



Ein cyf/Our ref DET/02851/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair, Petitions Committee

16 November 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Petition P-05-1048 ahead of the Petition Committee's formal consideration.

The Welsh Government's approach to tackling the Covid-19 pandemic has been, and will continue to be, cautious and based on the latest advice from SAGE and the World Health Organisation.

The local lockdowns and fortnight-long national firebreak lockdown were introduced to save lives and prevent the NHS from being overwhelmed. Cases of coronavirus have been rising sharply in Wales as we head into winter. While the national and local measures put in place across Wales have helped to keep that spread under check, there was a growing consensus that additional action was needed. Considerations have had to be made around the cumulative impact of all the actions we might make. It is the combined impact of numerous activities which makes the difference, not the risk posed by any one activity.

This requires a national effort, which means compromises and commitment from us all. Services which were essential to protect the health of the public during the period of the short lockdown have remained open. Sport and leisure facilities were not considered to be essential at this stage, as it was still possible to exercise in public spaces outdoors during the short firebreak.

While we appreciate the impact these short-term restrictions have on the most vulnerable in our society, the cautious approach we have taken in introducing these measures is aimed at protecting those most at risk from the virus, including elderly people. We also have strong scientific evidence that the risks are lower for children, which has allowed us some flexibility in keeping some organised children's activities running.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

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

[Gohebiaeth.Dafydd.Elis-Thomas@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Dafydd.Elis-Thomas@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Dafydd.Elis-Thomas@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Dafydd.Elis-Thomas@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.

Following the end of the national firebreak a new set of national rules has been introduced, covering how people can meet and how the public sector and businesses operate. Further details of the new rules following the firebreak have recently been published on the Welsh Government's website and can be accessed via the link below.

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-regulations-guidance>

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elis-Thomas'.

**Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas AS/MS**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Diwylliant, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth  
Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism