest emergency department);
- major trauma patients managed initially in local hospitals are 1.5 to 5 times more likely to die than patients transported directly to trauma centres;
- **one centre might typically serve a population of 3–4 million.** [Broadly equivalent to the population of Wales].

In 2012, major trauma services across England were reconfigured into regional trauma networks based around designated major trauma centres. A 2016 [study](#) found that, following the regionalisation of trauma care in England, all indicators of quality of care improved. While there was no apparent difference in mortality, evidence from other countries suggests that further benefits may become apparent after a period of maturing of the trauma system.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd, Llesiant a Chwaraeon
Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-769
Ein cyf/Our ref VG/01970/17

David John Rowlands AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

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

18 August 2017

Dear David,

Thank you for your letter of 31 July as chair of the Petitions Committee about Petition P-05-769 South Wales Major Trauma Centre - Cardiff and Swansea.

The NHS Wales Health Collaborative has been developing proposals for the establishment of a major trauma network, including a major trauma centre, to cover the region of south Wales, west Wales and south Powys.

The Collaborative convened an independent panel, comprising representatives from across major trauma services, to assist in identifying a preferred option for the location and development of a major trauma centre. Panel members were invited on the basis of their national and international reputations as experts in trauma care and the development of trauma systems. All have been involved in the development of regional major trauma systems.

The panel's report has been submitted to the Collaborative, which intends to make recommendations for consideration by the individual health boards by early autumn. It will then be for those health boards to make decisions through their own internal governance mechanisms. I understand there is likely to be a period of public consultation and engagement on any proposals for the major trauma network, before any final decisions are made.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
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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.

As I have set out, there is an evidence-led NHS process on the major trauma network and centre. I cannot, and will not, get drawn into commenting on this petition, as it is possible that I will have to determine a final decision and commenting may prejudice my position. Any decision I may make would potentially be reviewable in the courts.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Vaughan Gething'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd, Llesiant a Chwaraeon
Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport

Agenda Item 2.2

P-05-770 Reopen Crumlin Railway Station

This petition was submitted by Michael Davies, having collected 208 signatures online.

Petition text:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to reopen Crumlin railway station. We believe Crumlin could be a significant public transport hub. Its key location would provide the main multi-modal interchange point between the enhanced Ebbw line rail services and the main mid-valley Regional Bus Rapid Transport route. The site for the station has good access to the main highway network, a substantial car park and space for buses. Long distance walking and cycling routes are accessible from the site. We note that Crumlin has a street with the poorest air pollution outside London and that improving public transport links is necessary to improve public health. We urge the Welsh Government to assess the case for reopening a railway station in Crumlin and to consider adding it to the next priority list of proposals for new stations in Wales.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Islwyn
- South Wales East

Petition: Reopen Crumlin Railway Station

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 19 Medi 2017
Petitions Committee | 19 September 2017

Research Briefing:

Petition number: [P-05-770](#)

Petition title: Reopen Crumlin Railway Station

Text of petition:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to reopen Crumlin railway station. We believe Crumlin could be a significant public transport hub. Its key location would provide the main multi-modal interchange point between the enhanced Ebbw line rail services and the main mid-valley Regional Bus Rapid Transport route. The site for the station has good access to the main highway network, a substantial car park and space for buses. Long distance walking and cycling routes are accessible from the site. We note that Crumlin has a street with the poorest air pollution outside London and that improving public transport links is necessary to improve public health. We urge the Welsh Government to assess the case for reopening a railway station in Crumlin and to consider adding it to the next priority list of proposals for new stations in Wales.

Background

Rail infrastructure and services

Rail infrastructure investment is not devolved and the main statutory powers and duties rest with the Secretary of State for Transport. However, the Welsh Government has powers under the *Railways Act 2005* ('the 2005 Act') to invest in rail infrastructure, including stations.

Rail franchising is not currently devolved. However, the Welsh Government is responsible for the day to day management of the Wales and Borders franchise, including the funding of services within Wales ("Wales only services"), and those which start or finish in Wales ("Welsh services").

As well as infrastructure investment, the 2005 Act empowers the Welsh Government to invest in rail service enhancements. This could include any costs associated with a scheduled stop at Crumlin station. However, it is worth noting that inclusion of additional scheduled stops on a rail service has a knock-on impact on the timetable and journey times.

The Welsh and UK Governments are currently negotiating devolution of executive powers to procure the next Welsh rail franchise from 2018. Powers are expected to be devolved in Autumn 2017 and the Welsh Government has begun its [procurement of the next Wales and Borders franchise](#).

Crumlin station

Crumlin is located on the Ebbw Valley Railway line between Ebbw Vale Town Station and Cardiff Central. Arriva Trains Wales currently operates an hourly service on this line. The former Crumlin Low Level station closed in the 1960s.

Capita Symonds carried out a [Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance](#) (WelTAG) assessment of the *Ebbw Valley Railway, Future Phases* for the now disbanded South East Wales Transport Alliance (SEWTA) in 2010. The assessment considered new stations at Cwm, Crumlin, Abertillery, Pye Corner and Newport West Central. Capita Symonds concluded that a new station at Crumlin had a moderate benefit cost ratio and, together with a new station at Pye Corner and additional services, performed well in the overall WelTAG appraisal and should be progressed.

On increasing the reach of the rail network, a Jacobs [report on the SEWTA Rail Strategy](#), published in 2013, stated:

There are few quick wins in terms of new stations that could be built on existing lines in the SEWTA area. Options are Pye Corner and / or Crumlin and Ebbw Vale Town on the Ebbw Vale Line.

Caerphilly County Borough Council's [Adopted Local Development Plan](#) provides for land to be safeguarded for the provision of a new station at Crumlin and says "the establishment of this station would benefit the main employment site at Oakdale".

Cardiff City Deal and Metro

The [Cardiff Capital Region Transport Authority](#) (CCRTA) has been established under the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal to co-ordinate transport planning and investment within the City Deal region (inclusive of Crumlin). CCRTA has "set about developing a Strategic Regional Transport Plan" and will "review and prioritise existing draft plans in the light of City Deal". It is also "actively engaging with Welsh Government and Transport for Wales on co-designing the South East Wales Metro schemes".

The Metro is the Welsh Government's planned integrated public transport network for the South Wales Valleys and Cardiff. The Welsh Government says it is a "long term programme" which "is being developed so that it can be incrementally extended". The Welsh

Government's most recent [Metro brochure](#) says Metro Phase 2 (2017–23) “will focus on modernising the core Valley Lines and the wider South Wales rail network”. While the Ebbw Vale line is not included among the Core Valleys Lines the brochure says that, if not delivered during Phase 2, “a range of additional heavy rail stations [including Crumlin] can also be considered”.

Welsh Government action

New stations

The Welsh Government's [National Transport Finance Plan](#) (NTFP) commits to “develop assessment criteria and, using those criteria, a prioritised list of new station proposals for further consideration [in relation to securing funding from the rail industry]”. Crumlin is listed in the NTFP as a station that will be assessed as part of this process (NTFP Reference RI10). Under delivery of Metro Phase 2, Crumlin station is included in a list of proposed infrastructure enhancements which will be subject to “feasibility studies, development of business case and delivery of [a] recommended solution/option” between 2017 and 2020 (NTFP Reference CCRM10f).

The Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure [wrote to all Assembly Members on 26 April 2017](#) (PDF 229KB) to provide an update on:

- the Welsh Government's three-stage approach for prioritising proposals for new railway stations in Wales; and
- A prioritised list of stations which will be taken forward for further assessment under stages 2 and 3.

Crumlin station was not included on the Cabinet Secretary's prioritised station list.

Following a question to the First Minister on the [process for assessing proposals for new railway stations](#) on 16 May 2017, the Cabinet Secretary wrote to all Assembly Members [with a further update](#) on the 6 June 2017 which stated:

The regional stations identified for further [stage 2] assessment were the ones that scored the highest across all the [WelTAG and Well-being] criteria tested.

In his letter to the Chair regarding this petition, the Cabinet Secretary stated that in lieu of responsibility for funding for rail infrastructure, the Welsh Government is using its powers to “facilitate the development of rail stations” in order to increase the “ability of station proposals to be in a position to benefit from [UK Government] funding calls”. On Crumlin Station, he stated:

Whilst working on Stage 3 we will also assess the next batch of stations on the Stage 1 list. We anticipate commencing this work in early 2018. Our initial assessment is that Crumlin Station scored well against the transport case criteria. As the assessment process is an on-going and iterative one, Crumlin will eventually be assessed along with other stations on our list.

National Assembly for Wales action

Following a response from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure to a question on investment in the rail network in [Plenary on the 21 June 2017](#), Steffan Lewis stated:

The Cabinet Secretary, as mentioned previously, has published his priority list for new stations to be constructed, and I was surprised that Crymlyn was not among those priority stations, given the key location that it provides for a multimodal interchange point and its potential as a cycle and long-distance walking hub as well—in the area, the Cabinet Secretary will be aware, in which the street with the poorest air pollution outside of London anywhere in the UK is also located.

I understand that his resources are finite and there are many competing factors, but perhaps the current criteria for deciding priority stations aren't as all-encompassing as they could be.

Responding to a statement on historic environment policy and legislation in [Plenary on 4 July 2017](#), Rhianon Passmore stated that she would like to see “the railway station reintroduced in Crumlin in order to open up our Valleys communities”. Discussing the Ebbw Vale Town station and associated line extension in [Plenary on the 5 July 2017](#), Rhianon Passmore stated:

The Ebbw Vale Town station demonstrates how the line can be expanded as part of a strategic, holistic and multimodal transport interface [...].

I'm very much of the opinion that, one day, Crumlin should once again have a railway station on the line.

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.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-770
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/02791/17

David John Rowlands AM
Chair - Petitions committee

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18 August 2017

Dear David

Thank you for your letter of 31 July regarding Petition P-05-770 to reopen Crumlin Railway Station.

Despite our calls for further devolution, the responsibility for funding for rail infrastructure remains reserved to the UK Government. We are however using our powers to facilitate the development of rail stations. By undertaking this work we are increasing the ability of station proposals to be in a position to benefit from funding calls.

My recent letters to Assembly Members explain the process we are following to assess possible candidate sites. The first stage in this work programme has now been undertaken, and the regional stations identified for further assessment were the ones that scored the highest across all the criteria tested. Once these priority sites have gone through the Stage 2 assessment those that are likely to demonstrate a viable business case will be taken forward to Stage 3 where the proposal will be developed in more detail.

Whilst working on Stage 3 we will also assess the next batch of stations on the Stage 1 list. We anticipate commencing this work in early 2018. Our initial assessment is that Crumlin Station scored well against the transport case criteria. As the assessment process is an on-going and iterative one, Crumlin will eventually be assessed along with other stations on our list.

Yours sincerely

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

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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-05-770 Reopen Crumlin Railway Station – Correspondence from the
Petitioner to the Committee, 31.08.17**

Dear Kayleigh Imperato,

Thank you for the information and opportunity to expand on this petition.

I'm attaching further information as requested.

It is a brief document taken from several sources outlining the case for the re-opening of a train station in Crumlin.

I hope the committee find it useful when they consider my petition.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to invite the committee or a representative from amongst them to come to Crumlin to see the site itself.

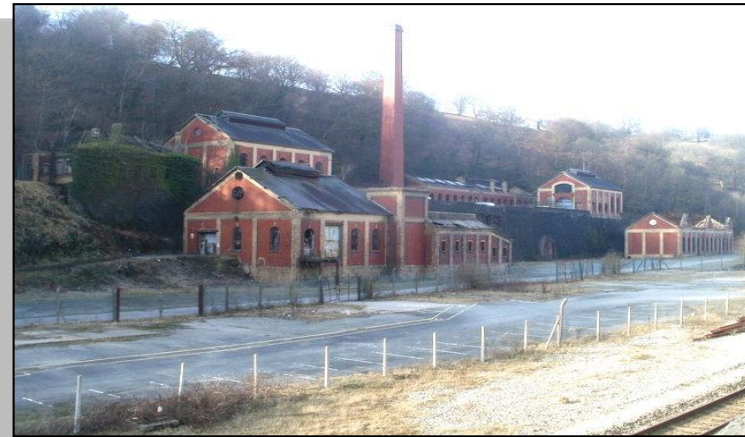
Yours,

Cllr Mike Davies

Re:- Reopening Crumlin Train Station

The re-opening of a train station in Crumlin has been under consideration for many years. The scheme originally developed by SEWRTA to re-open the Ebbw Valley railway for passenger services did include a new station at Crumlin but this was not taken forward at that time as the resources available were focussed on providing the core valley rail service. Since that time the South East Wales Metro scheme (SESM) has been fully developed, now including a number of cross valley links and connections. Crumlin's key location clearly provides the main multi-modal interchange point between the enhanced Ebbw lines rail services and the main mid-valley Regional Bus Rapid Transport Route. Unlike most of the other stations on this line whose overall footprints are severely restricted, the proposed Crumlin station benefits from being situated away from the location of the original Crumlin low level station site and on the Old Navigation Colliery Site instead. This location has space for a full multi-modal interchange with adequate capacity for bus dwell time and a substantial car park with good access to the main highway network. It also has good highway access to the existing major employment locations of Oakdale and Croespenmaen business parks. Addressing the infrastructure issues at Crumlin and enhancing public transport would also allow consideration of a sustainable solution to the blight of air pollution in the locality with it having the most air polluted community outside of London.

The reopening of the train station would not only enhance transport options but would also provide the catalyst for regeneration of the whole site. Navigation Colliery is a landmark group of buildings over a century old located in Crumlin, Caerphilly. Built between 1907 and 1911, the site was designed as a "model colliery", benefitting from high quality construction materials and cutting edge machinery. It was one of the first collieries in Wales to be made primarily out of brick rather than stone. Although the mine ceased production in 1967, the pit head buildings and chimney stack are still standing and strikingly dominate the valley landscape.



