

Concise Minutes – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: Tuesday, 25 February
2020

Meeting time: 09.01 – 09.50

This meeting can be viewed
on [Senedd TV](#) at:

<http://senedd.tv/en/5910>

Attendance

Category	Names
Assembly Members:	Janet Finch-Saunders AM (Chair) Michelle Brown AM Neil McEvoy AM Jack Sargeant AM Leanne Wood AM
Witnesses:	
Committee Staff:	Graeme Francis (Clerk) Mared Llwyd (Second Clerk) Ross Davies (Deputy Clerk) Samiwel Davies (Legal Adviser)

1 Introduction, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

2 New petitions

2.1 P-05-938 Make Welsh universities consider the Welsh Baccalaureate as an A Level

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to:



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- note the work undertaken by the Children, Young People and Education Committee on the status of the Welsh Baccalaureate; and
- write back to the Minister for Education to ask for detail of how the work to compile a list of universities which accept the Welsh Baccalaureate in their offers is progressing, and ask for a response to the further points raised in the petitioner's correspondence.

2.2 P-05-939 Immediate embargo on new dog breeding licences, licence renewals and planning applications until regulations are fit for purpose and enforceable

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to await an announcement by the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs about the actions to be taken following the review of dog breeding regulations.

2.3 P-05-941 Biodiversity Remit for NRW

The Committee considered the petition for the first time and agreed to provide the detailed comments provided by the petitioners to the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs and Natural Resources Wales and request responses to the points raised, in particular the suggestion that explicit reference to biodiversity should be included within NRW's remit letter.

3 Updates to previous petitions

3.1 P-04-477 Support for the Control of Dogs (Wales) Bill

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to close the petition in light of the length of time that it has been under consideration and because legislative powers over this issue are now reserved to the UK Parliament under the Wales Act 2017. The Committee thanked the petitioner for raising this issue through the petitions process.

3.2 P-05-839 Adopt WHO Guidelines and Introduce a Clean Air Act for Wales

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to close the petition given that the Welsh Government is currently consulting on a Clean Air Plan and intends to publish a White Paper on a Clean Air Act before the end of this Assembly term. In light of the practical restrictions on passing legislation before the 2021 election, and the commitments made by the Minister, Members concluded that there is

little further that the Committee could achieve at this time. The Committee wished to thank the petitioners for their engagement and wish them well for the future.

3.3 P-05-895 Rosa's Legacy: Introduce a scheme to help people access veterinary care for their companion animals

The Committee considered further information and agreed to write to the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs to ask:

- how the Welsh Government responds to the recommendations contained within the letter from the Companion Animal Welfare Group Wales; and
- for an update on the work being done by the Animal Welfare Network Wales on veterinary provision, assistance and advice.

3.4 P-05-786 Save our Countryside – Revise TAN 1

The Committee considered the petition alongside [P-05-881 Fix our planning system](#) and agreed to await an announcement of the Minister for Housing and Local Government's decisions following the consultation on revisions to the housing section of Planning Policy Wales, which closed in November 2019 before taking any further decisions.

3.5 P-05-881 Fix our planning system

The Committee considered the petition alongside [P-05-786 Save our Countryside – Revise TAN 1](#) and agreed to await an announcement of the Minister for Housing and Local Government's decisions following the consultation on revisions to the housing section of Planning Policy Wales, which closed in November 2019 before taking any further decisions.

3.6 P-05-903 Filming and Recording of Council Meetings

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to await the publication of new Welsh Government guidance about increasing public engagement in the work of community and town councils, expected in March 2020.

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

The Committee noted the actions which commit to improving access to mental health services in the Together for Mental Health Delivery Plan 2019 – 2022, as recommended

in the Committee's [report](#) on this petition. Given that the Welsh Government has [accepted](#) the Committee's recommendations, and made a number of commitments to improve access to crisis care, the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner for her commitment to improving services.

3.8 P-05-764 Better Mental Health Services for Adults

Given that the Committee has published a [report](#) on improving mental health services and made recommendations which have been accepted by the Welsh Government, and because no further comments have been received from the petitioner, the Committee agreed to close the petition.

3.9 P-05-812 We call for the Welsh Government to encourage trusts to implement the NICE guidelines for Borderline Personality Disorder or justify why they do not do so

The Committee agreed to write to the Minister for Health and Social Services to ask:

- how the Welsh Government is considering recommendations recently produced in the [Royal College of Psychiatry's Position Statement on Personality Disorders](#); and
- what action the Minister can take against health boards which are shown not to "take full account of NICE clinical guidance."

3.10 P-05-902 Paternal Mental Health (New Fathers Mental Health)

The Committee noted that perinatal mental health is identified as a key priority in the Together for Mental Health Delivery Plan, which includes work in relation to supporting fathers. Given the satisfaction of the petitioner with the progress made, the Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner for bringing this issue forward.

3.11 P-05-860 Make curriculum for life lessons compulsory

The Committee agreed to close the petition in light of the work of the Welsh Youth Parliament on this subject, and to encourage the petitioner to engage with the Youth Parliament as part of their ongoing work.

3.12 P-05-861 Make political education a compulsory element of the new national curriculum

The Committee noted the work done by the Welsh Youth Parliament on life skills in the curriculum (including political education), the imminent full introduction of the new curriculum for Wales, and the inclusion of political education within the Welsh Baccalaureate, and agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner for her engagement.

3.13 P-05-879 Add Mental Health Education to the mandatory teaching curriculum for all schools in Wales

The Committee agreed to close the petition in light of the scrutiny which has been given to these issues through the Children, Young People and Education Committee's Mind over Matter inquiry, the increased priority given to mental health in the new curriculum, and the lack of a recent response from the petitioner. The Committee wished to thank the petitioners for their engagement and wish them well for the future.

3.14 P-05-888 Make GCSE Welsh Language compulsory in all schools in Wales

The Committee agreed to close the petition and thank the petitioner for raising this issue through the petitions process.

3.15 P-05-925 Don't leave Wales behind – teach menstrual wellbeing in schools

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to write back to the Minister for Education to share the concerns expressed by Endometriosis UK and ask for a response to the questions they raise in relation to how pupils will be informed about the menstrual cycle and menstrual wellbeing.

3.16 P-05-913 Creation of Lôn Las Môn Multi-Use Path

The Committee considered further correspondence and agreed to write to Network Rail to seek information about the current status of discussions over the future use of the line and the timescales in which any decisions will be reached.

3.17 P-05-887 Stop regional AMs elected to represent specific parties from defecting

Neil McEvoy and Michelle Brown declared the following relevant interest under Standing Order 17.24A:

They are both regional Assembly Members who are no longer members of the party that they were elected to represent.

The Committee agreed to close the petition, given that the Senedd and Elections (Wales) Act 2019 has been passed, and in light of the lack of contact with the petitioner.