



**Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru  
The National Assembly for Wales**

**Y Pwyllgor Deisebau  
The Petitions Committee**

**Dydd Iau, 24 Ebrill 2008  
Thursday, 24 April 2008**

**Cynnwys**  
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Cofnodir y trafodion hyn yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynndi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal, cynhwysir cyfieithiad Saesneg o gyfraniadau yn y Gymraeg. Mae hon yn fersiwn ddrafft o'r cofnod. Cyhoeddir fersiwn derfynol ymhen pum diwrnod gwaith.

These proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee. In addition, an English translation of Welsh speeches is included. This is a draft version of the record. The final version will be published within five working days.

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

Andrew R.T. Davies	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Jenny Randerson	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru (yn dirprwyo ar ran Michael German) Welsh Liberal Democrats (substitute for Michael German)
Bethan Jenkins	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Val Lloyd	Llafur (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) Labour (Committee Chair)

**Eraill yn bresennol**  
**Others in attendance**

Chris Franks	Aelod Cynulliad, Plaid Cymru Assembly Member, The Party of Wales
Paul Haley	Deisebydd Petitioner
David Melding	Aelod Cynulliad, Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Assembly Member, Welsh Conservatives

**Swyddogion Gwasanaeth Seneddol y Cynulliad yn bresennol**  
**Assembly Parliamentary Service officials in attendance**

Alun Davidson	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Joanest Jackson	Cynghorydd Cyfreithiol Legal Adviser
Stefan Sanchez	Clerc Clerk

*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 12.31 a.m.*  
*The meeting began at 12.31 a.m.*

**Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon**  
**Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions**

[1] **Val Lloyd:** Good afternoon, everyone and welcome to the Petitions Committee. I have received an apology for absence from Mike German, and I am delighted to say that Jenny Randerson is substituting for him. You are very welcome, Jenny. I remind everyone to switch off any mobile electronic devices. Translation is available on channel 1, and amplification is available on channel 0. As David Melding is here, I will paraphrase him: we are not expecting a fire drill today, so, if you hear the alarm, it is real, and you should make your way to the exits, where the usher will assist you.

[2] The next item on our agenda should have been to consider a petition regarding Aberthaw. For reasons that will become clear later, I am moving that to the update section on our agenda.

12.32 p.m.

**P-03-106—‘Pride in Barry’**

**P-03-106—‘Pride in Barry’**

[3] **Val Lloyd:** We welcome Mr Paul Haley, who is chair of the Pride in Barry organisation; you are very welcome. I will give you a run-down of the procedure. You will have up to 15 minutes to make a presentation, and we are sharp about ending it at 15 minutes. Two Members who represent Barry are here today, Chris Franks and David Melding—I welcome them to the table—and they will have up to five minutes each after that to make any pertinent remarks that they wish to make. Following that, the committee will question you for up to 15 minutes. I hope that that is clear; this time does not count towards your 15 minutes. When you are ready, please begin.

[4] **Mr Haley:** I thank the committee for inviting me here today. I will give you a little background about Pride in Barry, then talk about regeneration in Barry to give you some kind of context, and then I want to make the case for proper funding for regeneration in Barry. Hopefully, you will have some of the literature that was supplied. When we set up the petition, we asked a selection of the town’s business and community leaders to sign it, and what they signed up to was:

[5] ‘that the Greater Barry Regeneration Programme should receive continuity and surety of proper adequate and timely funding for the next 10 years in order to continue investing for the future, and continue the good works and improvements made to date. The National Assembly for Wales is the beneficiary of revenue from the sale of land at Barry Waterfront, in the region of £60 million and we believe should commit to reinvest a large proportion of that money in Barry’.

[6] A certain and known funding stream will ensure that the Barry regeneration partnership board can properly plan a programme to meet the challenges of being Wales’s largest town, through ensuring the provision of much-needed community facilities, roads and footpath linkages for greater access, social and environmental improvements, sustainable developments, educational opportunities, public art and heritage, tourism, and economic development.

[7] Barry has missed out on many European public funding grants, despite having areas of great social need. It has many development opportunities, but does not currently live up to its potential. The petition requests that the National Assembly for Wales enable the Barry community to:

[8] ‘take ownership of its future, by setting it free from the cyclical nature of uncertain, centrally driven, grant funding competitions that do not empower local solutions to local problems, and enables a long term funding commitment solution which is commensurate with the monies to be received by the National Assembly for Wales through the sale of land at Barry Waterfront.’

[9] That is why we are here today.

[10] I will give you the background to Pride in Barry, and I will then talk about regeneration and the funding case. Pride in Barry was established in 1994. It is a non-political association of voluntary organisations, authorities, and others who have joined together to improve the local environment. It was set up by the Rotary Club because Associated British Ports, the Welsh Development Agency and the Vale of Glamorgan Council got together to form a partnership called Barry Action to try to transform the rundown former coal port in Barry. Pride in Barry was established to provide a community response to the work of that committee.

[11] Our purpose is to increase civic awareness, promote environmental improvements and enhancements, and to generate pride in the town. I certainly think that we have started to see that kick in and make a difference over the last four years. We are all from Barry, so we all believe passionately that Barry is a special place. It certainly is to us, and we want to keep it special for present and future generations. We appreciate Barry's environment and believe that this makes it special. It is unique in that it has a seafront, beaches, and quite a lot of landscape and countryside in close proximity. The community is special, as is the economy. However, we are realists and we realise that Barry will not remain special by itself. It has faced and continues to face a lot of competition, some of which has been detrimental to Barry; the shopping areas in particular have suffered because of that. We also realise that consumers' standards and expectations rise and we face competition, so we need to improve Barry.