The colliery site is a mixture of 15 Grade II and Grade II* listed buildings and structures set over 4HA of land. CADW regard the site as the most important group of colliery buildings in Wales, describing them as *"a nearly complete colliery complex of national importance"*.

The buildings are gradually deteriorating from environmental conditions. Many of these once proud buildings are now in a

state of advanced disrepair and urgent regeneration action is needed before nature claims the site forever.

A fully restored and regenerated Colliery site, with the buildings brought back into beneficial use, has the potential to be a truly transformative project with significant social, cultural and economic benefits to its surrounding rural communities and neighbouring regions.

The Navigation site is currently under the ownership of the South Wales Building Preservation Trust (SWBPT) who acquired the lease in 2011, supported by a local community Trust, Glofa Navigation Cyf, and the Friends of the Navigation community group. A project working group,

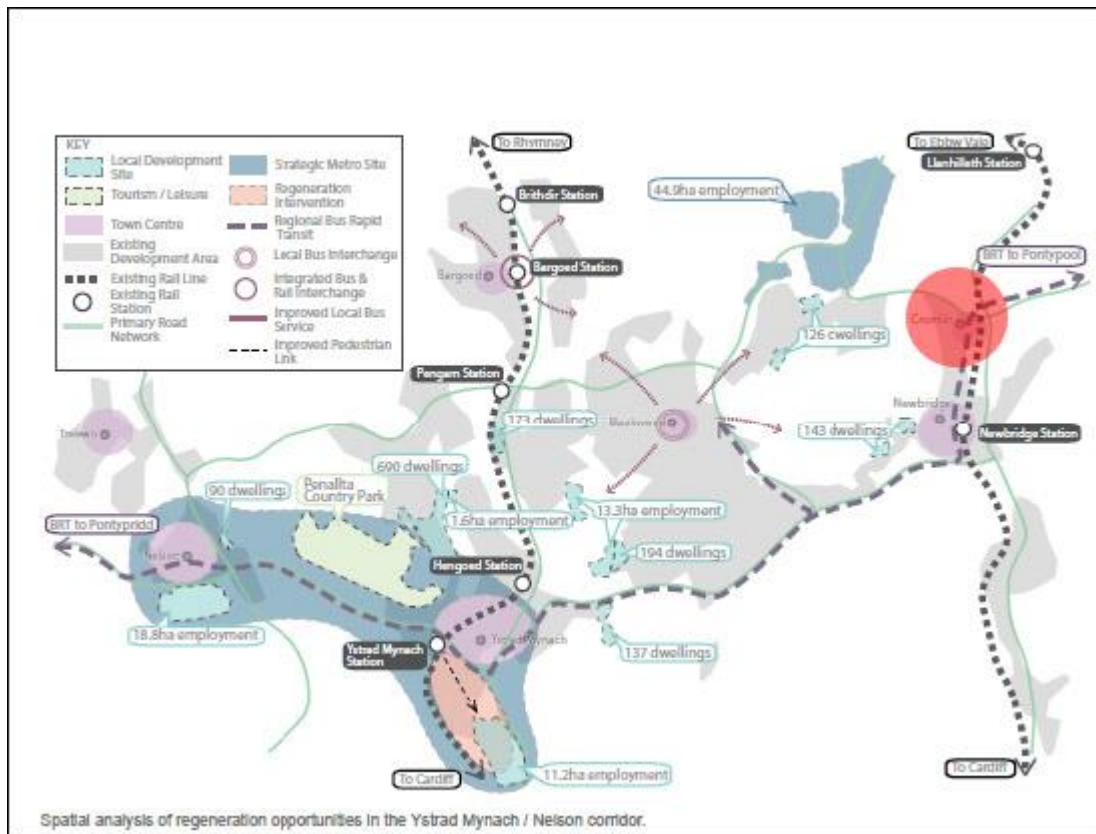
including Caerphilly County Borough Council's Urban Renewal Team, Cardiff Metropolitan University and the Prince's Regeneration Trust has been convened to work alongside SWBPT, Glofa and the Friends group to develop and drive forward a restoration Action Plan for the site.

The site could become a thriving centre for tourism and leisure. It's historical significance and the proximity to biking and walking opportunities makes it an ideal location for developing a range of leisure facilities, including accommodation and exhibition space. Crumlin would be seen as a place to visit and enjoy and not just a location to travel from.

The project also has the potential to significantly contribute to each of the 4 main themes outlined in the Cardiff Capital City Region strategic vision "Powering the Welsh Economy".

- *Connectivity:* *Deliver an integrated infrastructure which allows an effective, efficient and sustainable movement of people, goods and information, regionally, nationally and internationally.*
- *Skills:* *Our Region and our people are recognised globally for having the skills for life that meet the needs of our businesses and our communities.*
- *Innovation and growth:* *Support a thriving business community with international recognition, driven by an entrepreneurial culture and leading academic research.*
- *Identity:* *Build a vibrant and internationally recognised Cardiff Capital Region synonymous with quality of life.*

The Valleys Metro is a priority backbone project within the City Region strategy and the 2013 "Metro Impact Study" sets out the potential regeneration opportunities arising from the Metro routes and hubs, focussing on a number of key spatially targeted areas of investment, including the Ystrad Mynach Corridor as well as delivering benefits to nearby Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen. (*Crumlin area indicated by red circle in image below*)



Crumlin's key location provides the main multi-modal interchange point between the enhanced Ebbw Valley Rail (EVR) lines rail services and the main mid-valley Regional Bus Rapid Transport route (BRT). The proposed park and ride facility, if progressed, would be constructed within the southern end of the colliery site, which would place the project directly within a key strategic regional transport hub - unlocking significant investment and regeneration opportunities.

Previous feasibility studies identified a range of options to take the forward to design and implementation stage with a suite of mixed use options including arts, creative industries, heritage, cultural and learning, as set out below:

- Residential;
- Commercial / Industrial Floorspace;
- Office Accommodation;
- Hotel;
- Bunkhouse Accommodation
- Pub / Restaurant;
- Children's Play Space;
- Museum;
- Tourism / Heritage;
- Recreation Space / Trails;
- Community / Education;
- Artist Studios & Exhibition Space.

If the infrastructure issues were addressed, including the creation of a train station, some of the vacant land could be sold for development. This, coupled with the renewable energy plans for the site, have the potential to provide sustainable housing. The site also has the potential to be self-sufficient in green energy and possible become a net exporter via a proposed hydro-electric scheme being taken forward by the community interest company Crumlin Hydro CBC. There is also the potential for heat extraction from the South Wales Coalfield.

In addition, representatives from Cardiff Metropolitan University have identified the colliery site and buildings as a possible location for a regional Building Academy, with significant potential to establish itself as a flagship destination for innovation, research and educational provision.

It is considered that due to the size of the Navigation Colliery Complex and the buildings within it, accommodating one single use on the site would be difficult and may not present the most viable and sustainable option for the site.

Given the vast potential floor-space afforded by the Colliery buildings and the surrounding 4HA of land, the site, once restored, has the potential to accommodate a wide range of end uses across a variety of sectors.



Due to the size of the complex and the need to be pragmatic in approach, it is considered that a mix of the uses considered would create the most viable and sustainable site going forward. In order to realise some capital receipt from the site to assist in the renovation / conversion of the historic buildings, one possible option could

be to offer at least part of the site to the market for subsequent development.

In light of the huge potential of the site, and the range of economic activities and sectors the buildings could accommodate, future investment may be secured from a variety of sources:

- Heritage Lottery Fund
- Big Lottery Fund
- Coalfields Regeneration Trust
- European Structural Investment Funds
- Landfill Tax Scheme
- CADW
- Trusts and Foundations
- Welsh Government
- Private Sector

Agenda Item 2.3

P-05-772 No to the proposed Iron Ring at Flint Castle

This petition was submitted by Gerwyn David Evans, having collected 11,091 signatures online.

Petition text:

We the undersigned call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to scrap the proposed plans of building an Iron Ring outside of Flint Castle as we are well aware of the historical significance of Edward I and his so called Iron Ring as a use to subjugate and oppress our people.

We find this extremely disrespectful to the people of Wales and our ancestors who have battled oppression, subjugation and injustice for hundreds of years.

We ask that you please rethink the decision to build this monument and use the money elsewhere.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Rhondda
- South Wales Central

Iron Ring petition

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 19 Medi 2017
Petitions Committee | 19 September 2017

Research Briefing:

Petition title: No to the proposed Iron Ring at Flint Castle

Text of petition:

“We the undersigned oppose the building of the Iron Ring outside of Flint Castle as we are well aware of the historical significance of Edward I and his so called Iron Ring as a use to subjugate and oppress our people.

We find this extremely disrespectful to the people of Wales and our ancestors who have battled oppression, subjugation and injustice for hundreds of years.

We ask that you please rethink the decision to build this monument and use the money elsewhere.”

Background

On 21 July the Welsh Government [announced](#) its plans for a £630,000 project at Flint Castle and foreshore, including the installation of a sculpture named the Iron Ring. This design was selected by a panel from the Welsh Government and the Arts Council for Wales, following a competition to obtain proposals for an artwork concept celebrating the Welsh Government’s Year of Legends.

The £395,000 Iron Ring would be up to 7 metres high and 30 metres wide. The Welsh Government stated that it would be engraved with “carefully chosen associated words and sayings to be developed with the local community”. Visitors would be able to walk along the sculpture and enjoy elevated views across the estuary and of the castle.

George King Architects, who designed the Iron Ring, [stated](#):

The sculpture symbolises a giant rusted crown representing the intimate relationship between the medieval monarchies of Europe and the castles that they built. The sculpture’s precarious balanced form, half buried beneath the ground, half projecting into the air, demonstrates the unstable nature of the crown. Its location at Flint Castle marks the spot where the crown was famously transferred from one medieval dynasty to another, as described in Shakespeare’s Richard II. Flint Castle was the

setting as Richard II surrendered the crown to Henry IV, a momentous event that shaped the history of Britain and Europe.

They elaborated [further](#):

Iron Ring has been carefully designed to work at many scales. From afar its striking, iconic form resembles a giant ancient artefact, washed up on the shore of the Dee Estuary. Its scale and dynamic form, complemented by LED lighting, means that it will become an instantly recognisable landmark for the area. However as you approach the sculpture it becomes obvious that piece is more than a sculpture. A passageway is carved out of the giant ring, allowing visitors to travel over its circumference. The gently sloping path elevates you above the ground, providing views of the estuary and of Flint Castle. Closer inspection reveals the sides of the walkway are intricately engraved. On one side of the path the full length contains an iconic quote taken from Shakespeare's Richard II as the King is considering surrendering his throne.

On the other side the path turns the ring into a giant compass, providing the name and direction of the other castles that make up the Iron Ring, providing details of their own stories and legends and creating a link between them and Flint that encourages visitors to visit the other castles in the ring.

Response

The Welsh Government's announcement received a substantial amount of criticism (for example, this [article](#) on the Nation.Cymru website, and the accompanying petition). These criticisms centred on the perception that the planned Iron Ring was celebrating the "Iron Ring" of castles that Edward I built as part of his military campaign in Wales. On 26 July, Ken Skates AM, Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure said:

We have listened and recognise the strength of feeling around the proposed art installation at Flint Castle and feel it is only right that we now take a pause and review the plans for the sculpture. Working closely with local partners we will continue to work on proposals for developments at Flint, including reviewing new visitor facilities.

On 7 September, the Welsh Government [announced](#) that it would not be proceeding with the Iron Ring sculpture. Ken Skates AM said:

We acknowledge that the proposal for the Iron Ring sculpture has been divisive and, following extremely constructive and productive meetings with local stakeholders, have taken the decision not to proceed with the proposed design. Instead, we will use the investment allocated for the artwork to help deliver the wider masterplan for the foreshore, taking in the views of local people. This will include developing a range of capital investments for the area and holding a number of events and activities to increase the understanding of the history of the Castle and the significance of the foreshore. Alongside Flintshire County Council and Flint Town Council, we see development of the masterplan as a high priority.

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.

Agenda Item 3.1

P-05-692 Build an International Mother Languages Monument at Cardiff Bay

This petition was submitted by Mohammed Sarul Islam, having collected 16 signatures.

Text of the Petition

We the undersigned call on the National Assembly of Wales to urge the Welsh Government to build an International Language monument at Cardiff Bay for all International mother languages lovers.

Additional information

A plaque has been laid by Cardiff Lord Mayor in 2012 at Grange moor Park, Cardiff Bay. But due to lack of funding not constructed..

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Cardiff West
- South Wales Central



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref KS/01864/17
Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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

17 June 2017

Dear

Thank you for your letter regarding a petition to build an International Mother Languages Monument at Cardiff Bay. I recall similar correspondence from Mohammed Sarul Islam last year and I am aware of the petition to build an International Mother Languages Monument in Cardiff Bay. We are, however, in a similar position to last year where there are currently no funding streams available which could accommodate this request. It is also unclear from the petition whether there is wider community support for the monument.

I know the Leader of the House and Chief Whip recently attended a Gala Dinner, hosted by the International Language Monument Project Committee. In his letter Mr Islam refers to a financial commitment from Welsh Labour to support the monument. Ms Hutt's Private office has confirmed that, while she indicated at the event that she was supportive of the initiative in principle, she did not commit to any financial support for it from the Welsh Government.

The Welsh Government is continuing to deliver against our Community Cohesion Programme, including through the work of eight Regional Community Cohesion Co-ordinators who are active and engaged at a local level with partners across communities. We recognise the importance of diversity and working with partners to increase engagement and break down any perceived barriers. Our approach is underpinned by the goals set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act around a Wales of cohesive communities and a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.

