



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

**Y Pwyllgor Deisebau
The Petitions Committee**

**Dydd Iau, 6 Tachwedd 2008
Thursday, 6 November 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
Michael German	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats
Bethan Jenkins	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Val Lloyd	Llafur (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) Labour (Committee Chair)

Eraill yn bresennol
Others in attendance

Lyn Hudson	Cynghorydd ar ran Adran Etholiadol y Mynydd Bychan, Cyngor Sir Caerdydd Councillor for Heath Electoral Division, Cardiff County Council
John Jones	Cymdeithas Trigolion y Mynydd Bychan Heath Residents Association
Rhys Llwyd	Is-gadeirydd, Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg Deputy Chair, Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg
Menna Machreth	Cadeirydd, Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg Chair, Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg
Ron Page	Cynghorydd ar ran Adran Etholiadol y Mynydd Bychan, Cyngor Sir Caerdydd Councillor for Heath Electoral Division, Cardiff County Council

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
Bethan Webber	Clerc Clerk

Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 12.29 p.m.
The meeting began at 12.29 p.m.

Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon
Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions

[1] **Val Lloyd:** Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to today's meeting of the Petitions Committee. I have not received any apologies or substitutions for this afternoon's meeting. The headsets can be used for a translation from Welsh to English—that is on channel 1; channel 0 will amplify the sound, if needed. I have not been informed that there is a fire drill this afternoon, so, if you hear the alarm, please respond, and be guided by the ushers as to the way out.

12.31 p.m.

**Parcio yn y Mynydd Bychan a Birchgrove
Parking in the Heath and Birchgrove areas of Cardiff**

[2] **Val Lloyd:** I welcome our first set of petitioners to the meeting, who will speak in support of their petition regarding parking in the Heath and Birchgrove areas of Cardiff. Could you please introduce yourselves for the Record? If you speak into the mike, it will come on automatically.

[3] **Ms Hudson:** I am Lyn Hudson, a councillor for the Heath and Birchgrove areas.

[4] **Mr Page:** I am councillor Ron Page.

[5] **Mr Jones:** I am John Jones, from the Heath Residents Association.

[6] **Val Lloyd:** Before we start, I would like to explain how we conduct this section. You have 15 minutes in which to make your case—how you share your time is entirely at your discretion. I will indicate when you only have a minute left of your time. After those 15 minutes, I will open the session up to questions from Members. They can have up to 15 minutes too, but we often do not take that long—it depends. Therefore, when you are ready, please begin.

[7] **Mr Page:** First, let me thank you for inviting us to talk to you about the problem of parking in the Heath. As we only have 15 minutes, I will rush on. We are going to share our 15 minutes between the three of us. Lyn Hudson will talk about the problem, I will talk about what causes it, and John will then talk about how things could be different in the future, and the changes that could be made. So, I will leave the floor to Lyn.

[8] **Ms Hudson:** Thank you. I will start with some of the background. We have come a long way since the contractors who built the hospital commenced that operation. I acknowledge this, as I am not only a resident of the area, but I also work for the builders, and was present when Her Majesty the Queen opened the hospital in 1971. Since its inception, it has grown and developed out of all recognition, and has placed an ever-increasing burden on the surrounding area to cope with the many thousands of staff and visitors who pass through its portals every day.

[9] It is not only the immediate thoroughfares that are affected, but the Birchgrove area itself, including nearby streets and roads, such as Caerphilly road, Heathwood Road, Heath Park Avenue, all the side streets off those roads, and in their immediate vicinity. It has long been a bone of contention with the residents of all these areas, who have continually voiced their concerns to me, and have highlighted the constant and numerous problems with parking. These residents are frustrated at the lack of concern with this dilemma. They have to cope with the day-to-day slalom of trying to exit and enter their drives, a manoeuvre that is no mean feat, given the volume of static and moving traffic.

[10] There are accident black spots in the ward that do not get recognised as such, because the accidents do not always incur fatalities, but are generally considered of not sufficient importance to warrant reporting. We need to resolve the situation before it deteriorates even further. We have added, inherited problems, due to the lack of a park-and-ride facility for the two train stations, namely Heath High Level and Heath Low Level, at one end of Heathwood road, and, at the other end, you have shoppers visiting Birchgrove and its variety of shops. Unfortunately, there is also a distinct lack of thought as to how we are to cope with the influx of traffic to the area on a daily basis—most of this traffic needs to park.

[11] The hospital has had a great influence on the area and with the ever-increasing number of visitors and staff, there is a need to address and rectify the parking problems that are exacerbated by the status and scope of this great hospital. The hospital website gives directions for drivers to enter via the slip-road and then directs them to one of the two multi-storey car parks that are easily accessible to the Gabalfa interchange. One is small and the other is larger. These car parks will cater for 277 and 1,300 cars respectively. That is by no means adequate for the number of visitors who come to the hospital every day. There is also a charge for using these facilities. Inevitably, if staff and visitors know that there is free parking in the immediate vicinity, they will opt to use whatever legal, and sometimes illegal, parking is available.

[12] To bury our heads in the sand and hope that the parking situation will somehow resolve itself, or to take the view that, by not providing parking, all visitors and staff will be encouraged to leave their cars at home, is to ignore the dire situation that we have at present and will not prevent the majority trying to jostle for space within a reasonable distance of the hospital.

[13] It is now becoming a problem not only for these streets, because it is encroaching on nearby roads and stretches way beyond the boundaries of the hospital. I hope that a sympathetic answer can be found for what is fast becoming an insurmountable problem. I receive many complaints from residents in the ward about this situation and, in exasperation, I ask you to engage in finding an answer, with some degree of urgency. I call on the Assembly to find an acceptable solution to the parking situation and to restore the suburb parking to at least a level that can be sustained, as it is slowly clogging up the artery—I make no apology, as the pun is intended—of the heart of the Heath and Birchgrove areas until it will destroy the body that hosts it.

[14] **Mr Page:** You heard that parking is reaching crisis proportions in the Heath. I do not think that Lyn mentioned the question not only of frustration, but of the serious accidents that occur, regardless of the knock-for-knock ones.

[15] What has caused this situation? The answer is fairly obvious; it is the Heath hospital. People do not seem to realise that, on that site, there is the hospital, the university, a dental college, a social club, residential blocks and, of course, a large administrative body of staff who work in the various buildings. With all due respect to the people involved in planning the hospital, the policy, to a certain extent, was short-sighted because, when they put things on the site, I do not think that they really considered the question of parking.

[16] For example, near the hospital, just off Allensbank road, is the Unite building. There are 600 students in that building and it was built with the co-operation of the university. There are 20 parking spaces on that site for 600 students. They are not supposed to park their cars within, I think, 3 km of the site, but I have looked into this carefully and there is no policing of that rule—no-one says if that rule is or is not working. In addition, some time ago, a plan was put forward to look at the traffic problem and there was talk about the use of buses, car sharing and so on. However, I asked to what extent that had been policed and followed up and what improvements had occurred and the answer was, 'We do not know'.

12.40 p.m.

[17] The other aspect to this, and the reason why they are cramming everything into the Heath site, is that they are selling hospital land all over Cardiff—I say 'they'; I mean the Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust. You only need to think of the number of hospital sites that have been built on and the number that might be built on in the future—for instance, the sites of Rhydlyfar hospital, the Royal Hamadryad Hospital, Ely Hospital and Lansdowne Hospital

have been built on. There was also a plan for the Cardiff Royal Infirmary and I know that I saw, at one time, that residential blocks or housing were to be built on that site. I know that there was also a plan for Whitchurch Hospital and, of course, St David's Hospital.

