

# Concise Minutes – Petitions Committee

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Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 4 – Tŷ Hywel

Meeting date: Tuesday, 3 November  
2020

Meeting time: 09.02 – 10.04

This meeting can be viewed

on [Senedd TV](#) at:

<http://senedd.tv/en/6479>

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## Attendance

Category	Names
Assembly Members:	Janet Finch–Saunders MS (Chair) Michelle Brown MS Neil McEvoy MS Jack Sargeant MS Leanne Wood MS
Witnesses:	
Committee Staff:	Graeme Francis (Clerk) Mared Llwyd (Second Clerk) Steffan Lewis (Deputy Clerk)

## 1 Introduction, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting.



**Senedd Cymru**  
**Welsh Parliament**

## **2 New petitions**

### **2.1 P-05-1024 For Environmental awareness to be made compulsory and a key module within Schools in Wales for all years (Primary and Secondary Education)**

The Committee noted the petition and the correspondence received. Given that the Children, Young People and Education Committee is currently actively scrutinising the Curriculum and Assessment Bill and the content of the new Curriculum for Wales, the Committee agreed to raise the petition with that Committee. In doing so it agreed to thank the petitioner and close the petition.

### **2.2 P-05-1030 Preventive measures on wireless devices in nurseries and primary schools**

The noted the correspondence received and the assurances around research and guidance provided by the Minister. The Committee concluded that there is likely to be little prospect of making further progress on this issue and agreed to thank the petitioner and close the petition.

### **2.3 P-05-1031 Inhibit the diversion of Heavy Goods Vehicles through residential areas**

The Committee noted the petition and the correspondence received. It agreed, given the specific circumstances which led to the petition being raised, that the issues would be more appropriately taken up by local Members. Therefore the Committee agreed thank the petitioner and close the petition.

### **2.4 P-05-1033 Abolish Education Workforce Council (EWC) registration fees and completely reform its organisation**

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to write to the Education Workforce Council to ask:

- for its response to the petition and the further issues that have been raised by the petitioner; and,
- for further information about the vision of the organisation, how it supports teachers and school staff to perform their roles and for notable achievements since it was established.

## **2.5 P-05-1034 Re-open theatres and performance venues in Wales in time for the festive season**

The Committee noted the petition and the Minister's response to it. It concluded that the circumstances in relation to the measures in place to control the virus have unfortunately changed since the petition was submitted and there is now little realistic prospect of venues being able to open for festive performances. Therefore the Committee agreed to close the petition.

In doing so, members wished to write back to the Welsh Government to note the importance of allowing such venues to reopen quickly when the circumstances allow it.

## **2.6 P-05-1035 Allow birthing partners to be present at scans, the start of labour, birth and after the birth**

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and noted the importance of the issues being raised. Members agreed in light of the Minister's indication that updated guidance on this issue is currently being produced, that they would await a further update and a copy of the guidance before deciding what further action it would be appropriate to take on the petition.

## **2.7 P-05-1036 Allow support bubbles during lock down**

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed await the imminent publication of new detailed guidance on the rules that will apply from 9 November, with a view to close the petition if the issues raised by the petition no longer apply, or return to the petition at a future meeting if there are still issues regarding further consideration.

## **2.8 P-05-1037 Allow children to enter lockdown areas to continue to train with their existing sports clubs**

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and welcomed the changes made by the Welsh Government to allow children to travel outside of local lockdown areas prior to the introduction of the 'fire break' lockdown. The Committee agreed to write back to the Deputy Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport to ask whether he

anticipates that this ability would continue to apply in the event that future local lockdowns are required.

### **3 Updates to previous petitions**

#### **3.1 P-05-882 Transforming the response for older people experiencing domestic abuse – a call for action**

The Committee considered an update on the petition and, given the ongoing work and focus on this issue outlined by the Older People's Commissioner, the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner for their work to research and highlight this important need.

In doing so the Committee agreed to write to the Welsh Government to highlight that work is needed, especially given the current circumstances to ensure that the group of vulnerable people affected by this issue have access to the information they need to keep them safe in light of ongoing levels of digital exclusion.

