



Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales

# Cofnod y Trafodion The Record of Proceedings

[Y Pwyllgor Deisebau](#)

[The Petitions Committee](#)

01/11/2016

[Agenda'r Cyfarfod](#)

[Meeting Agenda](#)

[Trawsgrifiadau'r Pwyllgor](#)

[Committee Transcripts](#)

## Cynnwys Contents

- 3 Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau, Dirprwyon a Datganiadau o Fuddiant  
Introduction, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest
- 4 Deisebau Newydd  
New Petitions
- 5 Y Wybodaeth Ddiweddaraf am Ddeisebau Blaenorol  
Updates to Previous Petitions
- 11 Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42 i Benderfynu Gwahardd y Cyhoedd  
o'r Cyfarfod  
Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to Resolve to Exclude the Public  
from the Meeting

Cofnodir y trafodion yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynnddi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal, cynhwysir trawsgrifiad o'r cyfieithu ar y pryd. Lle y mae cyfranwyr wedi darparu cywiriadau i'w tystiolaeth, nodir y rheini yn y trawsgrifiad.

The proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee. In addition, a transcription of the simultaneous interpretation is included. Where contributors have supplied corrections to their evidence, these are noted in the transcript.

**Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol**  
**Committee members in attendance**

Gareth Bennett <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a>   <a href="#">Biography</a>	UKIP Cymru UKIP Wales
Janet Finch–Saunders <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a>   <a href="#">Biography</a>	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Mike Hedges <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a>   <a href="#">Biography</a>	Llafur Labour
Neil McEvoy <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a>   <a href="#">Biography</a>	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales

**Swyddogion Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru yn bresennol**  
**National Assembly for Wales officials in attendance**

Kayleigh Driscoll	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Graeme Francis	Clerc Clerk
Lisa Salkeld	Cynghorydd Cyfreithiol Legal Adviser
Kath Thomas	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk

*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 09:00.*  
*The meeting began at 9:00.*

**Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau, Dirprwyon a Datganiadau o Fuddiant**  
**Introduction, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest**

[1] **Mike Hedges:** Can I welcome everyone to the meeting this morning? I just remind people that they're welcome to speak in either English or Welsh. Headsets are available for translation of Welsh to English. There is no need to turn off mobile phones or other electronic devices, but please ensure that any devices are on silent mode. There are no apologies and I can see that

everybody is present.

09:01

## Deisebau Newydd New Petitions

[2] **Mike Hedges:** That takes us on to the first item—new petitions. The first one is ‘Include a Mynachdy and Talybont Station as Part of the Cardiff Metro Proposal’. This is one we received two weeks ago, I think, from representatives of the university. We sent it to the Cabinet Secretary for infrastructure on 13 August. We’ve had a response and there’s a research brief that people have had an opportunity to read. We are considering it today and the petitioner has been informed but has not come back. Points for discussion: we’ve had the Cabinet Secretary’s response that states that Gabalfa is one of a number of possible new stations. I’m not an expert on that part of Cardiff, but my understanding is that Gabalfa and where they’re talking about are generally the same area. I look to two experts on Cardiff to—

[3] **Gareth Bennett:** Yes. Mynachdy and Gabalfa are at least adjoining—*[Inaudible.]*—part of Gabalfa, yes.

[4] **Mike Hedges:** We’ve not had a new station for some time. We can perhaps write back to the petitioners telling them that the proposal is one for Gabalfa and ask them if that meets their need. Just a personal view—and I’m sure people from Cardiff know Cardiff better than I do—but for the metro to work properly, you need lots of stations, but you don’t need too many too close together, otherwise it will be stopping all the time. So, it’s a balance. I would hope that they will think Gabalfa meets the balance. Shall we write to them and ask them that? Yes.

[5] The second one is ‘Free Train Transport for school pupils with Arriva Trains Wales’. We received that petition, again, a couple of weeks ago, and it effects mainly children—. The petitioners have children who attend a Treorchy school and use Arriva Trains to get there. We’ve had a response from the Minister who says it’s Arriva Trains’s decision. Shall we write to Arriva Trains asking them?