[18] This selling of land is not just to do with hospitals because it is also occurring all over Cardiff in relation to schools. It is a very short-sighted policy because with an increasingly ageing population, there will be more and more demand for hospital services, so where are the new hospitals going to come from and where are they going to be built? Once you sell the land, it is gone. You cannot replace land like that. You cannot say, 'We will have a new piece of land in the centre of Cardiff'. You just cannot do it. So, that is the cause of the problem. It is a short-sighted policy and they are cramming different units onto the site when they should be looking at decentralisation.

[19] I will make just a small point that has nothing to do with parking. I have been told by an expert in MRSA that if you had small hospital units, the problem of MRSA would be much more easily dealt with; however, when you concentrate facilities, MRSA is more difficult to control. I know that that has nothing to do with parking, but it was just a thought.

[20] I will now pass you over to Mr Jones from the Heath Residents Association, who will make some suggestions to the committee about trying to resolve this problem.

[21] **Val Lloyd:** Thank you very much, Councillor Page.

[22] **Mr Jones:** In the first instance, I would like to pass around some enlarged maps. It may be of benefit for you to look at them.

[23] I live in Heath Park Avenue; I have lived there for the last 20 years. Since 2005, I have been campaigning to get something done about the parking. I believe that the hospital has the best situation at the moment because it has free car parking and that free car parking is outside my house and about another 1,000 houses in the area. You can see, in the photographs, the congestion that is caused by the parked vehicles.

[24] The larger photograph of the hospital shows areas where multi-storey car parks could be built. If, for example, you took car park number 4, which is currently used for disabled parking and has 144 spaces, and built a multi-storey car park to the same height as the existing one, which is six storeys high, that would potentially give you in excess of 600 spaces. As you can see, I have listed a number of areas where there are car parks or where you could build multi-storey car parks.

[25] An application has recently been submitted by the university to knock down Radnor House. Radnor House is in the centre of what I call high-rise buildings and I asked at a meeting that I attended whether consideration had been given to putting in some car parking with the building and the answer to that was 'no'. No consideration whatsoever is given to car parking. Again, if you built a multi-storey in that area, you could park a large number of vehicles.

[26] There is also potential where the residential blocks are because those blocks, as you can see from the information that we have submitted, are not being used to the same extent as they were when the hospital was opened. It was estimated, when the hospital was opened, that 58 per cent of the clinical side of the staff were residential, but now there are only 190 people who are residential. There are 7,000 people working there, on the hospital staff, and I estimate that with the university and other places, such as Tenovus, there are probably another 3,000 on top. There are only 1,674 parking spaces for staff. Whichever way you want to put it, you will never get staff parking there. It is a statistical fact that 71 per cent of those who travel to work travel by car. Ultimately, the hospital management has to decide what it will do. At the

moment, it is just sitting on its hands doing nothing.

[27] I realise that such a building programme could not be done overnight. Realistically, however, this hospital has been open for nearly 40 years, and, in that time, the number of people who pass through the concourse—that does not necessarily mean the number of people who work there—has risen from around 4,000 to 5,000 a day to between 12,000 to 14,000 a day. I know that things have changed in the hospital, and treatment has changed, and it was put to me as an example of where beds are not needed, that 43,000 day surgery cases have been dealt with in a year. When the children's hospital is finished, there will be 54,000 outpatient appointments in a year. So, you can see the need for something to be done.

[28] We are asking for somebody to plan for that scenario and to start thinking about it now. As a temporary remedy, you may wish to look at Flaxland allotments, which I have marked on the map. There is an area of contaminated land there that has the potential to be open space, but at £220,000, the cost is prohibitive to any work starting now. I would ask you to look at that as a temporary option.

[29] In conclusion, I recently wrote to the council to say that I did not feel that a zebra crossing was needed at a certain location as there are not enough people to use it. The council wrote back, saying that it is often criticised for acting after the event, that is, once a serious accident, a fatality or the like has occurred. I ask you not to let that happen in this case. We do not want to see serious or fatal accidents, but that is what will happen if somebody does not do something.

[30] **Val Lloyd:** Thank you very much, Mr Jones.

[31] **Mr Page:** May I just mention a couple of things?

[32] **Val Lloyd:** I am sorry, but your time is up. I did indicate to Mr Jones that he had a minute left, and he finished within that minute. We will now ask questions. Who would like to start?

[33] **Michael German:** Turning to your plan of the proposals for multi-storey car parks and Flaxland allotments, given that the Welsh Assembly Government now has a policy that all car parking will be free at hospital sites, which means that any new parking facility would also be free, the only other source of income with which to build a car park would have to be the health budget. Would you agree with that?

[34] **Mr Jones:** Earlier this year, I attended the Assembly when Andrew Davies, the Minister for finance, clearly stated that, over the years, you had built up some £200 million that had not been spent. I would approve of that money being used for the plan. What I am saying, however, is that it has to be done in a planned way. You have given £13.5 million and £3.7 million a year to the Wales Millennium Centre. Or shall we take the botanic garden as an example? This is a hospital. This is an essential part of the community, where people have to get to work and where people do not want the frustration of trying to find a parking space before they can get into work. They go into the hospital to look after critically ill people. We realise that, and all I am asking you to do is to address the situation by providing the car parking for those people.

[35] **Michael German:** It is the Welsh Assembly Government, of course, that you are talking about, and not the National Assembly. Tell me about the Flaxland Avenue allotments site. To your knowledge, has the health trust made any application to use this site for any health purpose?

[36] **Mr Jones:** Not to my knowledge.

[37] **Michael German:** To your knowledge, has the health trust made any application or given any thought to introducing further car parking on site beyond that which is already there?

12.50 p.m.

[38] **Mr Jones:** The only thing that the trust has said is that it had some idea of a place to build a car park for 380 vehicles, but that has never come to fruition and there has never been a planning application for it.

[39] **Michael German:** Is it your expectation that the Welsh Assembly Government would set aside capital funding to provide more car parking spaces on site?

[40] **Mr Jones:** That is the only place that the money could come from.

[41] **Val Lloyd:** Before I bring in Andrew, I have a point for clarification on the £200 million that you said that Andrew Davies, the Minister for Finance and Public Service Delivery, said that we have saved. Can you recall where you heard that, because something in my head is telling me that the £200 million is what councils have saved, but I am not sure about that. I will get it checked out. However, it would be helpful if you could remember where you heard him say that.

[42] **Mr Jones:** It was earlier this year, when a financial report was given out. It was prior to any discussion of this petition going in. If Mr Davies can help you on the date of the visit, it was prior to that.

[43] **Val Lloyd:** Thank you. That is helpful, and I will check it out, but that is my recollection.

[44] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Thank you for coming in today—it is much appreciated. Obviously, I have an interest in this petition because the area falls within my regional constituency and these concerns have also been raised with me. To clarify, in the petition process we do not have a remit to instruct anyone to do anything—it is a charge to the Welsh Assembly Government to take what action it believes is necessary. The petitions process is about offering the ability to raise an issue, to look into that issue and, hopefully, make a recommendation. I heard the three of you saying that we should be doing x, y or z, but as a committee we have no power to do so.

[45] Lyn, you said that the hospital was built in 1971, so you would have a good understanding of the relationship that has existed for a considerable time. Has that relationship and dialogue with the local community deteriorated over time, and thus do local residents feel far more frustrated about the situation that is developing in the locality because of the breakdown in dialogue?

[46] Ron, you touched on the point, which is in my education brief, that school playing fields must be audited before they are allowed to be sold off. In England, there are strong guidelines in place to ensure that if a piece of land used for playing field purposes is sold off, an alternative is provided in its place. From your investigations, are you aware of any such obligations being placed on health boards before they consider the disposal of land? Is it just a case of the health board suddenly seeing that it can make a quick buck and that it can dispose of land willy-nilly? You are right to point out that a strategic view must be taken, and that you cannot create a new piece of land. As a farmer, I am aware of that more than anyone—they are not making any more land, especially in a city centre location. That is critical.