#### **3.2 P-05-926 To Provide a Chronic Fatigue Department in Wales**

The Committee considered an update on the petition and noted that the NICE guideline for chronic fatigue syndrome is currently under review and an updated version due to be published in April 2021. In light of this, the Committee agreed to close the petition and write to the petitioner to thank her for her engagement with the process, and to encourage her to contribute to the review of the NICE guidelines. The Committee also agreed that it would highlight the petition and the evidence received to NICE.

#### **3.3 P-05-1014 Give Dental practices and their staff the “key worker” status**

The Committee considered an update on the petition and in light of the satisfaction of the petitioner with the response from the Minister, the Committee agreed to close the petition.

### **3.4 P-05-984 Stop discriminatory remote consultations for incinerator applications during the Covid-19 Pandemic**

The Committee considered an update on the petition and in the light of the latest correspondence received, the Committee concluded that there is little further progress which could be made at this time. The Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

### **3.5 P-05-898 Ban the use of A boards in Wales**

The Committee considered an update on the petition and, in light of the advice being provided by RNIB and Guide Dogs Cymru and the Minister's commitment that concerns about A boards will be considered further as part of work on the Social Model of Disability, the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner.

### **3.6 P-05-935 Ban Pavement Parking – Pavement Promise**

The Committee considered an update on the petition and noted the recent recommendations produced by the Welsh Pavement Parking Taskforce and that these have been accepted in full by the Welsh Government.

In light of the intention to provide more powers to local authorities to carry out civil enforcement of pavement parking, the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner for her campaigning on this issue, making her aware that the issues she raises around enforcement, reporting and awareness raising will be considered by the implementation group with local government and stakeholders.

### **3.7 P-05-944 Reverse the cuts to commuter train services in North East Wales**

The Committee considered an update on the petition and agreed to keep a watching brief until the end of this Senedd and to revisit the petition if rail services return to a standard timetables in this period.

### **3.8 P-05-920 School Budgeting for ALN**

The Committee considered an update on the petition and agreed write back to the Minister for Education to ask for:

- an outline of the next steps for Additional Learning Needs funding following the recent publication of the Review of school spending in Wales and in light of the concerns expressed by the WLGA; and,
- the information about what funding is provided to support the diagnosis of additional learning needs.

### **3.9 P-05-988 Give key worker children equal access to their schools and teachers**

The Committee considered an update on the petition and, in light of the assurances provided by the Minister for Education about prioritisation of the children of critical workers and the satisfaction of the petitioner, the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner for raising this issue.

### **3.10 P-05-992 We call on the Welsh Government to create a common body of knowledge about Welsh history that all pupils will learn**

The Committee agreed to note the correspondence received in advance of the Plenary debate on the petition scheduled for 4 November and that it would return to the petition following that debate.

### **3.11 P-05-1000 Make it compulsory for Black and POC UK histories to be taught in the Welsh education curriculum**

The Committee agreed to note the correspondence received in advance of the Plenary debate on the petition scheduled for 4 November and that it would return to the petition following that debate.

### **3.12 P-05-910 Make thrombectomy available 24-7 for Welsh patients**

The Committee agreed to note the actions currently being taken to further develop Mechanical Thrombectomy services, including developing services in Cardiff & Vale University Health Board and the expansion of availability of other services to ensure they are available 24/7.

Given that work is currently underway to progress these actions the Committee concluded that there may be little further that could be achieved at the current time, and agreed to close the petition.

### **3.13 P-05-936 Offer Bowel Cancer Screening After the Age of 74**

The Committee considered an update on the petition and agreed to write back to the Welsh Government to ask:

- For further details as to how the bowel screening programme is being re-instated and current progress on this; and,
- to seek an update on any further progress made in relation to self-referral for people over the age of 74.

### **4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the following business:**

The motion was agreed.

### **5 Committee Working Practices**

The Committee considered an analysis on the recent increase in the usage of the Senedd's petitions process. The Committee agreed some adjustments to its approach to considering petitions to support it to identify those issues that would benefit from more detailed scrutiny, and to seek to resolve most petitions within a shorter period of time given the proximity of the next Senedd elections.

The Committee also noted the significant number of petitions that are currently exceeding the 5000 signature threshold and agreed to consider this issue further, including options for amending the threshold on a temporary or permanent basis, at its next meeting.