[12] This is the crux of the matter, because we need to continue to improve and invest in new projects. Pride in Barry is committed to taking an active role in any partnership to improve the town. We firmly believe in quality in design and the imaginative use of land. Quality landmark buildings should be created, and we need the restoration, regeneration, and renaissance of the rich heritage that remains around the dock area. We have undertaken some studies and work with the Design Commission for Wales to consider what work we can do in this regard.

[13] There is much to invest in for the future, and there has been much investment. For example, in the town hall, the library, King Square, central park, and Holton Road, with its public realm improvement—although it could be said that neither of those achieved the commercial success for traders in that area, because they have suffered for three years due to the roads being dug up and so on, and have not recovered from that. There is also the waterfront area. We think that we should be developing education and training facilities in Barry, and further environmental enhancements and improvements are required. We realise that this requires partnerships at all levels, which we very much encourage. Business and community links need to be developed, and there needs to be self help. In the early years of regeneration, it was quite clear that the people of Barry believed that the WDA was coming in and doing regeneration to them and not with them. That has largely been addressed over the years and people in Barry are taking ownership of what has been created. There was a big divide between the town and the dock, which is starting to close now.

[14] That is who we are. I will give you a perspective of the regeneration project, because it does not hit the headlines as much as it probably should. Over 125 projects have taken place in the last 10 years. I will give you some of the key figures: some £47 million of public money has been used to pump prime this project. I will return to that £47 million in a short while. That has helped to lever in £100 million-worth of private-sector money. Barry is now the largest town in Wales. As a result of everything that has been going on, in 2004, it experienced one of the largest house price growths in the UK.

12.40 p.m.

[15] However, there is still more to do, because much of the money has gone into infrastructure, which is largely unseen by the public, although people drive above it all the time. There is still more to do—a marina, for example. A university has been much talked about; there is the issue of community and recreation facilities, and there is an image to be improved. Much work is going on there.

[16] Under those headings, I will talk about the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff. There was a scheme to bring an element of UWIC onto Barry Island, on the former Butlin's site, to develop a national university for tourism and leisure. There was a £24 million shortfall, so that project has gone. Yesterday, a £17 million project was unveiled to develop

Barry into a marina—that is just the money that needs to be spent on sorting out the lock gates. However, if we could not raise £24 million for the university, are we going to get £17 million for the marina?

[17] In the time that this has been going on, the public was over-promised a lot of community and recreation facilities that have just not transpired. In fact, you could make a case to say that we have fewer community and recreation facilities now—the Knap swimming pool has gone, and, only a few weeks ago, the last remaining theatre in Barry closed.

[18] We have created ambassadors for Barry, to go out and sell the kinds of messages that I am delivering here. Some of what is on this slide—and I will not go into all of them—are the kinds of things that we are asking our ambassadors to go out and talk about. The figures on the slide show that Barry experienced a large growth at the end of the eighteenth century and during the nineteenth century, because of the creation of a coal port, and it held some records. Barry was created to be the global access point to all the coal that was being mined in the Valleys. That is largely forgotten now, and I believe that Barry has missed out. The demise of coal had a huge effect on Barry, which was largely masked by the chemical companies that came into the town, and by tourism. As those industries have shrunk in size, you can see in greater detail what is happening there.

[19] Barry has one of the largest urban regeneration schemes in Europe at present. There are some stunning figures that relate to that. Some 320 acres of land has been reclaimed, and 10,000 linear yards of improvements have been made. That has created some jobs—not just in construction, but some permanent jobs. What all that means is that Barry now has a seafront that is linked to the town, and is not divided by a dock, which was in the middle. Therefore, with its proximity to Cardiff, Barry is in an attractive position to gain opportunities. There is a lot of available brownfield land there.

[20] This next slide gives an example of the kinds of opportunities that we have had. The slide shows Richard Brown, the chief executive of Eurostar, who has loaned a diesel locomotive to Richard Buxton of Cambrian Transport. That will be a working diesel locomotive, working on the lines, and will be named 'Pride in Barry', so that will, hopefully, extend our message all over Wales.

[21] We have created ambassadors, and you can see a few of them on this slide. One person who has been a great ambassador for Barry has been David Davies, the swimmer, who has gone all over the world, and is very proud of the fact that he comes from Barry.

[22] Let us talk about the funding issue now, because I am conscious of the time. I want to reassure the committee that this is not just a recent issue. Pride in Barry has been talking about this for at least four years, and long before the potential to realise the value in the land was probably even thought about. A hundred acres of waterfront land is now being sold; it is a joint sale by the Assembly and Associated British Ports, because of the reclamation works that were done by the former Welsh Development Agency. The question is how much of the money that will be realised from this sale will be reinvested in Barry.

[23] I started to raise this issue in February 2004; I have given you the bundle of documents that show that. We started to raise our concerns because we saw that the funding for the WDA was being cut, and we were concerned at how that would affect the regeneration scheme. I was able to question the then Minister for economic development, Andrew Davies, about the potential for recycling and reinvesting the moneys back into Barry. I then met him on 21 June. It was a strange meeting, because I went there to talk about the 100 acres, but he had been briefed that there were only seven acres and that I was completely wrong—that has proven to be inaccurate. That has never been corrected.

[24] I questioned the First Minister on 12 January at a Cabinet meeting that took place in Barry Memorial Hall and Theatre. I was assured that Barry was being treated exactly the same as anywhere else in Wales, but I believe that we are not treated the same as Newport and Swansea—because they have set up development corporations, they can recycle funds back into their schemes.