[47] John, you mentioned the use of multi-storey car parks, I can remember vividly the Heath hospital before current the multi-storey car parks were built on site. They do not meet the current requirements, but the hospital seemed to contain itself reasonably well before there was a multi-storey car park—my wife trained at the Health hospital in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and although there was an element of overspill, there was nowhere near the overspill that we currently have. So, was there an element of respite when the new multi-storey car parks were built? Therefore, could we reasonably expect a respite to occur should expenditure be incurred by the health board in developing multi-storeys on the site, or will it be a false economy to develop them? We need more parking but there is no more land, so the only way that you can go is up, is it not?

[48] **Mr Jones:** As far as I am concerned, the building of multi-storeys would alleviate a great percentage of the problems that exist. If the hospital worked towards a co-ordinated package and not only built multi-storeys—it has issued only 3,500 parking permits for staff but it will not carry out a survey to find out why people do not park in the hospital; it might help if it carried out that survey and found better locations for park-and-ride schemes—but implemented some parking restrictions, it would alleviate the problems in our area.

[49] **Mr Page:** I am not sure to what extent I have already emphasised this point, but we are not only talking about building multi-storeys. There is also a question of decentralisation, because too much is in the Heath at the moment. I remember when the medical college was located elsewhere and when more services were located at Cardiff Royal Infirmary—when all those units were not collected together. I know that there is an argument that, for clinical purposes, it is nice to have the university next to the hospital, and so on and so forth, but this question of decentralisation should be looked at carefully. The important point there is that you do not sell hospital land for housing, because you might need it in the future. I am repeating myself, but it is not just about building multi-storey car parks, there is also a question of decentralisation.

[50] Mr German asked whether we think that this money should be taken from the hospital budget. That is a difficult question for us but, surely, the answer is that you must address the problem—not you, but the trust, and we would hope that you would recommend that the trust recognises and addresses the problem. We all know that money is in short supply, but you cannot go on saying, for example, ‘We should spend the money on a cancer unit. Where shall we put that? We’ll put it in the Heath’.

[51] **Val Lloyd:** We are straying from the point. I take your main point, but we have further questions that we would like to ask, and we may be able to answer some that you have already raised. We only have five minutes left. Before I call on Bethan, I will quickly read what the Minister has already said about centralising services, because we took that point up with her:

[52] ‘I am not aware of a policy that advocates “centralising” services at Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust. My aim is to provide services as locally as possible allowing ease of access wherever and whenever possible. There are situations, however, when certain more specialist services have to be provided on a more centralised basis for very good clinical reasons.’

[53] So, there is no formal policy of centralising on that site apart from when there is a clinical need.

[54] **Bethan Jenkins:** I have two questions. Thank you for your presentation and your report. We have a letter from the Minister in front of us, dated 30 July, outlining plans for car-sharing schemes in the local area and for information points to be placed throughout the hospital to give information on other methods of transport, such as taxis and buses. Have you been made aware of those, and if you have, how effectively are they being implemented?

[55] My second question is on the restricted parking issue. I know that this is a matter for the local authority, but what discussions have you had with those who run the council about enhanced permits for those who live in the area? Has it come back to you with any concerns about financial difficulties in implementing such policies?

[56] **Mr Page:** I will answer the last question first. We have had discussions with the local authority, but part of the petition, to which I referred earlier—and perhaps we have got this wrong—refers to the Assembly making some recommendations to the local council. Perhaps that was not the right way to do it and we need to do it separately, but that was part of the petition. We have had discussions.

[57] As for the proposal in the letter, I must say quite clearly that I am not impressed, because we have been down the road of car sharing and bus use before, as I said earlier, and it was never fully monitored. If you carefully read through what has been said, does it impress you? It does not impress me. I will leave it there.

1.00 p.m.

[58] **Mr Jones:** The proof of the pudding is in the eating. I am aware that it has been doing this for the last couple of years. If you lived in my bungalow, you would see no difference. The parking problem has spread from Heath Park Avenue and Heathwood Road, where it was to start with, to Heathway, Ton-yr-Ywen Avenue, St Gowan Avenue, and throughout the Heath.

[59] **Bethan Jenkins:** So, nothing has changed or improved as a result of this letter?

[60] **Mr Jones:** No. If you stood there in the morning, you would see how many people get out of the cars—just one person per car. Stand at the hospital gates, and you will see that there is one person per car going in.

[61] **Bethan Jenkins:** My other question relates to the evidence that you gave on the development of the children's hospital. Have you seen any plans from the Minister, or from the trust, with regard to providing more parking for out-patients? Is that being factored into any new schemes?

[62] **Mr Jones:** I attend regular meetings with the hospital, and there are no plans for more parking. At a recent meeting, hospital representatives tried to tell me that they had increased the parking available, but I had a letter in 2005 stating that there were 2,849 spaces, and three years later, there are 2,850—one additional place.

[63] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I would like to bring Lyn back in on the question of whether the dialogue is getting better or worse. On the reasoning, there is no direct policy of centralisation at the Heath but, if my memory serves me correctly, there was talk of a new hospital being built when the bulk of the Cardiff Royal Infirmary was closed. That never came into being, and the services had to move somewhere, so they have gone to the University Hospital of Wales, at Heath. I think that we all recognise that was not a policy of centralisation—

[64] **Mr Page:** But it has happened.

[65] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** If there is only one place to move services, then that is where they have to go.

[66] **Ms Hudson:** Can I come back in on that? Andrew mentioned the closure of CRI

departments, so he obviously remembers the accident and emergency department moving to the Heath. There is constant dialogue, but there is currently no greater provision for parking than that which was already available at the Heath. The accident and emergency department caters for a lot of people from a wide, outlying area, and it is very congested at times. It does not just serve the people of the Heath.

[67] To give an example of the problem, there is one road where visitors park along both sides. I wanted restricted parking or residents' parking to be introduced, or for it to have access-only status. I was told that none of those options was available, but visitors parking on both sides of the road means there is no access for essential services. A friend of mine was dying of cancer, and when she needed an ambulance, it could not drive down the middle of the street. It had to stop at the top, and her husband ferried her over to the ambulance in their car.

[68] **Val Lloyd:** I must draw this discussion to a close now, because we are out of time. Thank you for joining us today, and for your presentation, your answers to our questions, and the supporting documents that you provided. If you would like to adjourn to the public gallery while we hear from the next petitioners, we will then discuss your case when you are settled. So, you will be able to hear all of our deliberations.

1.03 p.m.

Coleg Ffederal Cymraeg Welsh-language Federal College

[69] **Val Lloyd:** Good afternoon, and welcome to the Petitions Committee. Perhaps you would like to introduce yourselves. The microphones work automatically.

[70] **Ms Machreth:** Fy enw i yw Menna Machreth, a myfi yw cadeirydd Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg. Yr wyf hefyd yn fyfyrwraig doethuriaeth ym Mhrifysgol Bangor.

Ms Machreth: My name is Menna Machreth and I am the chair of the Welsh Language Society. I am also studying for a doctorate at Bangor University.

[71] **Mr Llwyd:** Fy enw yw Rhys Llwyd, ac yr wyf yn is-gadeirydd Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg. Yr wyf hefyd yn fyfyrwr ymchwil ym Mhrifysgol Bangor.

Mr Llwyd: My name is Rhys Llwyd, and I am a deputy chair of the Welsh Language Society. I am also a research student at Bangor University.

[72] **Val Lloyd:** Thank you. I am sure that you know the procedure, to some extent, but I will elaborate so that you are fully au fait with it. You will have 15 minutes in which to make your presentation. You can make it in any way you wish, but we adhere to the time limit. That will then be followed by up to 15 minutes of questioning by Members, and I will take it from there when we finish that section. Please start whenever you are ready.

