

William Powell AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Your ref:
Our ref: PO/RB/SG

15 February 2016

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 3 February enclosing the report of the Petitions Committee on the review of the public petitions system. I am grateful to you and your committee for the work you have done on this review, and I am pleased that you have found that the petitions system is a valuable part of the Assembly's procedures.

I have brought your report and its recommendations to the attention of the Business Committee. However, as there is so little time remaining in this Assembly, I have asked officials to ensure that the relevant recommendations are brought to the attention of the new Business Committee at an early point in the next Assembly.

My initial view is that your report as a whole provides a useful way forward for improving the public petitions system, and making it more effective. However, I am somewhat sceptical of your recommendation that the Assembly's petitions system could be used for petitions on non-devolved matters. I believe that the new Presiding Officer will need to give careful consideration to both the resource implications of such a change, and the usefulness of the public petitioning the Assembly on matters over which it has no competence.

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg neu Saesneg/We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

At its meeting of 9 February, the Business Committee agreed to schedule a debate on your report for 2 March. I look forward to hearing Members' views through that debate, and am sure it will be valuable in informing the new Presiding Officer and Business Committee's consideration of your recommendations.



Dame Rosemary Butler AM
Presiding Officer