[25] A lot of correspondence followed, which also set objectives for us, and we have jumped through all of the hoops. We set up, with the Vale of Glamorgan Council, a regeneration partnership board and we identified a strategic plan, objectives and priorities. At around about the same time, we were consulted as part of a Wales Audit Office improvement study on regeneration, in May 2005. That report made recommendations that bore out what we were saying, that the annual cyclical funding pattern did not aid anybody who was involved in regeneration because those projects can take years to come to fruition. We then met Gareth Hall and Karen Thomas in June 2005 and came away from that meeting realising that Barry would be competing with the Heads of the Valleys for funding. There followed a lot more correspondence. The First Minister then welcomed the recommendations in the Wales Audit Office report and told us that Barry was a high priority. We have been receiving lots of encouragement and warm words, as I call them, from various people.

[26] In November 2005, the Barry regeneration partnership board produced a strategy with priorities and came up with a lot of vision-type things and projects that sit under all of the aims. The message is that the regeneration board is in place, the strategy is in place and our priorities are identified, but the key thing that is missing is the funding stream. So, there is a lot on the wish list, but nothing can progress and nothing can be sensibly planned or any commitments made. On the regeneration board, which I sit on, along with a number of non-executives who represent various aspects of the community, we have continually raised the issue of funding. We have had various unsatisfactory answers over the two years since the board was formed and it is only in the last six months that an admission was made, by an official, that no moneys from the sale of the waterfront land would be allocated to Barry. It became a battle to get that recorded in the minutes because that was the first time, in four years, that anyone had publicly admitted that the money was not coming to Barry.

[27] I came along in October and made a presentation to Assembly Members and there were quite a few present. That was quite a good opportunity for us to make a similar case to this one. The Deputy First Minister stood up and responded to what I had said and gave us some encouraging warm words again. However, since that time, I have not received any reply or response. Officials keep coming along to the regeneration board meetings, but they have still not produced a costed regeneration plan for Barry. That does not exist. There are lots of things on the wish list that people would like to see being done, but there are no costs attached to them and there is still no indication of where the money is likely to come from. That is why we came up with this petition, because we think that it should really be looked at.

[28] Although there are only 200 signatures on the petition, I would like to make the point that I think that we could have easily got an awful lot more. For example, today, in the local Barry paper, the editorial is actually encouraging us and wishing us well for today. It has become something that is of huge interest in Barry because it was not public knowledge for quite some time.

[29] If we look at the Barry balance sheet and return to that £47 million of public money that was pump primed, I have asked some questions and I can give you some figures: £14.5 million-worth of land-sale receipts have already been recovered against that money, which leaves £32.5 million net. An estimated £60 million has been realised on the waterfront-land sale, although the figure is shrouded in mystery because no-one will actually admit to the figure. That represents a net loss to Barry throughout this regeneration of £27.5 million.

[30] **Val Lloyd:** Mr Haley, I have to ask you to wind up; I have already added a minute to your time for technical difficulties with the PowerPoint presentation.

[31] **Mr Haley:** Okay. To wind up, we want no more uncertainty. We would like to see an established line of funding for Barry and I am suggesting £20 million over 10 years that could be drawn down, and drawn down earlier if the scheme warrants it. We are here to say that Barry regeneration has been a success so far. We should not leave it as a half-done job; we should finish the job and be proud of working in partnership to achieve it.

12.50 p.m.

[32] **Val Lloyd:** Thank you, Mr Haley. As I said, I gave you another minute because of the technical difficulties. I will now ask David Melding, as one of the local Assembly Members, to address the committee for up to five minutes.

[33] **David Melding:** Thank you. I am delighted to have this opportunity and to be here supporting Paul Haley, whom I have known for many years. I have been involved in this campaign, if I can call it such, and have given advice from time to time. Indeed, on the petition, I was the one who said 'Go for a representation and a cross-section of people, rather than thousands and thousands', and that is what has happened. The people of Barry and all the local players are very much behind this petition. The way in which Paul has put the case demonstrates its strength. It was an excellent presentation and he was very eloquent.

[34] Barry has some particular problems. It is as south as you can go in Wales. You cannot go through Barry; if you go to Barry, you have a purpose for going. There is not much casual visiting in terms of people going through there and stopping. Therefore, we are often overwhelmed by Cardiff in the public attention that we receive.

[35] A second problem, linked to that, is that Barry is part of the Vale of Glamorgan—the council there, over the years, has done sterling work on the economic development front, with relatively limited resources—and, as a whole, Barry is one of the richest parts of Wales and would stand way above average in the UK as a whole, yet it has some very deprived wards. People sometimes describe it as a Valleys town on the seaside. That is perhaps an exaggeration, but there is an element of truth in it. Its profile is more like that of a Valleys town in recovery than that of Cowbridge, which is the middle of the vale, although Barry is much larger than that small, market town.

[36] I first raised this issue six or seven years ago—early in the Assembly—when we were looking at how Objective 1 was working and shaping other Government programmes. It was clear to me that, because Barry was not in the European funding zone, it was missing out on resources that it might otherwise have secured. The Government was shaping some of its overall economic development to match up with European priorities, and Barry suffered as a result.