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

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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.

P-05-692 Welsh Assembly to Build a International Mother languages Monument at Cardiff Bay – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 05.07.17

Dear Chairman,
Petition Committee
NAW

I refer to your recent correspondence from Mr Ken Skates AM. First of all, as I mentioned in my previous email that leader of the assembly did mention in her speech at City Hall on 21st February that the Welsh Government will support to build this project technically and financially. You may be aware that the International Language Monument represents International Mothers Language day. UNISCO has granted and recognised to celebrate this event internationally. Many countries in the world have been celebrating this occasion as well and it has become a part of the community world-wide. Wales is the communities of a community. I believe we have a wider range of support from all diverse communities in Cardiff. Many schools and local organisations also celebrate IMLD widely. It becomes a part of the educational aspect in Wales. However, in terms of financial support from the Welsh government, my project committee are asking for £65,000 funding from the Welsh Assembly. I will really appreciate it if the minister will come up with £50,000. The project committee will generate £15,000.

Look forward to hearing from you,
Many thanks

Mohammed Sarul Islam
Joint chair
International Language Monument project committee.

Agenda Item 3.2

P-05-737 Save our Bus.

This petition was submitted by Patricia Threadgill, which collected 60 signatures.

Text of the Petition

Just learned today the bus I use regularly from Gilfach Goch-Pontypridd is being "wiped out". In Jan 2016 the Welsh Government said it was committed to improving the quality + accessibility of local bus services. In Gilfach Goch we have older + poorer people + people with disabilities who use this bus, which can be the difference between getting around or feeling trapped. So please save the 150 to PONTY !!!!

Assembly constituency and Region.

- Ogmore
- South Wales West

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

1 St David's Road
Cwmbrân
Torfaen
NP44 1PD

T 01633 838856
F 01633 865299

stagecoachbus.com



Our Ref: NW/arw MH/AM
16th June 2017

Dear Mr. Hedges,

Re: Petition P-05-737 Save our Bus

I refer to your letter of 5th June 2017 in which you refer to Bus Users Cymru and a customer survey undertaken by Stagecoach post the change of bus Service 150 of October 2016.

As you know the nature of the petition is with regard to curtailment of the 150 bus service in the Rhondda so that it ceased to serve Pontypridd, terminating at Porth instead. There are already 11 buses per hour between Porth and Pontypridd with excellent connectivity from the Service 150 onto other Services in Porth for Pontypridd.

The South Wales Metro project at its heart will feature connectivity from one mode to another providing connectivity across South East Wales. The change for Service 150 is no different in this regard than to the Metro connectivity principles.

The purpose of the customer survey post the change to service is to determine the customer reaction to the change, if it is in line with expectations from analysing usage data prior to the change and to assess customer experience in general.

When asked for what purpose is the customer using the bus, 27 out of 210 responses replied that they wanted the link to Pontypridd reinstating.

64% of respondents were accepting of the frequency change.

65% of respondents either were accepting of the onward connection arrangement or it did not concern them as Pontypridd is not their destination.

The survey results reflect the customer demand for Pontypridd prior to the changes in October 2016.

It is therefore the case that the original reasons for change remain valid;

- Bus Service 150 provides a direct contribution and is not profit making.
- Declining revenues place the Service 150 at risk.
- The level of patronage for Pontypridd is disproportionate to the level of resource required to serve Pontypridd.
- The focus of our alteration is to achieve a sustainable service between Gilfach Goch and Porth with excellent onward connections by bus and train.

I hope the foregoing is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

Nigel Winter
Managing Director

Agenda Item 3.3

P-05-716 Free Train Transport for school pupils with Arriva Trains Wales

This petition was submitted by Elin Tuckwood, having collected 937 signatures on an alternative e-petition website

Text of the Petition

Here in the UK we are entitled to free education so surely we should be allowed free, safe transport to and from school? the answer to this is yes for many years Arriva trains Wales have been providing Treorchy Comprehensive pupils with Free train transport which is a huge benefit to those who live outside the catchment areas, however recently this has changed they have now called for all pupils to buy a train pass to get to and from school and these prices range from £19.95 to £32.90 per school term. For some parents with more than 1 child this can work out to be very costly and because these passes are provided through Arriva Trains Wales the school is unable to help parents with this funding. Arriva trains have stated that this is for safety precautions however children who have these designated train passes are in front of a "protective" metal barrier closer to the platform edge and the children that do not have these passes are in this small enclosed barrier space which actually causes more of a safety hazard due to overcrowding in such a small space. By being allowed free train transport once again every pupil will be able to have a fair chance to gain an education and will be able to go on to what they want to do in life we will all be treated as equal and money will not be a major concern for anyone.

Assembly Constituency and Region:

Rhondda

South Wales Central



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref KS/01870/17
Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee

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

21 June 2017

Dear

Thank you for your letter of 23 May following consideration of my response of 20 September 2016 regarding petition P-05-716.

I appreciate the concerns expressed by the petition organiser concerning the safety of pupils and can assure you that passenger safety is of paramount importance to both the Welsh Government and Arriva Trains Wales. The risk assessment to which Arriva Trains Wales refer too in their response to the petitioner have been undertaken to ensure the safety of passengers. My officials have discussed this issue with Arriva Trains Wales and they confirm that this is a matter they take extremely seriously and have committed to do everything in their power to ensure the safety of pupils using Treorchy Station.

I understand the concerns that free rail travel has been taken away. However I have been assured by Arriva Trains Wales that the arrangements now in place are the same as those for other schools with significant numbers of pupils using rail services. I have previously advised that the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 places a requirement on local authorities to provide free transport to learners of compulsory school age (5-16) who live more than two miles from their nearest suitable primary school or more than three miles from their nearest suitable secondary school.

Yours sincerely,

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
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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.

P-05-716 Free School Transport for all Children in Wales – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 03.07.17

RE: Petitioners response

To whom it may concern,

Although safety measurements and implications are continuously mentioned in responses I once again do not see any safety aspects taking place, which goes against all what Arriva Train proposed what the charged train service would give to the pupils, although the act states that children living within 3 miles of their nearest suitable school is in place I have not seen any child living in this distance away from Treorchy comprehensive receive this free transport and I reiterate that pupils who live this distance away are not eligible for bus passes so the train is the only means of transport as for some families it is physically impossible to take their children back and forth to school all day. From personal experience I find the staff on the train station to be very rude and ill-mannered and it is disappointing to see that the money Arriva gain from the passes does not go towards making sure their staff treat pupils with respect, the staff are not very courteous to those who buy the tickets on the station placing barriers in front of them before they even have a chance to board the train which is particularly unfair as these pupils may not be able to afford the passes once again putting a strain on families as they may have to collect their children from the station as a result of them being disallowed to board the train

I hope you take into consideration my concerns expressed

Yours sincerely,

Elin Tuckwood

P-04-688 TATA Steel Port Talbot Power Plant

This petition was submitted by Peter Bamsey, having collected 531 signatures.

Text of the Petition

We the undersigned call upon the Welsh Government to use all levers at its disposal, including financial levers, to support the completion of a new power plant planned for Port Talbot steels works. The construction of this plant will create jobs and when it is operational it will reduce emissions, reduce Tata's running costs and help to safeguard vital jobs in the area.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Aberavon
- South Wales West

P-04-688 TATA Steel Port Talbot Power Plant – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 05.07.17

Dear Kathryn,

I would certainly recommend that the petition be pursued, it is as relevant [today](#) as it was when first presented to the petitions committee.

With the current situation of uncertainty in the steel industry every consideration on securing the future of the Port Talbot plant has to be of paramount importance. I am very concerned at Tata's reluctance to invest in the plant, it does not bode well for the long term future. Rather than 'fire fight' with the current aging power plant, it has to be a better option to invest in a new modern environmentally efficient plant. Whilst the main object of the power plant is to supply 'blast' to the furnaces, the electricity produced is a bonus supplying the site and any surplus being exported to the national grid. What a win, win situation that would be.

I am alarmed and dismayed that Tata has shown little faith in the loyal workforce and fear that without this investment the works only has a short term future! Only last year Tata announced that if the Port Talbot works made £200m profit that they would invest in the works, [today](#) I haven't heard of any large investment! Tata stated that they would look at the two furnace operation on site after five years, why such a short term? Does Tata intend to close the 'heavy end' after the five years has expired? This would probably explain the lack of investment at present. Again I say, the investment of a power plant has to be pursued for the immediate and long term future of Tata Port Talbot.

Regards

Mr Bamsey

Correspondence from Bethan Jenkins, AM to the Petitions Committee, 05.07.17

Dear Petitions Committee members,

I would second the content of this email from the petitioner Peter Bamsey, and say that this issue is still very much relevant and important.

I would be more than happy to come in to the committee alongside Peter Bamsey to provide the committee with evidence on this matter.

We cannot let the issue of investment fall down the political agenda. The plans for the power plant were drawn up years ago now, and this is a much needed project for the long term future progress of the steel works in my region,

Regards,

Bethan Jenkins, AM

Agenda Item 3.5

P-05-690 Resurfacing of the A40 Raglan–Abergavenny Road

This petition was submitted by Sara Jones, having collected 22 signatures. The petition also collected 142 signatures on an alternative e-petition website

Text of the Petition

This petition calls on the Welsh Government to replace the old concrete surface on the A40 road from Raglan to Abergavenny with whispering tarmac.

The Noise Action Plan (2013–18) states that this road is a priority, after the consultation responses received and the measurements taken. Yet no progress has been made despite repeated calls from residents, the local County Councillor, Assembly Member and Member of Parliament.

We, the undersigned, state that this road should be given immediate priority, given the numerous concerns raised from both public and representatives and that it has been identified under the existing Welsh Government Noise Action Plan.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Monmouth
- South Wales East



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref KS/01977/17

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee

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

21 June 2017

Dear

Thank you for your letter of 2 June regarding Petition P-05-690 Resurfacing of the A40 Raglan-Abergavenny Road. I appreciate you forwarding the latest comments made by the petitioners and Nick Ramsay AM.

As explained in previous responses, the A40 at this location is not life expired and there are currently no plans to resurface it. However, work will commence in the current financial year to design suitable noise mitigation measures for the current Priority 1 section of the A40/Usk Road roundabout. Implementation is anticipated from 2018/19, depending on available funding and the relative priority of other schemes in the programme. Alternative measures to new surfacing such as noise fences are typically better at mitigating noise in the long term than new surfacing which can reduce in effectiveness over time.

The current priority list will also be reviewed this financial year following a new noise survey of the motorway and trunk road network. It is important to note therefore that priorities could change and new sections of trunk road may enter the programme.

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
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CF99 1NA

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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-05-740 Petition to Protect our High Street.

This petition was submitted by Sally Stephenson, which collected 939 online signatures and 729 paper signatures.

Text of the Petition

- We, the undersigned, believe that the Welsh Government's transitional rate-relief scheme is inadequate to meet the needs of businesses affected by the most recent re-valuation of premises and call on the Welsh Government to develop a package of permanent rate-relief measures to alleviate the financial pressure on small businesses..

Assembly constituency and Region.

- Vale of Glamorgan
- South Wales Central

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-05-740
Ein cyf/Our ref MD-00144-17

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

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

11 March 2017

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your letter of 23 February regarding the High Street Rates Relief Scheme.

With reference to how the High Street Relief will be allocated, my officials have worked closely with Local Authorities to develop this scheme, the details of which I announced in my statement on 17 February. Funding will be allocated to Local Authorities based on the estimated number of eligible ratepayers per authority area. Local Authorities will then administer the scheme and provide relief to eligible ratepayers. Ratepayers can contact their individual Local Authorities to find out what support they may be entitled to.

In relation to the non-domestic rates statistics requested, the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) produces statistics on the number of businesses in different rateable value bands for both England and Wales. Attached is a link to where these statistics can be found:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/non-domestic-rating-stock-of-properties>

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Correspondence.Mark.Drakeford@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.

Please note that the information for 2017 is not yet available. However, your petitioner may wish to contact the VOA at statistics@voa.gsi.gov.uk to see what information the organisation is able to provide.

Best wishes,

Mark

Mark Drakeford AM/AC

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

David J. Rowlands AM
Chair of The Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

4 July 2017

Dear Mr Rowlands,

Petition to Protect Our High Street - Business Rates

I have received the letter from Mark Drakeford, dated 11 March 2017, in response to the above petition. Apologies it has taken me a while to reply.

As you know, this petition is part of a wider campaign calling on the Welsh Government to

- 1) help SMEs facing astronomical increases in their business rates bills following the introduction of the new rateable values in April 2017;
- 2) develop a package of permanent rate-relief measures from April 2018 to alleviate the financial pressure on small businesses in Wales.

Alongside the covering letter which I presented when I formally handed over the petition on Wednesday 18 January, and my letter to the Petitions Committee on 8 February 2017, I would be grateful if the following points would also be considered by the Committee when you meet on Tuesday 11 July.

1) Rateable values have been increased dramatically

Following the revaluation of the rateable value of commercial properties across the UK, many Welsh businesses have been hit with an astronomical increase in their rateable value. Rural market towns, such as Cowbridge and Monmouth, appear to have been hardest hit and this could seriously threaten the long term viability of many businesses.

2) The Welsh Government has not increased the threshold for SBRR

Business rates is a tax which has been fully devolved from Westminster to the Welsh Government. Until recently, business rates in Wales were calculated in broadly the same way as they were in England. However from 1 April the situation changed, and not in Wales' favour.

From 1 April 2017, the UK Government **doubled** the threshold below which small businesses are exempt from business rates from £6k to £12k, and introduced tapered relief for those valued between £12k and £15k.