[73] **Mr Llwyd:** Cychwynnaf drwy roi cyd-destun y ddeiseb, ac esbonio pam y bu inni ei llunio a'i hanfon at y Gweinidog dros Blant, Addysg, Dysgu Gydol Oes a Sgiliau yn ystod yr haf. Y cyd-destun gwleidyddol i'r ddeiseb oedd bod y mudiad iaith wedi'i siomi nad oedd yr addewid o gael papur newydd dyddiol Cymraeg wedi'i wireddu gan y Llywodraeth. Yn yr hinsawdd honno, yr

Mr Llwyd: I will start by placing the petition in context, and explaining why we drafted it and sent it to the Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills during the summer. The political context of the petition was that the Welsh-language movement was disappointed that the pledge to have a Welsh-language daily newspaper had not been delivered by the Government. In

oeddem yn gofidio y byddai rhai o addewidion eraill 'Cymru'n Un' o ran yr iaith hefyd yn cael eu torri, neu y byddai'r Llywodraeth yn dweud ei bod wedi cadw'r addewid heb wneud dim ond symud y pyst.

that climate, we were concerned that some of the other 'One Wales' promises regarding the language would also be broken, or that the Government would say that it had delivered a pledge when it had simply moved the goalposts.

[74] Yng nghyd-destun coleg ffederal Cymraeg, yr oedd yn ofid gennym y byddai'r addewid gwreiddiol yn cael ei is-raddio i wneud dim mwy na sefydlu bwrdd i ddatblygu addysg Gymraeg. Mae gwahaniaeth, wrth gwrs, rhwng sefydliad statudol, fel coleg, a haen arall o fwrdd o fewn y fframwaith addysg presennol. O ganlyniad i'r gofid hwnnw, cawsom drafodaethau gydag Aelodau dwy blaid y Llywodraeth, ond gwaethygu ein gofidiau yn unig wnaeth y cyfarfodydd hyn ac nid eu lleddfu.

In the context of a Welsh-medium federal college, it was a concern of ours that the original pledge would be downgraded to do no more than establish a development board for Welsh-medium education. There is, of course, a difference between a statutory organisation, such as a college, and some other layer of a board within the existing education framework. As a result of that concern, we held discussions with Members of both Government parties, but those meetings heightened rather than alleviated our concerns.

[75] Yn wyneb hynny, aethom ati i greu'r ddeiseb hon. Cyn imi drosglwyddo at Menna i egluro'r hyn y mae'r ddeiseb yn ei ddweud, efallai y dylwn nodi ein bod wedi casglu'r rhan fwyaf o'r llofnodion ar faes Eisteddfod yr Urdd, sef gŵyl ieuencid fwyaf Ewrop, ac felly, mae'r rhan fwyaf o'r enwau sydd arni yn cynrychioli ieuencid Cymru, sef yr union bobl a fyddai'n elwa fwyaf o ddatblygu coleg ffederal Cymraeg. Hwy yw myfyrwyr y dyfodol na fyddant, o dan y drefn bresennol, efallai, yn cael yr hawl i addysg Gymraeg yn ein prifysgolion. Gobeithio, o gael coleg ffederal Cymraeg cyflawn yn ei le y bydd y bobl a lofnododd y ddeiseb yn cael addysg Gymraeg gyflawn. Fe'ch trosglwyddaf yn awr at Menna a fydd yn siarad am y ddeiseb yn ei manylder.

It was in light of that that we started to draft this petition. Before I hand over to Menna to explain what the petition says, perhaps I should note that we got most of the signatures at the Urdd Eisteddfod, the largest youth festival in Europe, and so, most of the names on it represent the youth of Wales, who are the very people who will benefit most from the development of a Welsh-medium federal college. They are the students of the future, who will not, under the current system, perhaps, have the right to a Welsh-medium education in our universities. Hopefully, with a full Welsh-medium federal college in place, the signatories to the petition will be able to access a full Welsh-medium education. I will now transfer you to Menna who will talk you through the detail of the petition.

[76] **Ms Machreth:** Af â chi drwy pedair egwyddor y ddeiseb, gan roi ychydig o gefndir i bob un. Credwn mai'r pedair egwyddor hon sy'n sylfaenol i goleg ffederal Cymraeg.

Ms Machreth: I will take you through the four principles of the petition, giving you some background to each of them. We believe that these four principles are fundamental to a Welsh-medium federal college.

[77] Yr egwyddor gyntaf yw bod y coleg ffederal Cymraeg yn cael statws statudol a chyfansoddiad annibynnol. Credwn ei bod yn bwysig bod gan y coleg y statws hwnnw, oherwydd bydd yn gorff a fydd yn ymroddedig i addysg Gymraeg, sy'n dangos pwysigrwydd cael corff a fydd yn datblygu addysg Gymraeg. Y nod yw cynyddu'r

The first principle is that the college should have statutory status and an independent constitution. We believe that it is important that the college has that status, as it would be a body dedicated to Welsh-medium education, which would demonstrate the importance of having a body that will develop Welsh-medium education. The aim

ddarpariaeth o fewn y prifysgolion presennol, a hoffwn bwysleisio nad coleg daearyddol fydd hwn a fyddai'n gwahanu myfyrwyr Cymraeg eu hiaith a myfyrwyr Saesneg eu hiaith, ond coleg Cymraeg a fyddai'n gweithio drwy'r prifysgolion a'r sefydliadau addysg uwch. Bydd yn gorff a fydd yn gyrru datblygu addysg Gymraeg, oherwydd, ar hyn o bryd, nid yw'r ewyllys gan brifysgolion i yrru'r agenda honno, oherwydd dim ond un ystyriaeth ydyw ymysg nifer. Felly, teimlwn fod angen sefydliad a fydd yn rhoi'r pwyslais hwnnw ar ddatblygu addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg.

is to increase provision within existing universities, and I want to emphasise that we are not talking about a geographical college that would separate Welsh-speaking and English-speaking students, but a Welsh-medium college that would work via the universities and higher education institutions. It would be a body to drive the development of Welsh-medium education, because, at present, universities do not have the will to drive this agenda, as it is just one consideration among many. So, we feel that an institution is needed that will emphasise the development of Welsh-medium education.

1.10 p.m.

[78] Yr ail egwyddor yr ydym yn teimlo ei bod yn hollbwysig yw bod gan y coleg lif ariannol annibynnol. Ar hyn o bryd, nid oes yr un pot ar gyfer addysg Gymraeg, ac mae'r arian ar ei chyfer yn cael ei rannu'n denau iawn rhwng llawer o gyllidebau gwahanol. Hefyd, mae systemau megis y ffioedd atodol a phremiymau i fodiwlau cyfrwng Cymraeg yn gwneud sefyllfa ariannol addysg Gymraeg yn annelwig. Byddai'n well pe bai gan goleg ffederal Cymraeg reolaeth i allu monitro'r arian sydd ar gael ar gyfer addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg ac wedyn yn gallu ei ddyrannu i amryw adrannau a darlithwyr yn y sefydliadau addysg uwch presennol er mwyn iddynt hwy ddatblygu addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg.

The second principle that we feel is crucial is that the federal college must have an independent funding stream. Currently, there is no single pot for Welsh-medium education and what funding there is for it is spread very thinly, across many and varied budgets. In addition, such systems as top-up fees and premiums for Welsh-medium modules make the funding situation for Welsh-medium education obscure. It would be desirable for the Welsh-medium federal college to have control so that it can monitor Welsh-medium education funding and then distribute it among the various departments and lecturers in the current higher education institutions, so that they can develop Welsh-medium education.