[37] I do not know what the answer is. I am not suggesting that we should expect all the moneys from the sale of land. Some public investment is on a Welsh basis and I accept that, and there is a similar principle in the NHS when assets are sold, but there is a genuine feeling, which I share, that Barry has not had its fair share over the last seven or eight years. Yet the infrastructure is there. All the major parties have had some involvement in an executive function in the council, with the exception of the Liberal Democrats, but I know that, locally, they would support this too. There is a political consensus on how development and regeneration should proceed. There is this wonderful local, grass-roots organisation that is the very stuff of successful regeneration in that the community gets involved, and it needs this boost.



[38] So I hope that you can find a way of progressing consideration of the case put forward in this petition in our Assembly structures, so that we can examine the case more fully and relay it to the Assembly Government. For those who have not been to Barry recently, the dockland area is vast. It bears comparison to the docklands as were in Cardiff. There is huge potential and it is already well begun, but there is a lot more to do, especially in integrating the older town with these new developments. So, I endorse what Paul has said and I hope that this case will convince you to allow the matter to go forward in whatever way you think appropriate within the Assembly's structures.

[39] **Val Lloyd:** Thank you, David. You were almost spot on with the time. Now, I am pleased to welcome another local Assembly Member, Chris Franks. Chris, you have five minutes to address the committee.

[40] **Chris Franks:** Thank you for the opportunity. I fully support the work of Pride in Barry. It is worth emphasising that it is made up of town residents, who undertake a vast amount of work in their own time on a purely voluntary basis. It shows the strength of feeling in the town that something needs to be done.

[41] You have seen in this presentation many of the positive schemes. Much of this has been achieved by the public investment that you heard about. Hopefully, you will appreciate the fact that a need for significant additional investment remains. The town wants the community to be an area in which people can work, shop and play. Barry people do not want their town to be just a commuter town. The need for a long-term financial commitment is essential.

[42] It is worth pointing out that the town is not trying to keep all the money that will be generated from the sale of the land. What is being requested is a fair share of any surplus achieved. It has been felt that the first phase has placed too great an emphasis on extra housing, and that a more rounded development is needed in the future. It is worth pointing out, however, that the additional housing has all been built on derelict land, not on green fields. So, it has had a tremendously positive benefit elsewhere. Now, however, we need further investment to complete the job. It is worth pointing out that very few alternative sources of funding exist. This asset within the town is one of the best opportunities to gain additional investment for the community. Barry has a bright future if we invest properly now and over the next 10 years.

[43] I hope that the committee can offer support to the petitioners and can endorse their request and pass it on to the various other committees and to the Government.

[44] **Val Lloyd:** Thank you, Chris. I do not think that I thanked you properly for your presentation, Mr Haley.

[45] I now invite our Assembly Members who are not members of the committee to leave the table—you are welcome to stay in the room and sit at the side. It is now over to committee members to start asking Mr Haley questions.

[46] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Thank you, Paul, for coming in today, and for your comprehensive presentation and evidence. Thank you also for the positive nature of your presentation. I agree wholeheartedly—looking at some of the pictures, I start to reminisce about the Memorial Hall and the first dance that I attended in 1985. I recall delivering spuds on Market Street and Holton Road. Sadly, none of those shops are there now, but that is by the by. What we have to decide is how best the petition can be put forward, and so, given that I attended a presentation back in October, how much further, do you believe, can you go with the Welsh Assembly Government considering the length of debate that you have had to date, starting in 2004? Ultimately, the anomaly in the petition is that it is not the National

Assembly for Wales that received that money, but the Welsh Assembly Government.

[47] If the money were to be forthcoming, what sort of money would it be likely to trigger in any type of match funding from private business? Much of your presentation focuses on the private money that has gone into the town of Barry as well as public money. Are you aware of any initiatives whereby, were the Government to show confidence in Barry and release some of that money, private business would have the confidence to go in to Barry regenerate parts of the town that currently lack such development?

1.00 p.m.

[48] **Mr Haley:** I will answer the first part of the question first. I do not know where we go next. You wonder what the purpose a regeneration partnership board is if there is no money allowing you to plan and strategically invest. As a voluntary member of that board, I would wonder what I was doing there, and so I worry about that. I also wonder what would become of Pride in Barry itself, because as I said earlier, we were set up in 1994 to be a voice for the community, and if there are no projects to give a voice to, I do not know where we would go next. That is something that we would have to consider.

[49] In terms of what could be achieved with the money, I have already alluded to the fact that a couple of projects have got away from us, and you wonder what would have happened had we had that £20 million—how much of it would we have needed to commit to UWIC in order to lever in money from other places? If you look at the £47 million that was attracted by the £100 million, there is almost a 2:1 ratio, which is obviously significant, but it would attract a greater percentage now, because a lot of that money went into the hidden stuff: the infrastructure, and dealing with the environmental contamination on the waterfront. So, the next 10 years will potentially be a different phase for the project: this is the good stuff, delivering on all the objectives to create jobs and community centres, and bringing in leisure attractions to revitalise Barry Island, for example. Barry Island is getting a lot of good publicity at the moment through *Gavin and Stacey*, but we need to ensure that, when people arrive, the dream is there in reality.

[50] **Val Lloyd:** No-one else has indicated that they want to ask a question—

[51] **Jenny Randerson:** I have a question.

[52] **Val Lloyd:** I will just ask the question that I was going to ask, and then we can come to your point, Jenny.

[53] You touched on this in your presentation, but could you perhaps flesh out a little bit the details of other avenues of funding that you have looked at for regeneration?