Unfortunately the Welsh Government has chosen not to implement this policy, meaning that all small businesses in Wales valued between £6k and £12k **are still paying rates whilst their counterparts in England are rates-free.**

Those businesses valued between £12k and £15k are paying the full amount since, unlike in England, they do not benefit from any tapered rates relief at all.

To put it simply, from 1 April 2017 small businesses are worse off in Wales under the devolved Welsh Government than they would be if they were under Westminster. The situation is even worse when compared to Scotland, where the SBRR threshold has been raised to £15k. SMEs in Wales are being left behind.

3) Welsh Labour's broken manifesto promise

During the Welsh Assembly elections last year, one of Welsh Labour's six manifesto pledges was "to cut taxes for ALL small businesses". Now they are in government, they are doing the exact opposite. Business rates is the only tax which the Welsh Government has the power to change, yet for many it is being increased dramatically. This is wholly unacceptable.

4) Analysis of business rates bands in Wales compared to England

Mark Drakeford claims that three-quarters of businesses in Wales will receive some form of relief. I have previously requested (and am still waiting for) the data to back up this claim. We would like to know, for 2016/17 and from 2017 onwards, how many businesses in Wales fall into the different rate bands - less than £6k, £6k-£12k, £12k-£15k, £15k-£51k, more than £51k - and how that compares to England.

The minister's last letter directed us to statistics on the VOA website to answer these questions, but he advised that the information for 2017 is not yet available. If this is the case, how can he possibly know that three-quarters of rate payers in Wales will receive some form of relief?

5) High Street Rates Relief Scheme for 2017/18

Following significant lobbying last autumn from towns and businesses across Wales, Mark Drakeford agreed to support high street businesses facing increased business rates bills with a one-off £10m 'High Streets Rates Relief' scheme for 2017/18.

Whilst we welcome this additional support, it was incredibly frustrating and disappointing that having announced the new scheme in mid-December, it took the Welsh Government far too long to decide how to actually allocate the money and provide the necessary implementation guidance to the Local Authorities. Rates bills therefore had to be issued in March without any mention of the funding, with many businesses having to pay massively increased bills whilst they waited for the details of the new scheme to be announced. The relief was finally allocated three months later when bills had to be re-issued. This was a waste of taxpayers' money and placed unnecessary financial stress on small businesses. The funding should have been ready for the new financial year.

6) Additional financial support announced for business rates

Responding to pressure from businesses across the UK, the Chancellor announced in the Spring Budget significant additional support for business rates. Wales will have received a share of this through the Barnett Formula, as well as the additional £200m. Please can you advise how this money will be used to support business rates in Wales this year?

7) Business rates from 1 April 2018 onwards

The High Street Rates Relief scheme is only in place for this financial year (2017/18). We do not know what will happen next year. As it currently stands, the HSRR scheme will

disappear, leaving just the transitional relief scheme which will see rates bills increasing significantly every year for the next three years.

Mark Drakeford has committed to reviewing the business rates scheme in Wales from 1 April 2018, however we have not yet seen any proposals. Businesses cannot plan properly or make investment decisions whilst there is such uncertainty hanging over us, especially in the current economic climate. Business rates must be resolved as a matter of urgency.

8) Small businesses are the backbone of the Welsh economy

In 2015, SMEs in Wales accounted for 99.4% of private sector business and 61% of employment – equating to 673,600 employees. The vast majority are ‘micro-businesses’ like mine (with nine employees or fewer), which qualify for SBRR. If every small business in Wales employed just one more member of staff, it would wipe out unemployment across Wales. Imposing a significant and unfair additional regional tax burden has the real potential to put many of us out of business and create further unemployment.

9) Involving businesses to shape future direction

There are many small business owners and representatives, particularly in Cowbridge and Monmouth, who have been fully engaged in this campaign and thoroughly understand the issues facing SMEs. Myself, David Cummings (Chairman of Monmouth and District Chamber of Trade and Commerce) and Ben Cottam (FSB Wales) have all offered our help, advice and experience to the Welsh Government to shape the development of a new permanent Small Business Rates Relief scheme which will benefit all small businesses across Wales. As yet that offer has not been taken up.

We are concerned that a new SBRR scheme is being developed without input from the business community and, just like with the transitional relief scheme and the High Street Rates Relief scheme, it will be presented later this year as a “done deal” with no real opportunity for consultation.

We do hope that you will listen to our concerns and encourage the Welsh Government to take us up on our offer in order to help support, protect and encourage business in Wales.

Yours sincerely,

Sally Stephenson
Director

Agenda Item 3.7

P-05-726 Give rate relief to Local Authorities for Leisure and Cultural facilities.

This petition was submitted by Ryan Dansie, which collected 17 signatures.

Text of the Petition

Due to ever increasing budget pressures, Local Authorities in Wales are looking at creating charitable trusts to take over the running of public services like libraries and leisure centres.

The main benefit of such an arrangement is the rate relief which a charity would be entitled to. This amounts to moving money from the central pot of non-domestic rates and into the authorities budget. No public money is saved overall, although there are overheads involved in setting up such arrangements which can involve payments being made to specialist private consultants.

Pembrokeshire County Council is about to begin the process of creating a charity to take over the running of all leisure and cultural services in the whole county. It's almost inevitable that other local authorities in Wales will follow suit in order to deal with their own impossible budget pressures.

I call on the Welsh government to change the rules of rate relief so that all Local Authority run leisure and cultural facilities are covered on an equivalent basis to that which a charity would be entitled to. If this is not done then the end result of losing this business rate income will still happen through the creation of these charitable trusts, but we will be unnecessarily losing control of our public services in the process.

Please take away this unnecessary incentive to outsource our important leisure and cultural services.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Preseli Pembrokeshire
- Mid and West Wales

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



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MD/00388/17

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
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government.committee.business@wales.gsi.gov.uk

11 June 2017

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your letter of 24 May, enclosing further correspondence from Ryan Dansie regarding local authority funding and the petition proposing that the Welsh Government should give rates relief to local authorities for leisure and cultural facilities.

I appreciate the concerns raised regarding the challenges faced by local authorities in Wales, who are supported through a range of funding sources including specific grants, council tax, reserves and income from fees and charges, in addition to Welsh Government funding provided through the local government settlement. Financial planning within each individual local authority needs to take account of all of these and the needs and priorities of the local area.

The Welsh Government will also continue to work with local government to ensure that each authority makes the most effective and efficient use of all the resources available to it. There is clear evidence of the scope for local authorities to deliver administrative efficiencies and redirect the savings towards front-line services. The proposals set out in the White Paper on Local Government Reform are designed to build resilience and to support renewal in local government and equip local authorities with the tools they need to:

- address the ongoing financial challenges faced by public services;
- build a model of prudent public service delivery, which recasts the role and relationship between services and citizens; and
- support the delivery of better outcomes for citizens and enable the improvement of local areas.

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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 80

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.

Following the White Paper consultation on local government reform, I am continuing to work with local government to develop proposals for a resilient and renewed local government. Enhanced regional working will provide resilience in staffing and finance and enable the design of services at the scale necessary for them to face financial challenges. Local government does not need to wait to pursue these opportunities.

I recognise that leisure centres provide a vital service to local communities and I am aware that some local authorities have, or are considering, outsourcing these services this is in the remit of each individual local authority. The potential reduction in non-domestic rates is only one of a number of factors and drivers taken into account when considering adopting such an approach. Alternative forms of service delivery can have many potential benefits, such as reduced running costs and the provision of better or more community focussed services.

It is also important to recognise that whilst non-domestic rates liabilities for local authority owned leisure centres and cultural facilities are payable by individual local authorities, these authorities are in turn funded by the non-domestic rates raised in Wales. As non-domestic rates collected are redistributed in full to authorities via the local government settlement on an adult population basis, any relief scheme considered would not result in the simple netting-off of the rates liability for each premise in question. There would be complex issues relating to the even distribution of funding to local authorities, particularly given the variable approach taken to alternative forms of service delivery. In addition, if reduced non-domestic rates revenue was collected as a result of any such relief, there would be a commensurate reduction in the funding available to local authorities for the provision of local services.

As I mentioned in my previous correspondence, I am keen to explore how the non-domestic system could operate in future years and I am considering the potential mechanisms for improvement whilst also ensuring that the system is fair and meets the needs of the people in Wales I welcome the views of all interested parties in relation to this .

Best wishes,

Mark

Mark Drakeford AM/AC

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

Agenda Item 3.8

P-05-734 Ban Letting Agent Fees to Tenants

This petition was submitted by Shelter Cymru, which collected 328 online signatures.

Text of the Petition

We, the undersigned, call on the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to end the unfair practice of charging letting agent fees to tenants.

Earlier this year Shelter Cymru campaign supporters mystery-shopped letting agents across Wales and found that more than half (55%) are not advertising fees on their websites as required by law. The study found that a tenant could pay between £39.99 and £480 for the same service depending which agent their landlord had chosen to go with.

The reality is that there is no such thing as consumer choice in tenants' fees, and a real risk that tenants and landlords are being double-charged for the same service. We believe that Wales should follow Scotland's example and ban fees to tenants. The private rented sector in Scotland is still going strong and three-quarters of Scottish agents say the ban has had no impact, or a positive impact, on their business.

Welsh letting agents are enjoying a business boom thanks to Rent Smart Wales which is encouraging smaller landlords to sign up with agents. However, extortionate letting fees are pushing tenants into debt and making it harder for local authorities to prevent homelessness. Please act now to give a fair deal to Wales' growing numbers.

Assembly constituency and Region.

- Swansea West
- South Wales West

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



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref CS/00765/17

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
97 Pleasant Street
Morriston
Swansea
SA6 6HJ

Mike.Hedges@assembly.wales

20 June 2017

Dear

Thank you for your email of 23 May asking if there is there an update on government action regarding letting agent fees.

I am considering this issue in the round to include all fees on tenants: letting agent fees, landlord fees and fees charged by any third party to tenants. My officials have already commissioned research to further inform us about the practice of charging fees to tenants and the impact it currently has. The findings of this research are expected by September. We will shortly be launching a consultation exercise aimed at landlords, letting agents, tenants and other stakeholders.

The findings of this research and consultation will inform our actions, including legislative proposals.

Yours sincerely

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

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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.

Agenda Item 3.9

P-05-751 Recognition of Parental Alienation

This petition was submitted by Families Need Fathers Both Parents Matter Cymru having collected 2,058 signatures – 752 on paper and 1,306 online.

Text of the Petition

We call upon the Welsh Assembly to persuade the Welsh Government to protect children and young people in Wales by formally recognising 'Parental Alienation' as a form of emotional abuse of children. We further call upon the Welsh Government to take specific actions to reduce the impact of Parental Alienation on children and their families.

Additional Information

We propose the following action by Welsh Government

- Recognise 'Parental Alienation' as emotional abuse of children with a definition incorporating the one given by the Ministry of Justice (paragraph 1) here <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/164983>)
- Commission and fund mandatory training for professionals including but not Social Work and Cafcass Cymru staff, in recognising Parental Alienation including pathways to protect children from harm.
- Establish and fund a national campaign to inform children and families about Parental Alienation and the harm that it causes.
- Place a duty on Welsh Ministers to act to protect children from abuse and harm where Parental Alienation has been identified.

Parental Alienation has been defined by the Ministry of Justice as:

‘In cases where parents are separated, parental alienation refers to a situation in which one parent (usually the parent with whom the child lives) behaves in a way which creates anxiety in the child, so that it appears the child is opposed to living or spending time with the other parent.’

This definition is taken from the first paragraph of the Government's response to Mr. Darren Towill's petition. <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/164983>

CAFCASS in England have already recognised Parental Alienation as an abuse of children. CAFCASS CEO Anthony Douglas stated in an article in the Telegraph online dated 12th Feb 2017 about Parental Alienation that "It's undoubtedly a form of neglect or child abuse in terms of the impact it can have".

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/02/12/divorced-parents-pit-children-against-former-partners-guilty/>

Assembly Constituency and Region.

- West Cardiff
- South Wales Central

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-05-751
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/00733/17

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Tŷ Hywel
Cardiff Bay
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government.committee.business@wales.gsi.gov.uk

23 June 2017

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your letter of 18 May following the Petition Committee's consideration of my response to the 'Recognition of Parental Alienation' petition at its meeting of 9 May. I have noted the dissatisfaction with my response raised by Committee members and the petition sponsor, Families Need Fathers Both Parents Matter Cymru, in the enclosed letter.

CAFCASS Cymru and its practitioner staff fully understand that children can be subject to emotional harm when one parent alienates the child against another parent. I am sure you will be fully aware that safeguarding and the protection of children are fundamental features of social workers' training and the Continuing Professional Education and Learning (CPEL) framework equips practitioners with the knowledge and skills they need to work in complex situations. Private law cases often involve disputes between parents over child arrangements; social workers and practitioners, as professionals, are experienced in handling disputes of varying levels of severity. Social workers are supervised by senior staff in their organisations, this provides an additional level of scrutiny to support safe and robust practice.

CAFCASS Cymru practitioners have a range of tools they can use to support their work. One of these is the Child and Adolescent Welfare Assessment Checklist (CAWAC); this is an academically validated tool in which all CAFCASS Cymru practitioner staff receive accredited training. The CAWAC has been developed to assess the psychological impact on the child living in a context of inter-parental conflict (i.e. where the conflict is frequent, intense and poorly resolved). The CAWAC also helps to identify situations where a child as evidenced through their responses, has been negatively influenced against a parent.

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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.

In recognition of the importance of this issue, 'implacable hostility' as a practice area has been incorporated into CAFCASS Cymru's learning and development plan. The learning and development plan is reviewed and refreshed on an annual basis.