[6] **Neil McEvoy:** Yes.

[7] **Mike Hedges:** Yes. Apparently—and I stand to be corrected by somebody, which I will—Arriva Trains used to allow it and now they don't. That's what the petitioner tells us. So, shall we go back to them?

09:03

### **Y Wybodaeth Ddiweddaraf am Ddeisebau Blaenorol Updates to Previous Petitions**

[8] **Mike Hedges:** Updates on previous petitions: 'A Fair Deal for Forest Rallying in Wales'. This we had on 12 July, with 5,246 signatures.

[9] **Janet Finch–Saunders:** I think I'd better declare an interest, because I've signed that.

[10] **Mike Hedges:** Thank you. That's noted. I understand that the Motor Sports Association and Natural Resources Wales have reached an agreement and the petitioner has requested that the committee formally closes the petition. Shall we offer our congratulations to the petitioners on the successful outcome of their campaign and also the fact that submitting this petition probably played a part in that?

[11] **Janet Finch–Saunders:** Chair, I was going to say the same, really, because I know when this first came on the horizon, there was a lot of concern, because the rallying is really good for tourism, and there were lots of conflicting emotions on this. I really do think that bringing it to the Petitions Committee has helped their cause, and I'm glad about that.

[12] **Mike Hedges:** Yes. I think we've all got rallyers in our constituencies and our regions. I'm sure they came to see all of us; I certainly had a deputation come to see me regarding it. A lot of Wales is suitable for rallying. Okay, we'll chalk that up as a success.

[13] **Janet Finch–Saunders:** Yes, definitely.

[14] **Mike Hedges:** 'Review of Scalloping in Cardigan Bay': we had this petition on 12 July. I'm sure everybody's seen it, but a decision was published by the Cabinet Secretary yesterday. The Government have proceeded in introducing a flexible permit scheme for scallop fishing. Shall we send the Minister's response to the petitioners and ask them for their comments?

[15] **Janet Finch–Saunders:** I do have concerns about this. I think marine conservation in the scheme of things, with everything that's going on at the moment, is very much low down on the political agenda. I know there are a lot of concerns about this. I have raised previously with the Minister, about marine permit licences and enforcement, how we enforce when abuse takes place. In terms of marine environment, I do have concerns about this. I understand that there was a statement yesterday, but I think this is one I'd like to see staying open until we've tested it a little more.

[16] **Neil McEvoy:** I'd echo that, really. Reading the Minister's response, I would question if he knows what he's talking about, really, to be frank. I think we should invite him to the committee. I'd love to ask him a few questions about this.

[17] **Janet Finch–Saunders:** It's Lesley now, isn't it?

[18] **Mike Hedges:** Yes. Shall we ask the petitioners first for their comments? Then, if the petitioners are unhappy, and if we so desire, we'll invite the Minister and the petitioners along.

[19] **Janet Finch–Saunders:** Yes, I'd support that.

[20] **Mike Hedges:** Yes. Happy with that? 'Abuse of casual contracts in Further Education': this was submitted on 4 June 2013. The petitioner has expressed satisfaction with the Minister for Public Services' statement in July 2015 on the guidance on using non-guaranteed hours arrangements. I suggest we close the petition and again provide a copy of the guidance to the petitioner.

[21] **Janet Finch–Saunders:** Well, I think the response from Briony Knibbs is asking that the committee check that the guidelines referred to at the end of the statement have been drawn up, because that was July 2015, wasn't it, when this came back?

[22] **Mr Francis:** Yes, they were published in September of this year. So, there was quite a delay from the statement made by the Minister in the last Assembly, but the Public Services Staff Commission published those guidelines in September.

[23] **Mike Hedges:** So, if we send those to the petitioner, and unless the

petitioner comes back with any further comments, we'll close it. If they come back with further comments, then we'll decide how to take it forward.

[24] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Yes. There's some merit in this, of course, because how many times have we sat in Plenary decrying zero-hours contracts? Certainly, I don't think we should have a sector where it's considered okay to use them. So, I think, you know, again, they've come to the right place with the petition and I hope that it does allow some weight to be given to their argument.