[54] **Mr Haley:** It goes back to what David Melding was saying earlier. We have been coming back and forth to the Assembly for quite some time—I think that we were here in 1999, when Barry had just lost out on Objective 1 money, and we were trying to make the case for retaining Objective 2 money. We came along and made a presentation then, and we did not get that funding either. We had some transitional funds, and we have tried those kinds of avenues, but this is the only game in town, unfortunately. Yes, we can try to be clever about obtaining grants, but we have to be careful in setting our strategy—for example, if money is available for creating an arts centre, we have to be careful that a building that is not really an arts centre does not suddenly become one just to fit in with the funding stream. There has been a bit of that going on, and we need instead to stick to our strategy for delivering jobs, value for money, and the kind of environment that we want. We must stay with that strategy, and not allow the grant mechanisms to dictate what we do.

[55] **Jenny Randerson:** In your presentation, you referred to the fact that Swansea and Newport have established development corporations that have proved very successful. You decided to set up a regeneration partnership board in Barry. What is the difference in the way that those organisations operate, and why you did not decide to set up a development corporation given that they have been so successful in Newport and Swansea?

[56] **Mr Haley:** It was the Vale of Glamorgan Council that set up the regeneration partnership board, and that was in response to the letters that we had received from the First Minister and others, saying that we needed to put things in place. The regeneration board replaced Barry Action, which was a partnership between Associated British Ports, the Welsh Development Agency and the Vale council. A development corporation is a legal entity in its own right, and Swansea and Newport set that up right from the beginning. I do not know the legalities of it, but I think that what happens is that partners put in various capital sums, and land, and so on, and the corporation then becomes a company with a board that recycles money and reinvests it into projects. I do not know why Barry never set itself up in that way in 1994—it is almost before my time with Pride in Barry. There might have been good reasons for that, but I do not know what they are.

[57] **Bethan Jenkins:** Thank you for your presentation. In your presentation, you said that officials had been attending your meetings and had said that there would not be investment in the next six months. Was that on the record in a public meeting? Is that something that we can refer to in future correspondence with the Government?

[58] **Mr Haley:** It is in the minutes of the Barry regeneration partnership board. The secretariat for that is supplied by the Vale of Glamorgan Council, so there are minutes of all those meetings. If you wished to plough through all the paperwork, you would see numerous requests from us to ask about this funding stream, about which I have been talking today. It was at one of these meetings that an Assembly official said that the money would not be reinvested in Barry and that we would have to reply for grant money on an each-project basis along with everyone else in Wales. We then had to ensure, when the minutes came out, that that was reflected in the minutes and there was a quite a debate on the words because, as I pointed out, that was the first time that anyone had admitted in a meeting that we were not going to have this ring-fenced money. As you can see from the correspondence, I have jumped through the hoops because I was led to believe that doing so would possibly lead to that funding.

[59] **Bethan Jenkins:** Was this meeting before or after the presentation that Ieuan Wyn Jones attended? Did you raise this with him in the public presentation?

[60] **Mr Haley:** I do not think that I did; it must have happened after that.

[61] **Bethan Jenkins:** So is that something that needs to be raised imminently with the Government?

[62] **Mr Haley:** It would give the impression that this debate has been had and you are not going to have the recycling of these funds back into Barry. Perhaps I need to take a lot of the blame for this. When I started to raise this question in 2004, I do not think that the Welsh Development Agency's land division realised how much land was there and what the potential was. So, it could well be that I alerted them to the value that was in that land and then it became a *fait accompli*—'We will use that elsewhere and hard luck, Barry.'. No-one has ever said that, but it has been a long process to get to where we are today and still have no certainty of funding.

[63] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** In your closing remarks, you said that, if this money does not come through—and there is a danger of tacking too much on this money—with regard to the

general principle of redevelopment of Barry, you do not know where Pride in Barry goes from here, which is quite a statement. Given the level of activity that you have undertaken up to this point and, as we have heard, your commitment and that of other members in terms of volunteering your time, are you really that despondent about the level of engagement that you are currently getting to seek some form of tangible future and redevelopment for the areas of Barry that you are promoting?

[64] **Mr Haley:** It is quite a statement and something that I have thought about and discussed with members of Pride in Barry and previous chairs of Pride in Barry. It is a case of what do we do next? As David Melding and Chris Franks have said, we are volunteers; we have day jobs and yet we take time off to attend council meetings, which are generally held during working hours, so much time and effort is being put into this. Attending the regeneration board takes a day, and there are five or six meeting a year of that as well as other meetings. So it takes a great deal of time and effort to attend those meetings.

[65] You know what projects are like—you need to know the time frame, scope and quality of the projects as well as how much funding is available. If you do not know where the funding is coming from, you start to wonder whether these meetings are all hot air—meetings for meetings' sake. So, Pride in Barry wants to be engaged in the development of Barry, but I do not know how to do that in future. I do not know where we go next, and I am quite honest about that.

[66] **Val Lloyd:** There are four minutes left, if Members would like to ask further questions. It does not look as though anyone does. I thank you very much, Mr Haley. You made the case on behalf of your town with clarity and passion and, in spite of some of the things you said, it was also an enjoyable presentation.

[67] We will not start to discuss your petition until you have time to reach the public gallery, so you do not need to rush so much that you trip over.

1.10 p.m.

[68] Normally, we consider two or three different petitions at the same time, and so we do not have this time delay, but, as a courtesy to Mr Haley, we are waiting for him to take his seat—and there he is in the gallery.

[69] I open this up for discussion by Members about the way forward. I remind you that, following our meeting on 10 April, we sent a letter to Minister for the Economy and Transport asking, first, how much money the Assembly Government received from the sale of the docklands; secondly, what portion of that, if any, was allocated or reinvested in Barry; and, thirdly, what investment Barry has received from the current Assembly Government. We have not yet received a reply; otherwise, it would be among your papers. So, would anyone like to begin?