Data collected by CAFCASS Cymru does not identify specific themes or behaviours; therefore information on the number of cases where implacable hostility features is not available.

My view and that of the Family Justice Network in Wales remains that the existing regulatory and legal framework contains provisions to deal appropriately and effectively with these behaviours. The family court's primary concern when making decisions is always focussed on the welfare of the child.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Carl Sargeant'.

Carl Sargeant AC/AM

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

Agenda Item 3.10

P-05-711 Ensure Disabled People's Housing Adaption Needs Are Adequately Met.

This petition was submitted by the Whizz-Kidz Cardiff Ambassador Club, having collected 30 online signatures and 95 paper signatures – a total of 125 signatures.

Text of the Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to commit to ensuring that disabled people in Wales do not have to wait for more than three years to receive the essential housing adaptations/houses they need and to work with local authorities to ensure staff dealing with adapted housing cases are adequately trained and accountable to ensure individual needs are met.

Additional information

Some of the Young Ambassadors at the Whizz-Kidz Cardiff club have had long struggles to get their housing needs met. There is a lot of inconsistency in dealing with cases and one young person in the group has not been able to live with their parents for over 7 years while they wait for a suitable house. We believe this is unacceptable and with more consistency and accountability when dealing with cases and better staff training the situation can be improved.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- N/A

P-05-711 Ensure Disabled People's Housing Adaption Needs Are Adequately Met – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 06.07.17

Dear Kathryn,

Thank you for your follow-up correspondence.

We are delighted that the new framework *ENABLE – Support for independent living*, which simplifies the processes for adaptations in the home, is being rolled out for a better home environment for disabled people. We are also pleased that your frontline staff and delivery team will be trained to serve the best possible care and support to help meet the needs of individuals.

As it stands, we are satisfied with the relevant actions and policies implemented by the Cabinet.

In the meantime, we will pass this on to our service users and ask for their feedback on the new framework, and we are confident the Cabinet will welcome their feedback too.

Many thanks for receiving our petition and informing us of changes to meet the needs of disabled people at home.

Regards

Jo

Agenda Item 3.11

P-05-712 A Welsh Government Department for Europe Would Ensure a Clear, Strategic and Accountable Voice for Wales in Ongoing Negotiations.

This petition was submitted by Tegid Roberts, having collected 22 online.

Text of the Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to create a Department for Europe as a matter of urgency, tasked with understanding and developing a strategy for Wales' continued engagement with the EU and our future relationship with the European partners.

Since the Brexit referendum the UK Government's response has been slow and ambiguous – A Cabinet office unit for Brexit was initially proposed then abandoned to be replaced with the new post of “Minister for Brexit”, a role seemingly bereft of clear objectives, and led by an MP who has spent the last 20 years on the back benches.

In Wales the Welsh Government response has been muted to say the least and it is time now that Wales itself took action so that negotiations between the UK and the rest of the EU work smoothly and that Wales – a net beneficiary of EU membership – has a decisive role in shaping our future relationship with the EU. As things currently stand, England and Scotland dominate all negotiations with the wider EU and without a concerted strategic plan of action from the Welsh government, this situation is likely to continue.

This Department should have a strong Cabinet Secretary with experience of working in Europe who can work across all departments. The Secretary should be supported by a cross-party committee to scrutinise all areas of current engagement and to help devise what our future relationship with the EU should look like. This committee should in turn be advised by a group of external expert advisors brought in from legal, economic, business, agricultural, cultural, and academic sectors.

A Welsh Government Department for Europe would ensure a clear, strategic and accountable voice for Wales in ongoing negotiations. We also need a strong voice in Europe to make sure that we continue to benefit and contribute to the areas we are already involved in and to develop relationships with the EU in sectors that we are not currently fully engaged with post Brexit.



Eich cyf/Your ref: P-05-712
Ein cyf/Our ref:FM -/00584/17

David Rowlands AM
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
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government.committee.business@wales.gsi.gov.uk

3 July 2017

Dear David,

I am writing in response to Mike Hedges' letter of 18 May, written in his capacity at the time of Chair of the Petitions Committee, requesting my response to specific comments raised by Tegrid Roberts in relation to a petition by him to the National Assembly for Wales Petitions Committee. His petition calls for a Welsh Government Department for Europe to ensure a clear, strategic and accountable voice for Wales in ongoing negotiations on the UK's departure from the European Union (EU). My response to each comment raised by Mr Roberts is set out below:

- 1. I would like to know how many staff have been allocated full time to the Brexit project in Wales as there is a danger that it could be under resourced. Brexit will touch many of the devolved areas the Welsh government and Welsh Parliament concern themselves with. They also have direct interaction at the Brussels level.**

The Welsh Government took early action following the referendum to establish a dedicated European Transition Team which leads the development of strategic policy and co-ordinates Welsh Government directorate work on Brexit. The team currently comprises 17 staff, and was built on what was an existing small EU Policy Branch. The new team works closely with the existing team in Brussels, who are working on transition matters in addition to conducting ongoing EU business. We see a continuing important role for the team in Brussels, in particular as negotiations with EU partners develop, though we do not yet know details of how the negotiations will be conducted and what our involvement in them will be. Within Legal Services, a small legal team has also been established since the referendum to support EU Transition work. More broadly, Welsh Government directorates are prioritising existing resources for dealing with specific Brexit issues. A wide range of staff are working on issues related to European transition alongside delivery of the overall programme for government, and specific commitments within it, as set out in Taking Wales Forward. As such it is impossible to separately identify numbers or costs of all staff working directly on European transition. There is, though, substantial staff resource committed across wide work areas including Environment and Rural Affairs, Welsh European Funding Office, and Economy and Infrastructure.

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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.

- 2. I am still concerned that a dedicated Minister has not been allocated to a specific Brexit department. Mark Drakeford though extremely able is also responsible for other important areas of government in Wales.**

I am satisfied at this point that the structures we have set up are appropriate and flexible enough to meet the enormous challenges presented by leaving the European Union. The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government, Mark Drakeford AM, has played an influential role on the Joint Ministerial Committee (EU Negotiations) which for all its frustrations remains the main forum for the Devolved Administrations to take our issues on Brexit directly to the UK Government. He has also chaired our European Advisory Group, through which we have benefitted from advice from a range of individuals with extensive relevant expertise. It is not just the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government who is involved. Other Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers lead on the Brexit aspects of their respective portfolios and all Welsh Government Directorates are appropriately involved in this work.

- 3. I would like to better understand if the WG has done a detailed SWOT analysis of Brexit as the report you have forwarded does not cover this most basic of analysis.**

The White Paper Securing Wales' Future focused on a number of strategic areas where potential impacts of Brexit were identified as particular risks. These potential risks included: the loss of access to the single market and possible consequences related to international trade; reducing the access to workers and skills needed for businesses and public services as a result of restrictions to migration from the EU/EEA; cuts to the levels of funding available to Wales for rural development, regional economic development and other areas as a result of the loss of funding currently received from the EU; constitutional issues and the risk of a 'power grab' from the UK Government; the threat of removing or watering down social and environmental protections; and the potential 'cliff edge' if transitional arrangements are not put in place at an early stage of the negotiations.

These reflected early work undertaken by policy departments last year to ensure our preparedness for the inter-governmental discussions in the UK aimed at developing a UK negotiating position. This analysis resulted in the development of six strategic priorities – reflecting our assessment of cross-cutting risks and opportunities, and taking account of known vulnerabilities and also strengths in Wales – through consideration at the Cabinet Sub-Committee on European Transition. This work did not end with the publication of the White Paper, and continues to develop and be refined. As such, the analysis and evidence underpinning our position is more advanced than a crude 'SWOT' analysis.

We are undertaking a fresh risk assessment exercise as we move into the next phase of the work following the triggering of Article 50 and the start of the negotiations with EU partners, and have committed to share further information with the External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee once this exercise is complete.

4. Given that the JMC process has been shown to be flawed by evidence given by Prof Drakeford to the Brexit Parliamentary select committee how does the WG expect relations between the WG and the UK Brexit departments to work in future.

I have stressed on a number of occasions to the Prime Minister and others that we must be fully involved in forming the UK's negotiating position, and Ministerial colleagues and officials have been equally clear with their UK Government counterparts. We remain committed to seeking common ground and a collectively agreed negotiating position for the UK as the negotiation phase of our exit from the EU progresses but there is still a need for considerable clarification and discussion on a range of points. This will include our involvement in the direct EU negotiations.

We have made it clear that we must be a part of these negotiations in particular within devolved areas of competence in Wales. Our position is that we should have a seat at the table at the negotiation on devolved matters and observer status at the negotiations as a whole.

On 15 June I launched a policy document, *Brexit and Devolution*, which provides a blueprint for renewing the UK's constitutional arrangements post-exit. The Devolved Administrations and UK Government (UKG) will need to find new ways of working together to enable agreements to be reached on common approaches or 'frameworks' in areas where this is achieved now through our membership of the EU. Crucially, this must be through agreement, not imposition by UKG. Existing inter-governmental mechanisms are not fit-for-purpose to enable such agreements to be reached, nor to resolve disagreements or disputes.

The document sets out a number of proposals to support this, including: criteria for identifying where new UK frameworks relating to devolved areas may be appropriate; developing new ways to seek agreement on areas where reserved powers and devolved powers are inter-connected, and devolved administrations have a strong interest in UKG policy responsibilities; and the creation of a new 'UK Council of Ministers' involving the UKG and the three devolved administrations to provide the forum for discussing and agreeing frameworks, which would then be binding.

5. Given that Brexit and the great repeal bill now introduces a further challenge to the Welsh Assembly sovereignty on devolved matters how will the department mitigate these.

I wrote to the Prime Minister after the General Election asking for urgent clarification of her intentions in respect of the so-called Great Repeal Bill. In particular, whether as a part of any Bill, the UK Government will seek to modify the devolution settlements. I have made clear repeatedly the Welsh Government's willingness to work with the UK Government and the other devolved administrations to establish new policy frameworks on matters hitherto governed by EU regulation where such frameworks are necessary to prevent the introduction of friction within our own internal market. If the UK Government attempt to take powers to *impose* frameworks in respect of matters within devolved competence, or to place new and continuing constraints on the National Assembly's legislative competence in this regard we will have no choice but to oppose such steps.

Our preferred option remains a UK Repeal Bill which properly recognises and protects the devolution settlement; we will continue to argue this forcefully in bilateral discussions with the UK Government and in the Joint Ministerial Committee. We have however also been considering the issue of our own legislation. It would be premature to bring forward such legislation before we have sight of the Repeal Bill, but if we are not satisfied when we see the Bill that the UK Government has fully taken on board our concerns, then we will have to look further at other options, including our own legislation.

I hope this response is of use in setting out the Welsh Government's position and approach on issues related to this petition. I will continue to make regular oral and written statements to the Assembly to update on the Welsh Government's work to secure the best outcome for Wales as the UK withdraws from the EU.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carwyn Jones', with a stylized, flowing script.

CARWYN JONES

Agenda Item 3.12

P-04-667 – A Roundabout for the A477/A4075 Junction

This petition was submitted by Pembroke Town Council, having collected 115 online signatures and 482 paper signatures.

Text of the Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to replace the Fingerpost Junction on the A477/A4075 with a roundabout – The current road configuration has not resolved the problems on this dangerous stretch of road.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire
- Mid and West Wales



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-667
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/06711/16

David Rowlands AM
government.committee.business@wales.gsi.gov.uk

21 July 2017

Dear

David,

Further to my letter of 21 October last year regarding Petition P-04-667: Roundabout for the A477/ A4075 junction, I am writing to provide you with an update.

We have now received the Stage 4 Safety Audit report, however, we have some further details to discuss with the original designer before the audit process is completed.

The improvements at this junction have all been designed and constructed in accordance with standards and guidance set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. The original concerns from RSA1-3 have been resolved, however, the report highlighted some unusual vehicle manoeuvres at the junction and we need to understand why these actions are occurring.

Therefore, we will be undertaking further surveys at the junction to monitor and consider what further action, if any, is required.

*Yours ever,
Ken*

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

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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-04-667 Roundabout for the A477/ A4075 Junction – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 31.08.17

Good Morning Kayleigh

I would be grateful if you could forward the comments below at the meeting of Friday 1st September.

Comments from Councillor Keith Nicholas: The problem with the junction is that when tankers are waiting to cross the junction and waiting to join the carriageway towards Carmarthen the carriageway heading to Pembroke Dock is blocked.

With a Petrochemical refinery close by using a high volume of petrol tankers this is clearly dangerous especially when travelling up the hill towards the fingerpost the junction is hidden for a fair distance.

Comments from Councillor Rose Blackburn: When looking towards the right, the main road has a dip which gives the impression that the main road is clear.

The island is not wide enough. If the lorry cab is there, the trailer is blocking half of the main road.

Comments from Councillor Dennis Evans: There was a line in the attached letter which mentioned “unusual vehicle manoeuvres” I can only assume that refers to the central part of the junction which in the opinion of many that it is not wide enough for some of the bigger / longer lorries to get fully into the space provided. This is obviously a safety issue because the speed generated on that section of the road can be excessive.

Another safety concern is the absence of any lighting. At night the junction is pitch black so the installation of lights will undoubtedly help. In my opinion the junction should be changed into a roundabout.

Comments from Councillor Aden Brinn: With regard to your email relating to the Fingerpost the concerns have already been addressed in our petition. Nothing has changed, the area is still one of danger for motorists and can be resolved by the introducing of a roundabout there. . I do not have statistics of accidents etc but the police would be able to assist in this regard.