[79] Yr ydym wedi nodi bod angen £20 miliwn i ddatblygu'r coleg ffederal. Yr ydym wedi cyrraedd y ffigur hwnnw am fod y Llywodraeth wedi dweud ei bod am i 3 i 4 y cant o fyfyrwyr sy'n astudio yng Nghymru ddilyn rhywfaint o'u cyrsiau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg, ac, o edrych ar gyllideb Cyngor Cyllido Addysg Uwch Cymru, felly, gwelwn mai £20 miliwn yw 3 i 4 y cant ohoni.

We have noted that £20 million would be necessary to develop a federal college. We arrived at that figure because the Government has said that it wants 3 to 4 per cent of students who study in Wales to follow part of their courses through the medium of Welsh, and so, looking at the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales's budget, we see that 3 to 4 per cent of it amounts to £20 million.

[80] Ers cytuno 'Cymru'n Un', byddai'r sawl sy'n ymchwilio i bwnc coleg ffederal yn gweld mai dau fodel yn unig sydd ar y bwrdd o ran ei strwythur. Daw'r un o Gylch yr Iaith a'r llall gan Gymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg ac undebau'r myfyrwyr ar y cyd. Byddai unrhyw un sydd wedi ymchwilio i hyn yn dweud wrthyfych y bydd coleg ffederal

Since 'One Wales' was agreed, anyone who has researched the subject of a federal college will have seen that there are only two models on the table relating to its structure. One comes from Cylch yr Iaith and the other from the Welsh Language Society and students' unions jointly. Anyone who has researched this would tell you that a Welsh-medium

Cymraeg yn costio £15 miliwn o leiaf i'w weithredu. Yr ydym yn wirioneddol yn meddwl bod angen swm sylweddol o arian ar unrhyw fodel os ydych chi i lwyddo. Heb hynny, ni fydd sefydliadau addysg uwch yn cydnabod coleg ffederal Cymraeg nac yn gweld unrhyw werth mewn cydweithio ag ef.

[81] Y drydedd egwyddor yw ei bod yn bwysig i'r coleg ffederal gael siartr benodol er mwyn gwneud nod y coleg yn hollol eglur. Dylai holl waith y coleg arwain at y nod hwnnw. Credwn mai datblygu darpariaeth ac ymchwil cyfrwng Cymraeg y dylai'r nod hwnnw fod.

[82] Mae a wnelo pedwaredd egwyddor y ddeiseb â chofrestru annibynnol. Pan fydd myfyriwr yn cofrestru am gwrs a ariennir gan y coleg ffederal, bydd yn amlwg yn cofrestru gyda'r sefydliad addysg uwch pa le bynnag y bo, ond bydd hefyd yn cofrestru yn awtomatig gyda'r coleg ffederal. Mae hyn er mwyn i'r myfyrwyr deimlo perchnogaeth dros y sefydliad. Credwn fod hynny'n bwysig o'r cychwyn cyntaf.

[83] **Mr Llwyd:** Yr ydym wedi nodi llythyr Jane Hutt yn ymateb i'r ddeiseb, a chroesawn sefydlu'r bwrdd dan arweiniad Robin Williams i edrych ar sut mae rhoi'r coleg ffederal ar waith. Fodd bynnag, mae dau beth yr hoffem eu nodi mewn ymateb. Yn gyntaf, erbyn i'r bwrdd adrodd yn ôl i'r Gweinidog addysg, bydd blwyddyn arall bron wedi mynd heibio, a byddwn yn bell i mewn i'r trydydd Cynulliad cyn i ddim byd gael ei wneud. Felly, rhaid inni, yr ymgyrchwyr yn y maes, holi'r Llywodraeth o ran ei blaenoriaethau ym myd addysg Gymraeg yn y sector addysg uwch os yw'n cymryd y ddwy flynedd gyntaf dim ond i gael ein traed ar y ddaear heb sôn am sefydlu'r peth.

[84] Yn ail, cawsom addewidion gan y Gweinidog ac yna gan gadeirydd y bwrdd y byddai'r bwrdd yn eang ei gynrychiolaeth ac y byddai amrediad eang o randdeiliaid addysg Gymraeg yn cael eu cynrychioli arno. Fodd bynnag, nid yw undebau myfyrwyr Cymraeg yn cael eu cynrychioli, a byddai dyn yn meddwl bod y myfyrwyr ei hun yn rhanddeiliaid go bwysig. Nid yw mudiadau fel Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg wedi'u cynrychioli ar y bwrdd, ac yr wyf yn siŵr y

federal college will cost at least £15 million to operate. We genuinely believe that a vast sum of money is required if any model is to succeed. Without that, higher education institutions will neither acknowledge a Welsh-medium federal college nor appreciate the value of collaborating with it.

The third principle is that it is important that the federal college has a specific charter to make the aim of the college crystal clear. All the work of the college should focus on that aim. We believe that that aim should be to develop Welsh-medium provision and research.

The fourth principle in the petition relates to independent registration. When a student registers for a course that is funded by the federal college, he or she will clearly register with the nearest higher education establishment, wherever that is, but that person will also register automatically at the federal college. That is for the student to feel a sense of ownership over the institution. We think that that is important from the off.

Mr Llwyd: We have noted Jane Hutt's letter of response to the petition, and we welcome the establishment of the board under the chairmanship of Robin Williams, to consider the implementation of a federal college. However, there are two things that we would like to note in response. First, by the time the board reports back to the Minister for education, almost a year will have passed, and we will be deep into the third Assembly before anything is done. So we, as campaigners in the field, must ask where the Government's priorities are on Welsh-medium education in the HE sector if it takes the first two years just to get our feet on the ground, never mind establishing the thing.

Secondly, we were promised by the Minister and then the chair of the board that representation on the board would be broad and that a wide variety of stakeholders in Welsh-medium education would be represented on it. However, the Welsh students' unions are not represented on the board, and one would imagine that the students themselves would be quite important stakeholders. Organisations such as Parents for Welsh Medium Education are not

byddech yn cytuno bod rhieni darpar myfyrwyr hefyd yn rhanddeiliaid. Yn ôl y disgwyl, mae'r holl brifysgolion presennol yn cael eu cynrychioli, ond byddwn yn awgrymu bod tuedd tuag at y prifysgolion traddodiadol, ac nid oes digon o gynrychiolaeth ar y bwrdd o randdeiliad mwy cyffredinol, fel y myfyrwyr a'r rhieni.

represented on the board, and I am sure that you would agree that the parents of potential students are also stakeholders. As expected, all existing universities are represented, but I would suggest that there is a bias towards the traditional universities, and not enough representation on the board of more general stakeholders, such as students and parents.

[85] I gloi, gofynnwn ichi, y Pwyllgor Deisebau, i gyfleu'r neges i'r Gweinidog dros Blant, Addysg, Dysgu Gydol Oes a Sgiliau ein bod yn gofidio y bydd yr addewid o sefydlu coleg ffederal yn cael ei wanhau. Yr ydym yn pwysu arnoch i fynd â'r neges i Jane Hutt ein bod am iddi gadw at yr addewid o sefydlu coleg ffederal Cymraeg ac i sicrhau nad yw'r addewid yn cael ei israddio fel ein bod yn cael rhyw fwrdd yn lle.

To close, we ask you, the Petitions Committee, to take the message to the Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills that we are concerned that the pledge to establish a federal college will be diluted. We urge you to take the message to Jane Hutt that we want her to keep her promise to establish a Welsh-medium federal college and to ensure that that pledge is not dumbed down so that we get some board in its place.

[86] **Val Lloyd:** My reading of the Minister's recent written statement on this seems to indicate that you are a member of the planning committee. Could you confirm that?

[87] **Mr Llwyd:** Yes. I said that students are not represented on the board, and I sit on the board as the author of one of the only two models, not as a student.