[70] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** We are waiting for a great deal of information from the Minister, and I hope that that will cast a bit more light on the situation, because there seems to be a degree of ambiguity over the figures and what exactly is going on. However, with regard to the regeneration project that was mentioned in the presentation and in the second part of the petition, an element of scrutiny is needed to see what has gone on over time. That level of scrutiny is not the responsibility of this committee, but it could be looked at by the Enterprise and Learning Committee, if it was so inclined. Maybe we should send the petition to the committee to consider and see whether it will look further into the case, given the length of time that it has been ongoing, and given some of the benefits that have come into Barry and some other things that may have held Barry back.

[71] **Jenny Randerson:** I do not know whether this is the way that you would normally act, but it occurs to me that there is a major issue of principle here, namely the reinvestment of money from the sale of land in any particular area. One understands why the money from land sales must be portioned out across Wales. If it were not, you would probably end up reinvesting in the richest areas time and again, because of the issue of land values. However, it would not be unreasonable to ask the committee to consider whether issues such as this should be open, transparent and highlighted in future land deals, so that communities can see what stake they have in the sale of land, and to consider whether the Assembly Government should develop a policy that a portion should go back into an area, without being too specific about how much.

[72] What is on a particular piece of land might be a complete eyesore at the moment, but its replacement is almost always controversial in one way or another. You cannot expect communities to feel positive about regeneration if they do not have some knowledge, at least, of what they will get out of the land sale, and if they do not have a stake in what comes out of that land sale. In some areas, it may be that all of the money needs to go back into the area, but in other areas it may be 10 per cent. So, I am not suggesting that there would be a limit on it or a specific figure, but we could ask the committee to consider the issue of a local stake and, above all, transparency.

[73] **Val Lloyd:** I get the feeling that there are two areas for action, which are complementary. Andrew suggested a more specific direction for this petition, and, Jenny, you are suggesting, because of the issues raised by the petition, that we also ask the Assembly Government to address a policy issue. I am content with that. Bethan, do you have any comments on that?

[74] **Bethan Jenkins:** I am concerned that we should be careful in referring such regeneration issues to the Enterprise and Learning Committee because, when we talk about grants and the problems relating to grants in many areas, a trend may appear with such petitions. I say that only out of concern that there is not over-administration in this regard. That is my only concern.

[75] **Val Lloyd:** I take your point.

[76] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I take Bethan's observations on board, but, as you said, Chair, we have a twin-track approach. We are waiting for information from the Minister, but from the evidence that we have heard today, an element of scrutiny is needed to try to get to the bottom of where things have gone wrong. Jenny mentioned land sales and the consultation process, and we should consider the way in which communities are informed of what is happening to their assets during the consultation process. It reminds me of the piece of work that I talked about during the March meeting—that we, as a committee, should look into the consultation process in the public sector. We have heard today about the lack of community understanding regarding what it perceives to be its assets. Perhaps we could talk about that a bit more in our informal session. Scrutiny is needed to try to get to the bottom of what has gone on here.

[77] **Val Lloyd:** I agree; we need to focus on the individual petition, but, now that they have been raised, it is also important to focus on the wider issues. There is no doubt that people's general expectation is that they will have a stake in what they consider to be their land in the first place. We would all accept that it is not quite as clear cut as that, but there is an element of that. We will move forward in that way. We will await the information; we will not close the petition; and we will refer it to the Enterprise and Learning Committee, as was suggested previously. Thank you very much.

1.18 p.m.

## Deisebau Newydd New Petitions

[78] **Val Lloyd:** We have three new petitions, the first two of which are similar, although there is a difference. The underlying theme of P-03-115 Save Sker Beach and P-03-117 Save Our Sands—Gower is the same, although the particulars vary in that we have had a response in relation to the petition to save Sker beach to say that some monitoring is carried out. The Save our Sands—Gower petition asks us specifically to monitor the environmental impact of sand dredging from the Helwick bank.

[79] **Bethan Jenkins:** I have looked at the Record, and I know that Dr Dai Lloyd raised the issue of sand dredging in the Assembly last year. The Minister with responsibility for this has moved forward to 2009 an independent review into sand dredging, which was set to take place in 2010. That is the latest information that I have. I do not know whether that would be sufficient for the petitioners, or whether they would want to see it this year, or even immediately. However, I know that that commitment has been made by the Minister.

[80] **Val Lloyd:** Are you talking in relation to either, or both?

[81] **Bethan Jenkins:** I believe that it was an independent study of the whole area.

[82] **Val Lloyd:** Yes, because it would be linked, would it not?

[83] **Bethan Jenkins:** I may need to be corrected, but I believe that it is for the whole area.

[84] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Looking at the first petition, a pretty comprehensive study has been done of the work, as mentioned in the notes. In our role as committee members, we can never have enough information on issues such as this, because—and I believe that you are from the area, Chair—it is a burning issue, is it not?

1.20 p.m.

[85] **Val Lloyd:** Yes, it is. Although my constituency does not abut the Gower coastline, it is of concern to all the residents there, because they use the beaches.

[86] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** However, the second petition refers to a specific private company, and the fact that an obligation should be placed on it; I am not sure how that obligation could be put on it if it already has a valid licence in place. I do not know how you could answer directly what the petition is asking for—I am not 100 per cent sure how you would move that forward. The wider issue of sand dredging, and the erosion of beaches, affects the whole coastline. Some form of correspondence from the Minister responsible to clarify the situation might be the correct way forward.