Pembroke Town Council is still under the impression that this junction is very dangerous and is an accident waiting to happen, and whilst there may not be a fatality recorded at this precise junction, there has been plenty of near misses. The lack of visibility whilst a large vehicle is entering out onto the main road, with traffic coming at you at speed is very dangerous and the only way forward for the safety of road users would be to install a roundabout there, therefore reducing speed and increasing the visibility.

Kind Regards

Suzie Thomas
Town Clerk – Pembroke

Agenda Item 3.13

P-05-701 Road Safety Improvements Along the A487 Trunk Road between Cardigan and Aberystwyth, to Include Passing Places

This petition was submitted by Maldwyn Lewis, having collected 93 signatures online and 750 paper signatures.

Text of the Petition

Following numerous incidents along the A487 Trunk Road particularly between Cardigan and Aberystwyth, I petition the Welsh Assembly to make improvements along this coastal road, including passing places at various locations, in order to alleviate the build up of traffic behind slower moving vehicles. I'm of the opinion that having strategically located passing places would reduce driver frustration and risk taking when attempting to overtake.

When this Fishguard to Holyhead Trunk road is closed due to an incident, the alternative diversion route is along minor roads which can be a nightmare especially when Heavy Goods Vehicles, buses and coaches meet each other in opposite directions.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Mid and West Wales
- Ceredigion



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-701
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/02141/17

David John Rowlands AM
Chair - Petitions Committee

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

14 July 2017

Dear David

Thank you for your letter of 19 June regarding Petition P-05-701 Road Safety Improvements Along the A487 Trunk Road between Cardigan and Aberystwyth, to Include Passing Places.

All of the sites listed in my letter of 2 March will be considered as part of the Speed Limit Review. This is a three year study looking at all aspects of road safety across Wales. The outcomes of the approximately 200 sites reviewed this year will be programmed for work over the next few years with priority work commencing in 2018/19.

The Pinch Points programme has almost completed the first phase of the feasibility process. The A487 has been included in the Mid-Wales programme for safe overtaking opportunities, where we will consider the most appropriate sites for improvement.

Further specific details will become available when we have completed the review in early 2018. We will also be able to inform Ceredigion County Council which sites are being taken forward in the Pinch Points programme.

Yours sincerely

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

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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.

Agenda Item 3.14

P-05-714 Include a Mynachdy and Talybont Station as Part of the Cardiff Metro Proposal

This petition was submitted by Dr Ashley Wood, having collected 137 paper signatures.

Text of the Petition

We, the undersigned, call on Cardiff Council and the Welsh Government to bring forward plans to include a Mynachdy and Talybont station as part of any Cardiff Metro proposal.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Cardiff North
- South Wales Central



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-714
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/02140/17

David J Rowlands AM
Chair - Petitions Committee

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

12 July 2017

Dear *David,*

Thank you for your letter of 19 June regarding the committee's consideration of petition P-05-714 for a new station in Gabalfa to be included as part of the Stage 1 Assessment on New Rail Stations Prioritisation and, if further, separate, consideration will be given to potential links to the South Wales Metro in the area covered by the petition.

A methodology has been developed for assessing proposals for new rail stations which can be applied in a cost effective and proportionate way. The assessment methodology follows a three stage approach. Therefore the costly work of producing detailed cost estimates, and timetable modelling for new station proposals is only undertaken for our highest priorities.

The first stage in this work programme has now been undertaken. The regional stations identified for further assessment were the ones that scored the highest across all the criteria tested. A new station at Gabalfa was given consideration in the sifting process and scored well against the criteria

I have enclosed a copy of the Stage 1 Assessment Report on New Rail Stations Prioritisation which includes the transport case assessment criteria.

The stage two assessments will look in more detail at the strength of the financial and economic case for a new railway station, including advice from Network Rail on deliverability. This is an on-going and iterative process and once the assessment of the priority list is completed there will be an opportunity to then consider the next group of regional stations.

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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 South Wales Metro is designed so it can grow to make it even more accessible to passengers. At its core, the Metro is about faster and more frequent services on an extendable network to link communities that are currently poorly served by regional public transport. As the Metro grows, areas that are not currently served will be able to access the network.

Although we do not presently have any plans to include a Mynachdy and Talybont station as part of the South Wales Metro proposals, Metro Phase 3 will see future rail extensions and further bus integration measures to extend the reach of the Metro to deliver a truly joined up regional network that will enable a wide range of benefits.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ken Skates'.

Ken Skates AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Seilwaith
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure

New Rail Stations Prioritisation – Stage 1 Assessment Report

Issue

1. This reports sets out the process for identifying new rail station schemes, proposed assessment and prioritisation process.

Background

2. Despite the Welsh Government's call for the devolution of funding for rail infrastructure, the responsibility for its funding remains with the UK Government.
3. From time to time the UK Government makes funding available for new stations through specific funding calls. Stations where there is an existing developed business case are at an advantage in such calls. We have therefore developed a methodology to accelerate the development work that is needed and develop a project pipeline so that, when UK funding opportunities occur, there are Welsh projects at an appropriate stage of development that can be submitted for consideration and stand the best possible chance to secure funding.
4. It should be noted that any proposal is only likely to be successful in securing funding with a sound business case. By undertaking this work we are increasing the ability of station proposals to be in a position to benefit from funding calls.

Station identification

5. Proposals for new stations have come forward from a range of sources. Following a public consultation exercise, a list of potential locations was published in the National Transport Finance Plan, 2015 along with a commitment to develop assessment criteria (NTFP Reference RI10) and, using those criteria, develop a prioritised list.
6. The National Transport Finance Plan stated:

RI10 - Develop assessment criteria and using those criteria, a prioritised list of new station proposals for further consideration (in relation to securing funding from the rail industry).The following stations will be assessed as part of this process:

- *South East Wales: Roath Park/Wedal Road, Crwys Road, Gabalfa, Ely Mill/Victoria Park, Caerleon, Llanwern, Newport West (on Ebbw Line), Crumlin, St Mellons, Newport Road/Rover Way, Brackla, St Fagans, Magor.*
- *South West Wales: Templeton, St Clears, Cockett, Landore.*
- *Mid Wales: Bow Street, Carno, Howey, Abermule.*

- *North Wales: Broughton, North Wrexham, Deeside Industrial Park/Northern Gateway (as alternative to upgraded Hawarden Bridge Station), South Wrexham, Llangefni.*
7. The proposals for new stations have been identified by a number of reports and studies including Cardiff Capital Region Metro proposals, SWWITCH Rail Strategy (November 2013) and report of the North East Wales Integrated Transport Task Force (June 2013). Some further locations have also been identified through correspondence with the Welsh Government from interested parties and through work on the South East Wales Metro. These have been added to the stations identified in the National Transport Finance Plan to give a list of 46 stations for consideration:
- South-East Wales: Abertillery, Brackla, Bridgend College, Cardiff Airport, Carleon, Coedkernew, Crumlin, Crwys Road, Cwmbach North, Ely Mill/Victoria Park, Gabalfa, Glyncoch, Herbert Street Bridge, Hirwaun, Llanwern, Loudon Square, Magor, Maindy, Mamhilad, Miskin, M4 J34, Nantgarw, Newport Road/Rover Way, Newport West, Roath Park/Wedal Road, Sarn Park, Sebastopol, Splott, St Athan, St Fagans, St Mellons, Upper Boat, New line through Llantrisant, Talbot Green, Beddau.
 - South-West Wales: Cockett, Landore, St Clears, Templeton.
 - Mid Wales: Bow Street, Carno, Howey, Abermule
 - North Wales: Broughton, Deeside Industrial Park/Northern Gateway, North Wrexham, South Wrexham, Llangefni.

Methodology

8. A methodology has been developed for assessing early stage proposals for new rail stations to identify which stations should be initially prioritised for further work.
9. The assessment methodology follows a three-stage approach. This means that the more costly work on producing detailed cost estimates for a new stations and timetable modelling is carried out in a focused manner. The assessment criteria is set out in Appendix 1.
10. The Stage 1 assessment involves an initial sift of the stations identified using the Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG) criteria and consideration of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 goals.
11. Stations prioritised from the Stage 1 assessment will be taken forward to Stage 2. This will involved the application of a standard assessment model to assess the anticipated demand, a preliminary assessment of the strength of the financial and economic case for a new station and advice from Network Rail on deliverability. This stage will be done using in-house resources and some technical assistance may be required.

12. Stations prioritised from Stage 2, will then be taken forward to Stage 3. This will involve development and assessment of the highest priorities, including a WeITAG Stage One Report, business case and Network Rail's Governance for Railway Investment Projects (GRIP) process.

Stage 1 Assessment

13. The Stage 1 assessment has been undertaken using the 'transport case' criteria (Appendix 1). Stations have been selected to be taken forward on a regional basis. The regional stations identified for further assessment were the ones that scored the highest across all the 'transport case' criteria tested.
14. Based on this initial sift, it is proposed that the following stations are taken forward for further assessment:
- South East Wales: Ely Mill/Victoria Park, Llanwern, Newport Road/Rover Way and St Mellons.
 - South West Wales: Cockett, Landore, St Clears.
 - North Wales: Deeside Industrial Park/Northern Gateway, North Wrexham, South Wrexham, Llangefni.
 - Mid Wales: Bow Street.

Next Steps – Stage 2 Assessment

15. The stations prioritised from the Stage 1 assessment will be taken forward to Stage 2, and following this, they will be developed further in Stage 3. It is anticipated that Stage 2 will take around 6 months to complete. Once the assessment of the priority list is completed there will be an opportunity to then consider the next "batch" of regional stations, if appropriate.

Appendix 1 – Assessment Criteria

			Criteria
STRATEGIC CASE - the case for change and the fit with other policies	A prosperous Wales	TRANSPORT CASE - the social, environmental and economic impacts of the change	Accessing major ports, airports and rail terminals
			Linking main centres of population and economic activity
			Links areas of high economic inactivity to employment sites
			Benefit to Cost Ratio
	A resilient Wales		Forecast Passenger Numbers
	A healthier Wales		Improved access to services
	A more equal Wales		Reduces cost of public transport services
			Improves access in areas with no bus transport alternative
	A Wales of cohesive communities		Improves access in areas with poor access to services
	A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language		Ensuring end to end connectivity
A globally responsible Wales	Improved access to tourist sites and cultural attractions		
	Air Quality Improvement		
	Noise Reduction		

	Criteria
FINANCIAL CASE - is the proposed spend affordable?	Scheme Cost
	Match Funding
DELIVERY CASE - Can the scheme be delivered?	Land Ownership
	Environmentally sensitive area
	Physical geometry/topography
	Design/Build Complexity
	Network Rail/TOC Support
	Delivery Stage

Consider constraints e.g. Environmental (SSSI, SAC), Physical (Geometry of scheme), Technical (see complexity - approvals required, specialisms)

P-05-714 Include a Mynachdy and Talybont Station as Part of the Cardiff Metro Proposal – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 30.08.17

Dear Kayleigh,

Thank you for your e-mail, our response to the correspondence is below. Please let me know if you would like me to clarify any points.

We are disappointed that there are not any plans to include a Mynachdy Talybont station as defined in this petition (P-05-714) as part of the South Wales metro proposals. Although we take a positive view that a new station in the Gabalfa area has been included in the Stage 1 Assessment Report on New Rail Station Prioritisation and was scored well, although not sufficiently to meet the transport case criteria to progress to stage 2 at this time. We would hope that the proposed Gabalfa station, given its scoring, will be included in the next batch of regional station for consideration and ultimately prove successful.

Further to this, we would like the the 'Mynachdy-Talybont' site proposed in this petition to be considered for the location of any future station in the Gabalfa area. Noting:

- o Its proximity to the Llys Talybont Student residences, with the potential to provide direct transport link to the main university campus at Cathays which will contribute to sustainable transport goals.
- o Its proximity to University Hospital of Wales (5 to 10 minute walk) with existing pedestrian and cycle links to this location. The UHW site is not currently served by a station on this line, a station would provide a sustainable transport alternative to car use for staff and patients travelling from the valleys and north Cardiff. It is likely to help alleviate the parking and traffic problems on the site and congestion on local roads.
- o Increasing congestion along the north road corridor linking the City Centre, the north of Cardiff and onward into the valleys. A station at this location would provide a non-road based alternative and helping alleviate traffic and dependence on road transport.
- o The reduction and loss of localised bus services servicing the Mynachdy and Gabalfa estates over recent years.

- o The existing National Rail land adjacent to the railway line at this location that potentially could be used for a station.

Regards,

Ashley

Agenda Item 3.15

P-05-738 Public Petition for the Dinas Powys By-Pass

This petition was submitted by V P Driscoll, A R Robertson and R T Harrod, having collected 3,305 signatures – 2,572 on paper and 733 on-line.

Text of the Petition

We the undersigned, call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to provide the necessary funding and support for the construction of a Dinas Powys By-Pass.

Assembly Constituency and Region.

- Vale of Glamorgan
- South Wales Central

P-05-738 Public Petition for the Dinas Powys By-Pass – Correspondence from the Vale of Glamorgan Council to the Chair, 10.07.17

For the attention of Mr Mike Hedges

Dear Sir

Petition P-05-738 Public Petition for the Dinas Powys By-Pass

Thank you for your letter dated 19th June 2017 in respect of the petition for the Dinas Powys By-pass.

I can advise you that the current position on this matter is as detailed below.

The Dinas Powys by-pass was originally proposed in the late 1970s and a by-pass route protected in the former South Glamorgan Structure Plan (1977) and in the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Adopted Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011. However, the route was not included as protected in the current Local Development Plan 2011-2026. Notwithstanding this fact, I do consider that the route identified in previous development plans for a Dinas Powys bypass is still largely protected as a consequence of the area to the east of Dinas Powys, having been designated as a Green Wedge in the approved Local Development Plan. This designation seeks to prevent the coalescence of the settlements of Dinas Powys, Penarth and Sully and as a result, land would be available should a scheme be brought forward for a new road.