[88] **Val Lloyd:** I have you down as representing the Welsh Language Society. That was in the Minister's statement.

[89] **Mr Llwyd:** Yes.

[90] **Val Lloyd:** That is just for the record. Thank you for your presentation, which did not take up the full time allocated. I will now open it up to Members.

[91] **Bethan Jenkins:** Diolch am yr adroddiad ac am eich geiriau. Rhys, yr wyt newydd ddweud dy fod ar y pwyllgor newydd hwn. A fyddai unrhyw beth llai neu fwy yn dy blesio o ran yr hyn a drafodir ar y pwyllgor newydd, sef o ran y statws statudol, y siatr annibynnol, a'r arian yr ydych yn sôn amdano? Mae pobl eraill o gwmpas y bwrdd, a rhaid trafod y materion hyn yn agored. A fyddet yn derbyn llai na'r hyn yr wyt wedi sôn amdano yn y fan hon?

Bethan Jenkins: Thank you for the report and for your words. Rhys, you just said that you are on this new committee. Is there anything less or anything more that would please you as regards what is discussed on the new committee, in relation to statutory status, an independent charter, and the funding that you mentioned? There are other people around the table, and these matters have to be discussed openly. Would you accept less than you have spoken about here?

[92] Dywedaist fod y Llywodraeth wedi bod yn eistedd ar hwn, ond mae'n ymrwymiad gan Lywodraeth Cymru'n Un i sefydlu coleg ffederal, ac mae'n dda ein bod yn trafod beth ydyw. Pe bai'r Llywodraeth wedi dweud mai hwn a hwn fyddai'r coleg ffederal, heb ymgynghori ar ei strwythur, byddai'r gymdeithas wedi cwyno am hynny.

You said that the Government has been sitting on this, but it is a commitment of the One Wales Government to establish a federal college, and it is good that we are discussing what it will be. If the Government had said that the federal college would be this or that without consulting on it, the society would probably have complained about that. So, is it

Felly, onid yw'n werth cael yr ymgynghoriad hwn? Yn amlwg, mae angen i myfyrwyr gael eu cynrychioli ar y bwrdd, a chredaf y byddai hynny'n sbarduno trafodaeth. Onid yw'n dda, felly, ein bod yn ymgynghori ar y peth yn y lle cyntaf?

[93] **Mr Llwyd:** Ydy. Yr ydym yn agored iawn i drafod y manylion. Wedi dweud hynny, yr ydym yn credu y dylai'r pedair egwyddor fod yn sail i'r drafodaeth am y manylion. Pe baech wedi holi unrhyw un a oedd yn gweithio yn y maes ddwy flynedd yn ôl pan gytnwyd i addewid y Llywodraeth, byddent wedi gallu dweud pa bwyntiau oedd yn disgrifio'r coleg ffederal, oherwydd yr oedd y dogfennau ar y bwrdd, ac yr oedd y gwleidyddion yn gallu troi atynt os oeddent yn dymuno gwneud. Os yw'r Llywodraeth yn awr yn dweud, 'O na, nid dyna beth yw'r coleg ffederal', mae hynny bach yn gamarweiniol. Os nad oedd yn bwriadu cadw at yr egwyddorion, byddai wedi bod yn fwy onest iddi ymrwymo i ddatblygu addysg Gymraeg yn lle. Yr wyf yn eistedd ar fwrdd Robin Williams, a byddaf yn dadlau yn y cyfarfodydd cyntaf bod angen trafodaeth am y manylion, ond hefyd bod angen inni, yn weithgor, osod egwyddorion y coleg ffederal yn gyntaf. Mae'n sefydliad ac yn goleg ac nid yn ddim ond haen o fwrdd dros sefydliadau presennol.

1.20 p.m.

[94] **Bethan Jenkins:** Felly, o dy safbwynt di, ni fyddai newid o ran y pedwar peth craidd hyn. Byddai egwyddorion y prifysgolion yn wahanol i dy egwyddorion. Mae'n bosibl na fyddant yn cytuno â dy fodel o goleg ffederal.

[95] **Mr Llwyd:** Mae'r prifysgolion presennol wedi ei gwneud yn hysbys ers tro eu bod yn gwrthwynebu coleg ffederal. Am y rheswm hwn, hoffwn weld gwleidyddion yn cymryd y cam cyntaf a dweud wrth y prifysgolion bod yr ewyllys gwleidyddol wedi newid a'u bod am weld coleg ffederal, a bod angen iddynt ymateb i hynny. Yn y pen draw, y gwleidyddion sydd wedi eu hethol, nid arweinwyr y prifysgolion.

[96] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Thank you for your evidence and the papers that you have provided in support of the petition. To carry on with an element of what Bethan has said, the

not worth having this consultation? Clearly, students need to be represented on the board, and I believe that that will stimulate the discussion. Therefore, is it not a good thing that we are consulting on this in the first place?

Mr Llwyd: Yes. We are very open to discussing the details. Having said that, we believe that the four principles should be a basis for the discussion on the details. If you had asked anyone working in the field two years ago, when the Government pledge was agreed to, they would have been able to tell you what points described the federal college, as the documents were on the table, and the politicians could turn to them had they wanted to. If the Government is now saying, 'Oh no, that is not what a federal college is', that is slightly misleading. If it had no intention of keeping to the principles, it would have been more honest of the Government to make a commitment to develop Welsh-medium education instead. I sit on Robin Williams's board, and I will argue in the first meetings that we need to discuss the details, but also that we need, as a working group, to draw up the principles of the Welsh federal college first. It is an institution and a college and not only a layer of a board above the current institutions.

Bethan Jenkins: Therefore, from your point of view, there would be no change with regard to these four core things. The principles of the universities would differ from yours. It is possible that they would not agree with your model of a federal college.

Mr Llwyd: The current universities have made it known for quite a while that they are opposed to the idea of a federal college. For this reason, I would like to see politicians taking the initiative and telling the universities that the political will has changed and that they want to see a federal college, and that they need to respond to that. In the end, it is politicians who are elected, not university leaders.

petition is quite clear as to what it asks for, with the four pledges. In particular, the bottom line is that it would be breaking a promise if those four pledges are not met. However, from the evidence that you have given, Rhys, you have clearly already put those four to the Labour-Plaid Government in the Assembly and you said that it had 'denied' them; it has said 'no'. That is my understanding of what you said. The difficulty that we have in determining this petition is that the Minister has set out her path and has set up the body. I cannot detract from that, because, if you are going to have such a fundamental change in higher education, then it is about bringing all of the partners together, with all of them then contributing to the pot. Then the politicians come out with the decision that they see as being the fairest for the interested parties. The higher education sector in Wales, as we all know, faces a severe funding crisis. You have a figure of £20 million; I am sure that all of the higher education institutions would love to go to the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales's budget and work out their percentage pro-rata rate. There are many things to consider. It is about having confidence. Do you have confidence in the body that has been established to look into this and come out with recommendations?

[97] **Ms Machreth:** Penodwyd Robin Williams fel cadeirydd ar y bwrdd newydd. Yr ydym yn hapus gyda'r ffordd y mae'n arwain y bwrdd ar hyn o bryd. Mae'r bobl sydd ar y bwrdd yn rhoi gwybodaeth iddo. Felly, ei gasgliad annibynnol ef fydd yn mynd at y Gweinidog fis Mai, a'r Gweinidog fydd yn dewis beth i wneud gyda'r adroddiad.

Ms Machreth: Robin Williams has been appointed to chair the new board. We are happy with the way in which he is leading the board at the moment. Those who sit on the board provide him with information. Therefore, it is his personal conclusion that will be presented in May to the Minister, who will then decide what to do with the report.