[25] **Mike Hedges:** Okay. We'll ask for comments from them to see if they're happy with the arrangements published by the Public Services Staff Commission.

[26] 'Establish a Welsh Language Champion in our Communities in Wales': it was submitted on 23 February 2016—

[27] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** We've got a Welsh Language Commissioner, haven't we?

[28] **Mike Hedges:** Yes.

[29] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** I think, really, for me, I'd like to see her role, sort of, well supported, both in legislation and resources. I'm not really sure we need champions. I consider her, the Welsh Language Commissioner, to be the champion of the language. You know, she's got a function there—she just needs the support of us, really.

[30] **Mike Hedges:** Well, I think that we ought to write to the Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language to seek his views on progressing this. We may want to contact the Welsh Language Commissioner, depending on what reply we get from him. I think he's got to be our first port of call, hasn't he? Okay. Happy with that?

[31] 'School Times an Hour Later': we considered it on 13 September and we've written Cabinet Secretary for Education to ask if she will consider issuing guidance to local authorities and whether the Welsh Government would support further research. We've had a response from the Cabinet Secretary. The petitioner was informed that the petition would be considered by the committee, but had not responded when papers to the committee were being finalised, and has still not responded. Have we taken it as far as

we can? At the moment, it's a decision on what time schools start and stop, but it's a decision, effectively, for each school's governing body.

[32] **Gareth Bennett:** I think it's an interesting proposal because an awful lot of traffic problems in Cardiff, and doubtless other places, are caused by the school run, and from a traffic point of view, it's worthy of consideration. The petitioner is talking about it from an educational point of view, but it's not only an educational issue. I think it's worth exploring as far as we can.

[33] **Mike Hedges:** The question is, of course, that if schools started at 10 o'clock, would the rush be until 10 o'clock because people are still taking their children to school? But it would mean that people would be looking to start work later and it would cause certain problems to individuals. A lot of people like getting their children to breakfast club at 8.30 a.m. so that they can get to work by 9 o'clock.

[34] **Gareth Bennett:** Is there not a case that some people are driving to work and they're not involved in schools runs at the same time as people who are involved in school runs?

[35] **Mike Hedges:** Yes. If we don't say that we've taken it as far as we can, what do you want to do? Do you want to write to the Minister responsible for transport, asking whether a change would be beneficial, or do we wish to note it?

[36] **Gareth Bennett:** I would suggest, maybe, if we could involve the transport Minister—I think that would be Ken Skates, wouldn't it?

[37] **Mike Hedges:** Yes.

[38] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Each school can do it now under the—. So—

[39] **Gareth Bennett:** Each school can change it.

[40] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Yes. It just takes the will and the governors to decide to take that forward.

[41] **Mike Hedges:** Schools all start at different times, but most of them start sometime between 8.40 a.m. and 9 o'clock, but they all start at different times. But it's a school governing body decision what time they start. There has historically been a tendency to start around about 9 o'clock,



or slightly before 9 o'clock for most schools, but it's a decision of the school and governing body. But we could ask the—

[42] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** This is a really detailed response from Kirsty Williams, the Cabinet Secretary, and, to be honest, I think there are other things, aren't there, that are going forward now with education? And I think, as she has said, wait until the project—the conclusions.

[43] **Mike Hedges:** Okay. So, shall we just wait for the response at the moment, and hold it until we get any further response?

[44] **Mr Francis:** From the petitioner.

[45] **Mike Hedges:** From the petitioner, yes. 'Say NO to Dyfed'—

[46] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** It's irrelevant this now.

[47] **Mike Hedges:** This has been overtaken by events. I think we should close the petition. This has been overtaken—the idea of giant councils around Wales has disappeared. Okay.

[48] The next one—'Allow Public Recording of Local Government Meetings'. This is from—. This was first considered on 8 March. The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government's statement on local government reform on 4 October indicated the Government is reconsidering the content of the previous draft local government Bill. The committee could therefore write to the Cabinet Secretary asking if and how he intends to progress the planned provision to make it compulsory for local authorities to broadcast meetings.