It is considered that whilst the provision of a by-pass would address through traffic congestion issues on Cardiff Road within Dinas Powys, any scheme should also seek to address the primary issues which cause the congestion itself. A key issue in this regard is the constraint imposed by the Merrie Harrier and Barons Court junctions, which impact on the ability of traffic to flow in a west-east direction along Cardiff Road and beyond. The provision of a by-pass alone, without wider consideration of traffic flows at the Merrie Harrier and Barons Court junctions and would merely transpose the traffic problem to another location.

The Council has been awarded funding by Welsh Government to undertake a study of the Dinas Powys Transport Network in January 2017 and a WelTAG Stage One assessment has been carried out by the Council's chosen consultants Arcadis Consulting Limited. That report is due to be considered by the Council's Cabinet in late July 2017. At this meeting consideration will be given to approve options to take forward the issue of the Dinas Powys Transport Network to WelTAG Stage Two

Report. The Council has also been awarded funding from Welsh Government in 2017 to undertake the WelTAG Stage Two work. It is expected that subject to Cabinet approval in late July that this piece of work will be completed in Spring 2018. A further report will be presented to Cabinet in Spring 2018 with recommendations for a way forward, and potentially a further funding request to progress solutions for Dinas Powys to WelTAG Stage Three. The options being considered involve all modes of transport to improve the Network.

I hope that this appraises you of the current situation and please do contact me if I can be of any further assistance on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Cllr John Thomas
Leader
The Vale of Glamorgan Council

P-05-738 Public Petition for the Dinas Powys By-Pass – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 31.08.17

Response to communication from Cllr John Thomas, Leader of Vale of Glamorgan Council to the Petitions Committee:

Petition P-05-738 Public Petition for the Dinas Powys By-Pass

The response from Vale of Glamorgan Leader, Cllr John Thomas is both noted and appreciated.

We are particularly pleased to note that, despite the route of the by-pass being protected by the:

- a.) Former South Glamorgan Structure Plan(1977)
- b.) Unitary Development Plan (1996 – 2011)

it was not included in the Local Development Plan developed by the previous administration and signed off in June 2017, Cllr Thomas still considers that the ‘route is still largely protected’ and that ‘land would be available should a scheme be brought forward for a new road.’

We agree that the constraints imposed by the Merrie Harrier and Barons Court junctions need to be addressed as a primary issue associated with any road work improvement on the traffic situation along the Dinas Powys traffic corridor. That is why we have offered our own re-modelling of the Merrie Harrier junction as a suggested proposal to the Council.

It involves replacing the current sets of traffic lights with two roundabouts, one at the junction of Redlands Road and Cardiff Road, Dinas Powys and the other beneath the Merrie Harrier public house. It would not require the demolition of any houses but may require some of the currently vacant land of the former petrol station.

We pressed the former Administration in the Vale to purchase this land (£160,000) but agents acting for the owners, the NHS, were told the Vale wasn’t interested and anyway didn’t have the money. This was just prior to the Vale spending £400,000 on a wide pavement from the Merrie Harrier to the entrance of Llandough Hospital.

The land was eventually sold to a developer in April 2017 and it’s understood they are planning to submit an application to build a small row of houses on the site, regardless of access. We are pleased, however, to note in correspondence to us

from Cllr John Thomas, Leader of the Council that, if needed, the site can be purchased under a Compulsory Purchase Order.

At the Cabinet Meeting of the Vale Council on 31st July, as flagged in the Leader's email, the Cabinet received the WelTAG Stage One assessment from the appointed consultants, Arcadis Consulting Limited.

There are several points arising from that meeting that we've felt necessary to draw to the Council's attention:

1. Reference was repeatedly made both in the Arcadis report and the report to Cabinet from within the Council to the content of the WelTAG 2016 report. However the reports then referred to a Review Group that had been put in place. But this process only exists in the WelTAG 2017 draft document and has never been used by any other project.

It implied, at page eight of the document (attached) that the Review Group should assess each of the options presented, make the necessary decisions and take the actions needed at the end of that WelTAG stage.

After considerable inquiries we discovered that Officials compiled the Review Group.

Cllr Thomas has since confirmed that the decision of all stages of WelTAG will be made by the Cabinet and not the Review Group.

2. The composition of the Review Group includes representatives of WAG and the Vale Council plus Network Rail, Arriva Trains, local bus companies and Sustrans. We have requested that our member Roger Pattenden B.Sc MICE would be accepted to represent the 72% car commuters and work drivers from the area. We were told no pressure group could hold a position but at present our Vale Councillors are challenging this decision as those listed above are also pressure groups for the interests they represent.

The Cabinet decided to refer the matter of the way forward to Stage 2 to the Scrutiny Committee for Environment and Regeneration for further discussion and advice. It is due to form part of the Agenda of the meeting to be held on September 14. Representatives of our Steering Group are hoping to register to address the Committee, which is also to receive a presentation from Arcadis Consulting.

3. There's been a further complication surrounding proposed applications for housing on two sites, one by Barratt Homes for 230 houses on the site of the former St Cyres School and the other, for 70 houses by United Welsh Housing at the rear of Caerleon Road. Consultants for both developers have stated their intention of having both their construction vehicles and eventual home-owners using Murch Road from the already officially over-capacity A4055 Cardiff Road traffic lights next to Dinas Powys Junior School.

Our understanding is that these developments could fall foul of several parts of the recently adopted Local Development Plan (LDP). We are hoping in the circumstances these developments will be postponed until they can use an entrance onto the proposed By-pass that would, regardless of route, pass between the St Cyres site and Sully Road.

I trust this brings matters up to date and that your Members will agree to keep a watching brief on the situation.

Yours

Rod Harrod

Also for Petitioners Vince Driscoll & Andy Robertson

Dinas Powys By-Pass-Steering Group

Agenda Item 3.16

P-05-755 Call on Welsh Government to make the A48 safe for all road users and pedestrians at Laleston, Broadlands and Merthyr Mawr

This petition was submitted by Ian Spiller having collected 997 signatures.

Text of the Petition

We the undersigned call on the Welsh Government and Bridgend Country Borough Council to make the A48 from Ewenny Roundabout, Merthyr Mawr, Broadlands to Laleston safe for ALL road users and pedestrians.

The A48 in Bridgend is an accident hotspot, over the last year 2 lives have been lost, and too many minor accidents and near misses have happened, involving cars, pedestrians and cyclists.

Despite this from Island Farm the A48 remains a 60mph road, the cycle/pathway finish at Newbridge Fields from Broadlands.

No Safe Crossing exists from the public footpaths linking Newbridge Fields/Craig-y-Parcu nature serve to the rear of Broadlands on to Merthyr Mawr from the designated trail.

Broadlands children are expected to walk on a 60mph road to get to Brynteg School, or cross the road risking their lives on a daily basis.

Some road users pay little attention to the NO RIGHT TURN at Merthyr Mawr junctions creating an additional hazard for all users.

Bridgend County Borough Council have linked improvements to the long awaiting Island Farm Development.

Join the campaign today, how many more families will be shattered before action is taken?

Additional information

We call for an

- Immediate reduction in speed from 60mph to 40mph
- Create safe crossing on the A48 from Newbridge Field/Craig-Y-Parcau nature reserve on the Merthyr Mawr Trail

- Extend Cycle/Footpath to enable our children to walk safely to school
- Explore options such as a central island for preventing people from ignoring the no turning right from Merthyr Mawr junctions.

Funding must be made immediate available to prevent any further tragedies occurring.

Assembly Constituency and Region.

- Bridgend
- South Wales West

P-05-755 Call on Welsh Government to make the A48 safe for all road users and pedestrians at Laleston, Broadlands and Merthyr Mawr – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 1.06.17

Many thanks for your reply.

As another child was knocked off their bike last week on the same stretch of the a48 I consider that any action other than to implement these improvements is negligent.

I would welcome the petitions committee attending the location to see the situation for themselves.

Kind Regards

Ian Spiller

Laleston Community Councillor

Agenda Item 3.17

P-05-732 Unacceptable Waiting Times for NHS patients in A & E Wreccsam/Wrexham Maelor Hospital.

This petition was submitted by Charles Dodman, which collected 14 signatures.

Text of the Petition

I am petitioning the Welsh Assembly to debate and discuss and implement measures to resolve unacceptable waiting times for the Welsh people at A & E Wreccsam/Wrexham Maelor Hospital. Welsh people look undermined and demoralised by this unacceptable situation.

Assembly Constituency and Region.

- Wrexham
- North Wales



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-732
Ein cyf/Our ref VG/01469/17

David John Rowlands AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
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21 July 2017

Dear David

Thank you for your letter of 19 June about Petition P-05-732 regarding A&E waiting times in Wrexham Maelor Hospital.

Unfortunately, we have not seen the sustained improvement against emergency care access targets we had hoped at Wrexham Maelor Hospital, which like other Welsh emergency departments, experienced a deterioration in performance over the winter period. Performance at the hospital has, however, been generally more resilient than over the previous two winters.

In order to improve performance and escalation processes the Welsh Government has commissioned the NHS Wales Delivery Unit to undertake a six-month targeted intervention at both Wrexham Maelor and Ysbyty Glan Clwyd hospitals, which will focus on improving senior decision making processes to limit risks to patient safety and enable better patient flow through the hospital sites, at times of peak pressure. A key component of this work will relate to emergency care access targets.

Alongside this work, the Welsh Government has sought assurance about the role of Clinical Directors in the escalation process, the use of data intelligence to inform capacity and demand planning and on the impact actions from the local operational plan are having on delivery.

Officials continue to engage with the health board and seek assurance on improvement through daily urgent care conference calls. The Deputy Chief Executive of NHS Wales has

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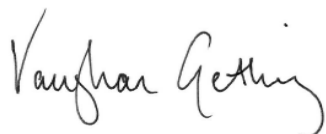
Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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.

also been holding summit meetings with each health board to discuss unscheduled care improvement actions over recent weeks.

I hope my response has helped to clarify the position on this issue.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd, Llesiant a Chwaraeon
Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport

**P-05-732 Unacceptable Waiting Times for NHS patients in A & E
Wreccsam/Wrexham Maelor Hospital – Correspondence from the Petitioner to
the Committee, 1.09.17**

This type of response gives actions being taken but fails to demonstrate that they are having an effect

In fact, the Cab Sec seems to be suggesting that they are not working!

While this goes on, real people are waiting for longer than they need to, often in discomfort and without dignity

I have seen and am seeing no solutions to this ongoing problem – the whole point of the petition is invoke a debate on these issues so I suggest this is now done in the spirit of cross party agreement to air the problems and seek out real action and a meaningful drive to improve this situation.

P-05-736 To Make Mental Health Services More Accessible.

This petition was submitted by Laura Williams, which collected 73 signatures.

Text of the Petition

To make mental health services more accessible the Government should ensure that no-one who approaches a mental health service should be turned away without help. Anyone who goes to their GP or any other health care professional who is experiencing a mental health problem should be automatically referred to the crisis team who should act immediately. The onus should not be on the individual to contact the Crisis Team on their own. There should also always be a one to one therapy option, rather than group therapy.

Many people will know I haven't had an easy time with life or with mental illness; I suffer with depression, anxiety, PTSD and OCD. Recently, I've hit rock bottom and have screamed for help but have been let down by mental health services who I thought would help, instead they have let me down majorly.

I want my experience to help others around Wales and to get the help they need.

Assembly constituency and Region.

- Cardiff West
- South Wales Central

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd, Llesiant a Chwaraeon
Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: VG/01350/17
Eich cyf/Your ref: P-05-736

David John Rowlands
Chair - Petitions Committee
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6 July 2017

Dear David,

I am writing following the letter of 2 June about petition P-05-736 which relates to mental health services and for sending me the additional correspondence from Hafal and Laura Williams. I have noted their comments.

Mental health remains a priority for the Welsh Government. Spending on mental health in Wales is protected by a ring-fence and we spend more on mental health services than any other part of the NHS. We have increased funding for mental health services to £629 million this financial year.

Our current priorities for mental health can be found in the 2016-19 Delivery Plan for *Together for Mental Health*, our 10-year mental health strategy for Wales which was developed following extensive public consultation. The delivery plan includes specific objectives on access to services and outcomes for service users. Hafal and other mental health organisations in Wales, as well as service users are represented on the National Partnership Board which oversees progress against the strategy. I also meet with Hafal and the wider mental health third sector organisations through my regular meetings with the Wales Alliance for Mental Health.

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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.

I hope you will understand I am unable to comment on PIP procedures as the UK Government, through its Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is responsible for social security benefits and as such is not devolved to the Welsh Government.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Vaughan Gething'.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd, Llesiant a Chwaraeon
Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport

**P-05-736 To Make Mental Health Services More Accessible –
Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 1.09.17**

To whom it may concern,

Here are my comments for the Petition meeting for 19th September regarding my petition and also the response I had from the health secretary, upon reading the letter I do not understand the response even though I have seen that you fund mental health in Wales more than any other services within the NHS I have seen with my own eyes that in fact mental health services are being reduced and as you can see Hafal have also agreed with me on every point on my petition I find that your response was not good enough as you didn't address any of my points on mental health and how you could improve them, therefore I am not happy with the response and I will continue to push my petition until I see improvements within the mental health services Hafal have also stated how people are being turned away and how more funding needs to be invested in mental health services. As a person with mental health problems myself I have seen first hand how mental health services are struggling and there isn't enough support out there for people with mental health problems just like with crisis team a mental health patient should not have to ring the crisis team themselves upon seeing a doctor and just given a leaflet on what their number is and what they do more needs to be done to help people who are seeking help within their GP or other mental health services. The waiting lists for mental health appointments is also very long, I hope you find my comments very helpful, the Petition committee has also agreed that mental health services in Wales does need to be looked at so I hope that we can work together to improve services across Wales and see a major improvement so more people can get help and not feel turned away. I hope that the health secretary could look at my petition again and Hafal response and see that we need improvement I look forward to hearing further, also if you would like further evidence then I am more than happy to come in and talk to committee and health secretary to explain further about my Petition.