[98] Credaf fod angen i ni beidio â meddwl am roi arian i'r Gymraeg fel rhywbeth ychwanegol. Mae unrhyw arian sy'n cael ei roi i'r Gymraeg yn cael ei weld fel rhywbeth ychwanegol ar ben yr hyn sydd yno'n barod. Pe bai Cyngor Cyllido Addysg Uwch Cymru yn rhoi £5 miliwn, er enghraifft, i'r adran ffiseg yn Abertawe, nid ydym yn dweud, 'Dyma £5 miliwn ychwanegol i addysg Saesneg'. Felly, mae meddwl am y Gymraeg fel rhywbeth ychwanegol yn anghywir. Os yw'r Llywodraeth o ddifrif am roi blaenoriaeth i ddatblygu addysg Gymraeg, mae'n rhaid iddo wneud yr ymateb hwn yn flaenoriaeth. Felly, yr ydym yn falch bod Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg yn cael y cyfle i fod yn rhan o'r bwrdd a rhoi mewnbwn. Fel y dywedodd Rhys, dau bapur sydd ar y bwrdd pan gyfeiriwn at goleg ffederal. Mae'r ddau bapur yn eithaf tebyg o ran eu hegwyddorion. Pan gynhwyswyd y coleg ffederal yng nghytundeb 'Cymru'n Un', yr egwyddorion hyn oedd yng nghefn meddwl y gwleidyddion.

I do not think that we should see money given to the Welsh language as something additional. Any money that is given to the Welsh language is seen as something that is additional to what is there already. If the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales gave £5 million, for example, to the physics department at Swansea, we would not be saying, 'Here is an additional £5 million for English-medium education'. Therefore, thinking about Welsh as being something additional is wrong. If the Government is serious about giving priority to developing Welsh-medium education, it has to make this response a priority. Therefore, we are pleased that the Welsh Language Society has a chance to be a part of the board and to have an input. As Rhys said, there are two papers on the table when we talk about a federal college. The principles of the two papers are fairly similar. When the federal college was included in the 'One Wales' agreement, these principles were in the minds of politicians.

[99] **Mr Llwyd:** Rhof enghraifft o sut mae'r *status quo* yn cropan ei ddylanwad ar y bwrdd. Pan sefydlodd y Gweinidog dros

Mr Llwyd: I will give an example of how the status quo is having an influence on this board. When the Minister for Children,

Blant, Addysg, Dysgu Gydol Oes a Sgiliau'r bwrdd hwn, ei geiriau oedd:

Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills established this board, her exact words were:

[100] The board's sole purpose will be to look into and establish a Welsh federal college.

[101] Yn dilyn cyfarfod cyntaf y bwrdd, cyhoeddwyd mai un o bwrpasau'r bwrdd oedd datblygu'r cynlluniau presennol. Mae hynny'n dangos sut mae dylanwad y *status quo* a'r prifysgolion yn cael effaith ar safbwynt y bwrdd.

Following the first meeting of the board, it was announced that one of its purposes was to develop the present plans. That shows how the influence of the status quo and the universities is having an effect on the board's position.

[102] **Bethan Jenkins:** A fydddech wedi trafod hynny er mwyn newid cylch gwaith y drafodaeth ar ôl y cyfarfod cyntaf?

Bethan Jenkins: Would you have discussed that in order to change the remit of discussion after that first meeting?

[103] **Mr Llwyd:** Cytunwyd y byddem yn trafod pethau dadleuol yn yr ail gyfarfod, ond er gwaethaf hynny, rhyddhaodd ochr weinyddol y grŵp ddatganiad i'r wasg, gan anwybyddu cwestiynau a godais. Felly, yr ydym yn poeni bod gan y bwrdd duedd naturiol tuag at y *status quo*, sydd yn mynd yn groes i'r hyn a ddywedodd y Gweinidog, sef

Mr Llwyd: We agreed that we would discuss contentious issues in the second meeting, but despite that, the administrative side of the group released a press release, ignoring questions that I had raised. So, we are concerned that this board has a natural bias towards the status quo, which is contrary to what the Minister has said, that

[104] its sole purpose will be to establish a Welsh federal college.

[105] **Val Lloyd:** I need to clarify a point. I do not wish to be party to what went on in the meeting, because that would be for those who were at that meeting, but in the meeting that you attended, which included all the participants, are you saying that there was no consensus? The notice that we had from the Minister sets out the terms of reference. It was published on 3 November and is in the public domain. I always considered that to be factual and the Minister has published it as such.

[106] **Mr Llwyd:** Byddem wedi dymuno i'r bwrdd hwn fod wedi dweud o'r dechrau nad oedd y *status quo* yn opsiwn ac mai pwrpas y bwrdd oedd sefydlu coleg ffederal Cymraeg er mwyn gwireddu addewid y Llywodraeth. Ond mae wedi gwrthod dweud nad yw'r *status quo* yn opsiwn. Fel ymgyrchwyr yn y maes—wrth gwrs, ni fydd pawb ar y bwrdd yn cytuno ar bob manylyn—byddem yn hoffi o leiaf dechrau ar y nodyn nad yw'r sefyllfa bresennol yn opsiwn.

Mr Llwyd: I would have liked this board to have said from the outset that the status quo is not an option and that the purpose of the board was to establish a Welsh federal college in order to realise the pledge made by the Government. However, it has refused to say that the status quo is not an option. As campaigners in this area—of course, not every board member will agree on every detail—we would like to at least have started on the note that the status quo would not be an option.

[107] **Val Lloyd:** That will have to be discussed in the board's meetings; you are a member of that board.

[108] **Bethan Jenkins:** Yr oeddwn yn mynd i ddweud yr un peth. Yr oedd pleidlais ar ganlyniad y cyfarfod ond nid oeddech wedi cytuno y dylai'r datganiad i'r wasg a

Bethan Jenkins: I was going to say the same. There was a vote on the outcome of the meeting, but you had not agreed that the press release that was issued should change

ryddhawyd newid yr hyn a drafodwyd yn y cyfarfod. what was discussed in the meeting.

[109] **Mr Llwyd:** Nid oedd pleidlais. Cytunwyd i'w drafod yn y cyfarfod nesaf, ond er gwaethaf hynny, rhyddhawyd datganiad i'r wasg heb bleidlais gan aelodau'r bwrdd. **Mr Llwyd:** There was no vote. We agreed to discuss it at the next meeting, but despite that, a press release was issued without a vote by board members.

[110] Y pryder yw bod tuedd sefydliadol yn hytrach na thuedd tuag at sefydlu rhywbeth ffres a newydd. The concern is that there is an institutional leaning rather than a leaning towards establishing something new and fresh.

[111] **Michael German:** I would like to get to grips with this issue. I thank you for your evidence so far, but I am slightly more confused than I was when I first read the evidence and when I heard your initial statements. To be absolutely clear, are you content or not with the terms of reference that the Minister laid out for this board?

[112] **Mr Llwyd:** Yr wyf yn hapus â'r cylch gorchwyl a bennwyd gan y Gweinidog, ond mae papurau'r bwrdd yn wahanol i hynny. Dywedodd y Gweinidog mai ei unig bwrpas oedd sefydlu coleg ffederal Cymraeg, ond mae papurau'r bwrdd yn nodi pethau fel datblygu ar y strwythur presennol ac yn y blaen, sy'n wahanol i sefydlu coleg ffederal Cymraeg. **Mr Llwyd:** I am happy with the terms of reference set out by the Minister, but the board's papers are different. The Minister said that its sole purpose was to establish a Welsh federal college, but the board's papers note things like developing the current structure and so on, which is different from establishing a Welsh federal college.

[113] **Michael German:** Do you agree that there should be an independent board, chaired by Professor Robin Williams, to do the work set out in the terms of reference?