[87] **Val Lloyd:** Yes, I think so. The comments that I made to you were unofficial, not official. We have not had an official response—we have not written to anyone, but we had an unofficial response regarding the first petition.

[88] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Could I pick up on one small housekeeping point? The petition serial number is 117, but it is down as 116 on page 3. I presume that they refer to the same petition. Is that just a housekeeping point?

[89] **Val Lloyd:** Yes, I think so, because they are distinct.

[90] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** If it follows through the process, that one digit—

[91] **Val Lloyd:** No, because we will have had something else in between, probably, will we not?

[92] **Mr Sanchez:** I think that it may refer to 116; I apologise for that—we will check that.

[93] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Sker Beach is 115, so we have either missed one, or it is just a housekeeping point.

[94] **Mr Sanchez:** I believe that it is a housekeeping point.

[95] **Val Lloyd:** You are very observant, Andrew.

[96] **Bethan Jenkins:** We need to clarify whether the private company is going to make its own monitoring processes or whether the independent study by the Government will reflect that.

[97] **Val Lloyd:** It is always preferable to have an independent comment, rather than the company itself—that is not a comment on this specific company, but, in general, I believe that people have greater regard if it is an independent monitoring. Therefore, we will start by writing to the Welsh Assembly Government to determine whether any monitoring has been, or is about to be, undertaken, and we will bring it forward at another meeting.

[98] We now move to the third petition, which is from the Welsh Canoeing Association. As I am sure you all know, this petition holds the record so far, as it has nearly 10,000 signatures. It is obviously very much an issue for those people who have signed it. Are there any comments on that?

[99] **Jenny Randerson:** My family were canoeists in previous years, which is a pastime that they have relatively recently ceased to undertake, and I know that this is a long-standing problem, and one that has got worse. There are two issues here. One is the absolute lack of access, and the second is the lack of clarity on where access is allowed. It is interesting that the wording of the petition refers to responsibilities as well as rights. I do not believe that you can expect individuals to always have a full sense of responsibility if they are completely unclear as to what their rights are. It is a two-way street, is it not?

[100] It would be helpful if we could get legal advice on whether we would have the power as an Assembly to do this. I believe that the Counsel General has indicated that we do not have the power, but I would be interested to know whether it would be possible to have a legislative competence Order. If it is not a Measure issue, is it an LCO issue? If it is an LCO issue, if the Welsh Assembly Government is not able to solve the problem immediately, or to help to alleviate the problem immediately, it would at least mean that Assembly Members could perhaps take this issue up.

[101] **Val Lloyd:** Or the committee could take the LCO forward.

[102] **Jenny Randerson:** The committee could do so, of course; I am sorry.

[103] **Val Lloyd:** The main thing is that it would move forward, but it could be something that the committee could consider. I think that that is a splendid suggestion. Joanest is nodding; she knew that we were going to ask her about it. It would be very interesting to find out. As chair of the all-party group on waterways, I have met this problem before, although I did not ask them to put in a petition, obviously. We could also address the Government and, at the same time as Joanest is undertaking that piece of work on the legal issues, ask the Government for a view as to where it is on it and whether it is doing something to address it. I

think that that is very clear cut. That concludes our new petitions. We have a lot more in the pipeline, of course, and we will come to those later.

1.26 p.m.

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

[104] **Val Lloyd:** We have five updates for consideration today, but I deferred an issue regarding Aberthaw at the beginning, which was meant to be a new petition. What happened at the last meeting, if you remember, was that the committee decided to ask the petitioners, Friends of the Earth, to present evidence and we suggested that it should do so today. Friends of the Earth has been pressing us for some time to come to give evidence and, having read the introductory papers, that is what the committee decided to do. Friends of the Earth proceeded to invite somebody else to come to give evidence with it, the Countryside Council for Wales. I am of the opinion that the committee's invitation was to Friends of the Earth and it was not really for Friends of the Earth to invite another organisation. It should have been a committee decision to say 'yes' or 'no', if we found when Friends of the Earth presented its information that we thought that it would aid our investigation if we then invited the Countryside Council for Wales. I would be interested to hear what Members think about that.

[105] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I would concur, to a point, with what you have said. However, we have had other organisations in. I am thinking of the Sustrans petition, in particular, when it had Post Office Ltd and the British Medical Association as witnesses, although the invitation was extended to Sustrans. We did suddenly find that the other organisations were promoting their own policies and ideas, rather than those in the initial petition, which is what we are charged with understanding and discussing. As the precedent has been set for other organisations to come in as guests, as long as they form part of the party of three, I would be guided by the advice of the clerk as to whether we could stop someone extending that invitation to someone else to be part of the official party that comes in to give the evidence.

[106] **Val Lloyd:** You make a very reasonable point, as you usually do, Andrew. However, I have found with this committee that, as it is a new committee, we are learning all the time. That is why we have informal meetings, to try to learn from things that have happened before. Perhaps we have learnt from what happened before; I do not know, perhaps you are right. I would be glad to hear from clerk.

[107] **Mr Sanchez:** It is something that the committee should decide, based on experience. As Val said, this is a learning experience, so if the committee wants to take a decision on that in a private meeting, we can then implement it as a policy in future meetings.

[108] **Bethan Jenkins:** With the Sustrans case, had the other two organisations not signed the petition? Is it true that the Countryside Council for Wales signed this particular petition? If it did, there would be an argument for it to be invited. With the Sustrans petition, it was quite clear that they were involved.

[109] **Mr Sanchez:** I do not think that it officially signed the petition.