Laura Williams

P-05-754 Lack of support for children with disabilities at crisis (there is a crisis team but do not support children with disabilities)

This petition was submitted by Rebecca Weale having collected 200 signatures.

Text of the Petition

I am trying to highlight the need for the Cwm Taf children's crisis team to recognise there is a vital need for children with disabilities to be supported through crisis and have the right to be treated as any other child would.

I am a mother of four children, my middle son Tom has numerous needs, severe learning difficulties, autism, a mood disorder as well as other additional health issues. Tom hits a crisis point every now and again. Which involves increase in aggression, shouting louder than usual, hurting himself as well as others, as well as many other changes in behaviour. Tom has extremely limited communication skills and is unable to tell us what is wrong or what we can do to help. We have been at crisis point with Tom who is now 15yrs old and on high doses of medications, many times over the years and it's astonishing how things have not progressed with regards to support for children with disabilities while at crisis. Tom is currently at a crisis point and has been for some time. We as a family have had very little if any support to help him through this difficult period. I have been made aware there is a children's crisis team however they do not support children with disabilities! Surely a child at crisis no matter if they have disabilities or not, is still a child at crisis. In fact I may be wrong but in some cases may need more crisis support. I can not believe at this day in age this divide is still acceptable. I am trying to highlight the need for the Cwm Taf children's crisis team to recognise there is a vital need for children with disabilities to be supported through crisis and have the right to be treated as any other child would.

Assembly Constituency and Region.

- Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney
- South Wales East

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd, Llesiant a Chwaraeon
Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref : P-05-754
Ein cyf/Our ref : VG/01470/17

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

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

25 July 2017

Dear David,

I am writing following the letter of 19 June following my response of 10 May regarding Petition P-05-754 and the Committee's further questions about CAMHS.

The committee asked '*whether it is typical across Wales for children with learning disabilities not to be able to access CAMHS crisis care teams*'. CAMHS crisis teams are for acute mental illness crisis. If a child has this then they should be seen, irrespective of whether they have a learning disability (LD) for an initial assessment and treatment if it is thought they have mental illness or disorder. All Health Boards have enhanced capacity for treatment of LD following additional funding in 2011.

The committee also asked '*whether there are any plans to expand access to these services*'. The Together for Children and Young People (T4CYP) Neurodevelopment work-stream is beginning to identify the support needed for LD children. We would hope that the evidence produced by the work-stream will be used by local multiagency planning groups to deliver their responsibilities to the families and children of this group, supported by Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act and Wellbeing and Future Generations Act.

In addition to the work of T4CYP, the cross government learning disability transformation programme will review existing policies, frameworks and provision and develop proposals for action at local, regional and national level designed to strengthen service delivery and improve its sustainability. The review will look at health, social care, education, employment, skills and housing services for people with Learning Disabilities. It will also consider funding arrangements, commissioning and workforce themes for example and a detailed implementation framework will be produced.

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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.

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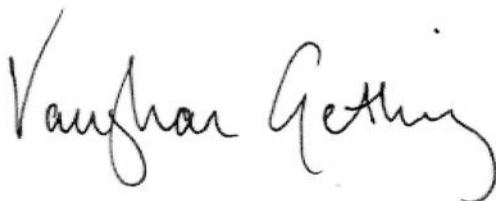
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Health Boards and local authorities will shape their care and support services based on the needs of their population. They have recently published the first combined population assessment reports on the health board footprint. These assessments provide a clear and specific evidence base to inform a range of planning and operational decisions, including in relation to needs for mental health services in an area.

Regional partnership boards, made up of the health board, local authorities, third sector and others in each region must prepare area plans by April 2018 setting out how they will respond to the care and support needs identified in the population assessment. This will include consideration of specific core themes including children and young people and mental health.

The needs of children with a learning disability, including mental health needs should be met where possible by generic services. Where these needs extend to more specialised or acute support there must be arrangements in place to facilitate access to that support. Through the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act we are driving integration across statutory partners to ensure the pathways to specialist health and social care are in place for individuals.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Vaughan Gething'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Vaughan' and the last name 'Gething' clearly distinguishable.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd, Llesiant a Chwaraeon
Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport

Agenda Item 3.20

P-05-766 Make a Vegan Option Compulsory In Public Canteens

This petition was submitted by Rachel Turnbull, having collected 118 signatures online.

Petition text:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to make including a vegan option obligatory for all public canteens or services in Wales where they have the powers to do so.

The Portuguese Parliament has approved an obligatory vegan option in all public canteens (e.g. schools, universities, prisons, hospitals) – a huge step for vegan catering for all. Over 5% of the population is vegan and growing. A vegan diet is healthier, it conserves resources and protects the planet, above all it's cruelty free. United Nations has called upon us to consume more plant based foods. Animal products are linked to the increase in cancer and heart disease.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Newport West
- South Wales Central



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: LG/01695/17

David Rowlands AM
Petitions Committee Chair
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

18 July 2017

Dear David

Thank you for your letter of 6 June to Vaughan Gething AM, regarding making a vegan option compulsory in public canteens (Petition P-05-766). I am responding on behalf of the Welsh Government.

The Welsh Government sets strategic direction for public sector food service provision through relevant nutrition and healthy eating standards, which support the wellbeing of our people and the sustainable use of natural resources.

The National Procurement Service (NPS) also offers a facilitation role in sourcing healthy and sustainable foods for the public sector in Wales.

However, the management of meal provision in public canteens is a matter for the managers of those services to decide, not the Welsh Government, in accordance with the law and in response to customer needs.

Lesley

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
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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.

Agenda Item 3.21

P-05-750 For single use items: introduce a Deposit Return System for drink containers and make fast food containers and utensils compostable

This petition was submitted by Marine Conservation Society having collected 1,993 signatures.

Petition text

The Marine Conservation Society calls on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to act upon the globally responsible Wales goal within the Well Being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015. Build on the excellent results achieved by the carrier bag charge, by implementing two further actions that would help Wales to achieve a zero waste, circular economy. Namely:

1. Introduce a deposit return system in Wales for all single use beverage containers such as glass and plastic bottles and aluminium cans.
2. Legislate that all fast food containers and utensils, as well as take-away cups and lids, if not reusable or refillable or collected for recycling in store, are fully compostable.

Deposit return systems are already in operation in over 40 countries around the world and have been proven to reduce litter, increase recycling by creating a more certain supply of affordable, high-quality materials, reduce costs for Local Authorities and create jobs.

Fast food wrappers and takeaway cups are a common litter item on our streets and making them refillable/reusable, easily recyclable or compostable would reduce litter.

Manufacturing new drinks containers and fast food containers and cups use up huge amounts of energy, which contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. The more we recycle, and the less we litter, the better for our environment and our economy.

Assembly Constituency and Region.

- Ross-on-Wye
- Herefordshire



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-750
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/01388/17

David Rowlands AM
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
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government.committee.business@wales.gsi.gov.uk

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July 2017

Dear David

Thank you for your letter of 19 June 2017 regarding petition P-05-750 for single use items to introduce a Deposit Return System for drink containers and make fast food containers and utensils compostable.

The review of our waste strategy will look at how well Wales has performed against targets set in Towards Zero Waste (TZW) and against the delivery of the Well-Being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WFGA).

The 2013 Waste and Resources Action Programme/Ellen MacArthur Foundation report 'Wales and the Circular Economy - Favourable System Conditions and Economic Opportunities' identifies potential savings to the Welsh economy. The report suggests how this may contribute towards a resource efficient and low-carbon economy, reducing costs and supply chain risks, while generating economic and social value. This will be considered as part of the review and as part of the refresh of the Waste Strategy.

The evaluation and subsequent refresh of the waste strategy will help identify opportunities for the public and private sector to maximise financial, social and environmental benefits as a result of adopting changes in practices under the banner of circular economy and resource efficiency.

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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 Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) research will consider examples of EPR approaches for the life cycle of packaging from design through to end of life. It will also investigate the feasibility and options for developing EPR schemes for food and drink related packaging. This will include research on Deposit Return Systems and Reverse Vending Machine Systems. The research will also appraise the costs and benefits of different interventions from increasing recycling and reducing littering to the costs of collection and treatment of food and drink related packaging.

The research will also assess the likely impacts of EPR schemes, both positive and negative as well as any potential unintended consequences thus ensuring alignment to the Well-being Goals to balance short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long-term needs. The research will be carried out with consideration of the Welsh Government's key policy drivers and legislative priorities.

We will continue to work with stakeholders to develop stakeholder engagement plans to ensure meaningful and early engagement with key stakeholders. We will carry out a stakeholder engagement event prior to the consultation on the refresh of TZW.

Our programme for Wales '*Taking Wales Forward*' sets out how Government will deliver more and better jobs through a stronger, fairer economy, improve and reform our public services, and build a united, connected and sustainable Wales. The refresh of the Waste Strategy and the EPR research will focus on ensuring the ambitious aims of the Programme for Government are met through the development of new policy and targets.



Lesley Griffiths AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs

Agenda Item 3.22

P-05-760 Stop Compulsory Welsh Language GCSE

This petition was submitted by Emma Williams having collected 128 signatures.

Petition text:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to change their policy and allow children to drop the Welsh language at GCSE (Key stage 4). Give our children back their choice, do not make the Welsh Language compulsory.

Assembly Constituency and Region.

- Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire
- Mid and West Wales

P-05-760 Stop Compulsory Welsh Language GCSE – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Cabinet Secretary for Education, 5.7.17

Dear Ms Williams,

Thank you for taking the time to reply to Mike Hedges letter concerning the petition seeking to ask the Welsh Government to stop the compulsory study of welsh as Key Stage 4. I had been asked for my comments on your letter, hence this reply.

I was educated in Wales prior to the implementation of compulsory welsh at Key Stage 4 (being 40 myself) and am aware of how long this policy has been in place. However I do not know what this policy has cost us financially and educationally, and whether it has had a significant effect on numbers of people speaking Welsh, which I assume was the original purpose. From very brief research on statswales.gov.wales it appears that the percentage of people who speak welsh has actually declined in this time.

I am Welsh having been brought up in Swansea and now living in Tenby, but neither myself or my family have ever been Welsh speakers. I do fully support the right of Welsh speakers in Wales to be able to educate their children through the medium of welsh. However I do not believe that the compulsory education of Welsh should come at all cost. As we are struggling to fund Education as well as the NHS, social care etc in Wales.

We are in a situation in Wales at present where many English-speaking Welsh people are feeling discriminated against and fear speaking up for anxiety of being labelled racist or discriminatory.

Children educated via the medium of Welsh receive more funding per capita than their English medium counterparts for one. Every teacher and LSA is having to train in the Welsh language regardless of whether they are required to teach welsh. Parents who have chosen to send their children to English medium schools are also paying for this. If we have a never ending education fund then this would not be an issue but I currently feel that Welsh is being put above all else in our education system.

As I believe you recently commented yourself in relation to the initiative with computer coding in schools, our children are going to have to compete in a global market. As a direct result of forcing the continued education of Welsh in senior schools we are becoming more insular, our children no longer have access to

foreign languages and are being put at a disadvantage to other counties. Greenhill school our local senior school no longer offers Spanish or German and is not longer able to offer any modern languages at A's or A level. Please also see bbc extract below.

I am already aware from my time as a governor in the local primary school that due to the amount of time having to be spent on Welsh in primary school numeracy is suffering, but heads have no control to improve due to edicts from above.

“ Schools must continue to ensure continuity and progression in learning and that all learners have access to the whole programme of study” I am not entirely sure what this comments means, but given that Welsh schools are falling behind and recent targets to improve (i.e PISA score) have been dropped I fear that our children are falling behind in all areas. Funding is at crisis point with Greenhill school losing 19 staff this year and I am deeply concerned about the future of Education in Wales.

I am afraid that I do not agree with your comment about increasing demand for Welsh language skills from employers, this may be the case in the public sector where the welsh assembly is stipulating this requirement. Council and Government jobs are then main jobs specifying a requirement for welsh, this is not representative of the rest of the country where employers are desperate for highly skilled, educated, qualified people regardless of language backgrounds.

I have always worked in the Construction and Engineering sector, this Industry is a very large employer in Wales with no requirement for welsh, but with a dia need for engineers with good maths and science.

18% of people in wales speak Welsh , but 100% of us are paying for access to Welsh be it via Education, translation costs, training, duplication of all documentation or multiple phone lines.

On a personal note, my son is considering studying to become a Vet, he will therefore have to study the individual sciences, and some universities are asking for a modern foreign language at GCSE. With the requirements to continue with Welsh as well as other compulsory subjects this will not fit into the timetable. At this age, a child should be free to make choices that have a direct impact on their future.

I fear that it is underestimate how forcing welsh on people in general is also causing animosity and taking away people's freedom of choice. I would like to pose a question to you, with the number of welsh speakers in Wales being around 18%, what % of the Welsh Assembly are Welsh speakers? Is this representative of the people?

Kind Regards

Emma Williams

Extracted from : <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-40457984>

Teachers in Wales are "extremely worried" about the future of foreign languages in the country, according to a British Council survey.

A Welsh Government spokesman is quoted as saying "We believe that languages play an important part in giving a young person a well rounded education, to support them in becoming global citizens, who are able to communicate effectively in other languages and appreciate other cultures."

Agenda Item 5

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

Document is Restricted