[49] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** You know I'd support this, because anything we can do to open up the doors of local government is to be applauded, really. I mean, despite the Government providing £40,000 for a local authority, a lot have been very selective about the meetings that they're choosing to record. And I think true open, transparent democracy is when there is a facility—. Everything we do is under the public gaze, and I can't see why that doesn't apply to local authorities. I would support this.

[50] **Mike Hedges:** So, we'll write to the Cabinet Secretary to ask how he intends to address the planned provision to make it compulsory for local authorities to broadcast meetings. Yes. Okay.

09:15

[51] ‘Save Cardiff Coal Exchange’—this goes back to March 2014. It was last considered by us on 11 October. We await the views of the petitioner on the response received from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure and the leader of Cardiff council. The petitioner submitted further comments, which are in our papers. The petitioner wants a public inquiry into the Coal Exchange development. A letter received from the leader of Cardiff council updates the committee on progress since planning permission was granted for the change of use of the building to a hotel in July 2016. A number of listed building consent applications have been submitted to Cadw for their consideration. The developers are producing a conservation plan for the building. The Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure states this is a matter for Cardiff council, and it would be inappropriate for the Welsh Government to comment further.

[52] In light of this, the committee could decide to close the petition, given that it has now been open for a considerable time, and that the future of the building seems to be primarily a matter for Cardiff council, or we could await the outcome of the application currently with Cadw, and the developers’ conservation plan, and the subsequent views of the petitioner, before deciding on further action. I think that it would be easier if we await the outcomes of the applications. But I would have thought—and there’s two people from Cardiff here, so I know I’m on difficult ground—that turning the Coal Exchange into a hotel is probably the best possible outcome for that building.

[53] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** And they’re talking about soft stripping, aren’t they, the outside of it and everything, and the conservation report? For me, it reads as though they are taking the conservation issues quite seriously indeed, because the report of—

[54] **Mike Hedges:** So, if we wait until the applications are carried out, and the conservation plan, and, when we get those, we’ll speak to the petitioner again and then decide what to do. But it does look as if we’re making progress. I mean, there was concern, genuine concern, amongst a number of people, not just the petitioner, that the Cardiff Coal Exchange was going to be left until it fell down, and that was a concern to very many people. And I don’t exclude myself from the very many people who are concerned about a major building in Wales just being left to fall down. So, this does seem to be

progress, so we'll wait to see what happens with the applications.

[55] The next one—'Develop Tynton Farm as a Visitor and Information Centre'. This was last considered on 19 January—await the petitioner's view on the response received from the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport. The petitioner has since submitted further comments, which are included in the papers. In light of the petitioner's view on the opportunity to be achieved—the aim of the petition has now been lost and the committee could close the petition. Well, if the petitioner doesn't think we can take it any further, I don't see how we can. So, shall we close it, and thank the petitioner for taking the trouble to contact us? Good.

[56] 'Rename Cardiff Int. Airport to Princess Diana International Airport'—we discussed this on 13 September. We've had a response from Cardiff Airport, making it clear that their advice to the Welsh Government is to retain the name Cardiff Airport. In light of this, the committee may have taken the petition as far as they can and should consider closing it. It does come down to—. Shall we close the petition?

[57] **Neil McEvoy:** Yes.

[58] **Mike Hedges:** Yes. Thank you very much.

09:18

**Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42 i Benderfynu Gwahardd y Cyhoedd  
o'r Cyfarfod**

**Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to Resolve to Exclude the Public  
from the Meeting**

*Cynnig:*

*Motion:*

*bod y pwyllgor yn penderfynu that the committee resolves to gwahardd y cyhoedd o weddill y exclude the public from the cyfarfod yn unol â Rheol Sefydlog remainder of the meeting in 17.42(vi).*

*accordance with Standing Order 17.42(vi).*

*Cynigiwyd y cynnig.*

*Motion moved.*

[59] **Mike Hedges:** Could I move, under Standing Order 17.42, to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the following business? Is that agreed? Yes.

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig.*

*Motion agreed.*

*Daeth rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod i ben am 09:18.*

*The public part of the meeting ended at 09:18.*