[110] **Val Lloyd:** My memory tells me that Friends of the Earth made reference to the Countryside Council for Wales, but it was not part of the petition. I will be guided on this issue by committee members, as to which way we should proceed. We will then bring it forward for discussion at an informal meeting.

1.30 p.m.



[111] **Jenny Randerson:** It strikes me that, although there are major issues about organisations inviting other organisations, you are quite right, Chair, that it is this committee's invitation to an organisation, and it is not up to organisations to invite other people. However, in this particular case, CCW is a major and significant organisation. I wonder whether the committee can develop a process in which one actually invites a supporting organisation at the same time, when appropriate. In other words, petitioners could be asked whether they want someone else to come in to support them and told, if that is the case, to make it clear at the time of accepting their invitation.

[112] **Val Lloyd:** It is all part of our development, is it not?

[113] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Can we discuss the procedural aspect at the informal part of the meeting? It will very much be a procedural issue, will it not? Precedent dictates that, when you have various organisations at the table, they tend to talk at cross purposes. The real issue is that it is the petitioners that we want to hear from, rather than hear a host of opinions.

[114] **Val Lloyd:** We are not saying in this case that we will not hear the Countryside Council for Wales at any time, but we should perhaps stick to our original invitation, in this case to Friends of the Earth, and if we find a need to hear from the Countryside Council for Wales, we can do so next time. However, we will move to a wider policy that everybody understands.

[115] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Without wishing to drag it out any longer, thinking about procedure, on the housing and drainage issue in Ystrad Mynach, the petitioners came in and gave their evidence, and then, at a subsequent meeting, the Environment Agency came to give the statutory view, with the local authority's view coming subsequent to that. Surely, CCW would fit in to the Environment Agency role in that aspect. Again, I am guided by your advice.

[116] **Val Lloyd:** I think that you make a good comparison. It backs up the fact that we repeat our invitation to Friends of the Earth. Thank you for taking the time to discuss that matter.

[117] Let us turn to the coal MTAN.

[118] **Bethan Jenkins:** We should wait until 23 May for the consultation to take place, because the final consultation will not take into account all these areas. There may be grounds then to take it further, so I do not want to close it at this time.

[119] **Val Lloyd:** Do Members want to add anything to that, or are you content with that decision? I see that you are content. We will wait until the second consultation has closed.

[120] Moving to cancer services—I was going to say 'informally', but Jenny is also a Member of the Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee—the health committee agreed to continue monitoring the progress of the recommendations in the report on cancer services. At about 5 p.m. yesterday afternoon, the formal letter from the Chair of the committee was placed in my pigeonhole, but it was too late for me to pass a copy to anybody.

[121] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Shall we wait until the next meeting, when we will have seen the letter, and decide the way forward then?

[122] **Val Lloyd:** Thank you, Andrew.

[123] On wind turbines, we had a letter from the Minister, dated 5 April, and I understand that that has been circulated to Members. The Minister tells us that the comments, as we

requested, will be included as part of the renewable energy route-map consultation exercise. That means that we have passed on the petitioners' concerns and that they are being considered by the Welsh Assembly Government.

[124] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Does it not seem that the petitioners are being—

[125] **Val Lloyd:** I do not think that we can do any more with what the petitioner requested, Andrew. We have gone as far as we can, in the light of what the petitioner asked of us.

[126] Powys Community Schools Action—

[127] **Mr Sanchez:** Sorry, Val, but may I clarify that you have agreed to close it?

[128] **Val Lloyd:** Yes.

[129] We also received a letter on this issue from the Minister, Jane Hutt, on 2 April, and we have circulated it. We passed this matter to the Rural Development Sub-committee for an inquiry, and I suggest that we wait until have its report before we close this petition.

[130] On the A465 relief road, we received a further letter from the Minister on 14 April. I am delighted that the Welsh Assembly Government has given further resources to the local authority to undertake a review and to look at the options that Mr Harris suggested when he gave evidence to us.

[131] **Bethan Jenkins:** I believe that we should—*[Inaudible.]*

[132] **Val Lloyd:** Yes, and we should ask the Minister to let us formally know the result of that. He does make the point, though, that, whatever happens, the building of the road is the responsibility of the local authority, which we were unclear about. We will also return to this in the informal meeting.

[133] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** To be fair, the Minister has given us a very comprehensive résumé of what has gone on there.

[134] **Val Lloyd:** It is a very helpful letter.

[135] That brings us to the update. I will not go through it page by page. Just to let the committee secretariat know, I find this paper very useful as it points out where petitions are closed or not. I know that it is getting weightier all the time, but it is very helpful. I will not call pages out, but please indicate if you want to raise anything.

[136] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** On the Rhyl flats petition, on page 2, I believe that we looked at that in March. A letter was supposed to be sent to the Minister. Is that in the formal system?

[137] **Mr Sanchez:** Yes. All of the letters that we agreed to on that petition have been sent. We are awaiting a response.

[138] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I appreciate that this is from memory, but do we know when those letters were sent?

[139] **Mr Sanchez:** There was a delay. They were sent this week, but that was because we wanted to seek legal advice on the content of the letters and it coincided with a particularly busy period. So, there was a slight delay, for which I apologise, but the letters have been sent now.

[140] **Val Lloyd:** A local Member asked about that and we have responded exactly as Stefan has just done, because that is what happened.

[141] Are there any more points to be raised? I see that there are not. I therefore declare the formal meeting closed.

*Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 1.38 p.m.*  
*The meeting ended at 1.38 p.m.*