[114] **Mr Llwyd:** Ydwyf, ond fel y dywedais, hoffem fod wedi gweld amrediad mwy eang o randdeiliaid ar y bwrdd ac nid dim ond cynrychiolaeth o'r sefydliadau presennol ac o un neu ddau gorff mwy cyffredinol. **Mr Llwyd:** Yes, but as I said, I would have liked to have seen a wider range of stakeholders on the board and not only representation from the current institutions and from one or two more general bodies.

[115] **Michael German:** So, you think that if others were on board, there would have been a different outcome?

[116] **Mr Llwyd:** Most certainly.

[117] **Michael German:** The deficits, which you have talked about, are in student and parent bodies. Have you had a discussion on the words that the Minister uses on school bodies? Are school bodies involved?

[118] **Mr Llwyd:** Yes.

[119] **Michael German:** On other interested parties, which are presumably down to the discretion of the chair, apart from yourselves, what other interested parties, apart from you, are on the board?

1.30 p.m.

[120] **Mr Llwyd:** Mae darpar gyflogwyr yn cael eu cynrychioli ar y bwrdd. Mae rhywun o Gyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru yn cynrychioli darpar gyflogwyr graddedigion a fyddai'n gallu trin eu gwaith yn ddwyieithog. Yr wyf i ac Ieuan Wyn yn eistedd ar y bwrdd, fel awduron y ddau fodel posibl. Heblaw am hynny, mae holl aelodau eraill y bwrdd yn cynrychioli'r prifysgolion presennol. Fel yr wyf wedi dweud, mae'r bobl sy'n pledio'r *status quo* wedi'u gorgynrychioli ar y bwrdd, o bosibl.

Mr Llwyd: Prospective employers are represented on the board. Someone from the Countryside Council for Wales represents prospective employers of graduates who could do their work bilingually. Ieuan Wyn and I sit on the board as the authors of the two possible models. Apart from that, all other members of the board represent the current universities. As I have said, the people who are pleading the case of the *status quo* may be overrepresented on the board.

[121] **Michael German:** Did you raise—

[122] **Val Lloyd:** Sorry, I know that you are undertaking questioning, but I just want to make the point that we really have strayed—I said 'we'—from the terms of this petition; it does not talk about the board and we are only able to consider the terms of the petition.

[123] **Michael German:** Indeed, but I think that the relevant point here is that the argument being used to support the petition is that the board is not doing its job. That is what I am testing.

[124] **Val Lloyd:** I will let that particular question go through and then I think that we must really firm up on the petition.

[125] **Mr Llwyd:** Ni fyddwn yn mynd mor bell â dweud nad yw'r bwrdd yn gwneud ei waith, ond wrth i ni eich gadael heddiw, hoffwn pe baech, fel Aelodau'r Cynulliad, yn cadw'ch clustiau ar y cledrau ac yn edrych i weld bod y datblygiadau'n mynd rhagddynt yn iawn. Yr ydym wedi crybwyll pwyntiau heddiw sydd yn destun pryder ond yr ydym yn hapus i eistedd arnynt yn awr, am ychydig fisoedd, tra bo'r bwrdd hwn yn gweithredu. Yr wyf yn gofyn i chi, fel Aelodau'r Cynulliad, gadw'ch clustiau ar y cledrau i sicrhau bod y datblygiadau yn mynd ymlaen yn deg ac y cynrychiolir gwahanol rhanddeiliaid ac nid y prifysgolion presennol yn unig.

Mr Llwyd: I would not go so far as to say that the board is not doing its work, but as we leave you today, we would like it if you, as Assembly Members, were to keep your ears open to ensure that the developments are being taken forward properly. We have raised points today that are a cause of some concern, but we are happy to sit on them for now, for a few months, while this board does its work. I ask you, as Assembly Members, to keep your ears open to ensure that the developments are being taken forward fairly and that various stakeholders are represented, not only the current universities.

[126] **Val Lloyd:** Thank you. We take on board and hear what you have said, but we are here as members of the Petitions Committee and we can only address what you have put into the petition that is before us. We will have to discount what you have said that is outside the remit of the words that you used in your petition. With that, I note that we are now out of time. Thank you, Miss Machreth and Mr Llwyd, for your presentation; if you would like to retire to the gallery, we will now consider our next moves. We will wait until you are settled and will discuss the first petition before we discuss yours.

1.33 p.m.

Trafod y Dystiolaeth Discussion of Evidence

[127] **Val Lloyd:** We will now discuss the first petition, which concerns the parking situation surrounding the University Hospital of Wales in the Heath and Birchgrove areas. Who would like to start the discussion?

[128] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I will start. The petition has three points to it. I think that we have already established that point 2 is within the remit of Cardiff County Council and that it is for the council to determine as it sees fit. It is not for us to interfere with that. We have, however, taken a keen interest in the other two points. The Minister has replied on point 3, the third-party appeal mechanism, which was looked at back in 2002 and is under constant observation. However, given the complexities of the planning system, I think that it is understood by most people that to adjust it now would be inappropriate. I think that the petitioners should be made aware of the fact that if there is compelling and professional evidence that could make the case that that should be resurrected, then that evidence should be brought forward and made available to the Minister. I think that the position has been clarified as to when that was looked at previously, namely 2002.

[129] Where we might be of more use would be in directing our energies towards point 1, which is obviously the parking problem that is blighting the lives of so many residents and even the employees of the hospital in that area. A couple of points that I took out of the evidence this morning that were of interest related to the sale of land, and whether health boards are under any obligation to audit their land and whether they can sell land without finding an alternative—thinking of the Fields in Trust campaign for school playing fields. It would be worth asking the Minister for Health and Social Services about whether health boards have an obligation in that regard.

[130] The other point is that it is worth going back to the Minister with responsibility for planning and seeking her advice on when health authorities are applying for new services. They often have to apply for planning permission, so what consideration is given to the impact on transport and parking? For private residents, parking is a critical component of any planning application.

[131] Finally, we need to ensure that Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust takes this issue seriously, and that it is looking at it strategically. We have had an assessment from the Minister of the parking audit that was undertaken in the summer months, but, frankly, it does not satisfy me as a Member, and I am sure that it does not satisfy many others. It seems to reinvent the wheel, so I would be interested to know what obligations are placed upon Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust to be a good neighbour, and ensure that it addresses this issue.

[132] **Val Lloyd:** I have a couple of points on those issues, Andrew. I agree with your first and third point, but parking is already a material planning consideration, across the board. Any new build applications must provide a travel plan showing how any increased parking needs will be met. That is my understanding, although you can clarify that with the Minister.

[133] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I was seeking clarification on the robustness of those travel plans, especially with regard to major strategic operations such as healthcare provision. Another type of operation might be less travel-oriented, and I would be interested to know how the solution is worked out at the planning stage.

[134] **Val Lloyd:** My understanding is that planners work to a model relevant to the kind of development. For a house, it would be two parking spaces, but that would be ludicrous for the kind of facility we have been discussing today. However, there would be appropriate models

for that.

[135] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** It is obvious that the models that the planners are running are not working in this instance.

[136] **Val Lloyd:** The other side to this is enforcement. Why is the council not enforcing the ban on parking at bus stops? How many times do they send their enforcement officers to look at that? Some of the photographs that I saw showed vehicles that were clearly parked illegally at bus stops. Why is that not being chased up?

[137] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I deliberately steered clear of discussing the council because we have established that it is not within our remit to interfere in council affairs. However, the question is worth asking: what levels of enforcement are being undertaken? I have, hopefully, directed my questions and answers towards what we can do as a committee—

[138] **Val Lloyd:** I suggest that we also draw the Minister's attention to the Record of Proceedings, and send her a copy of the helpful map that has been provided of potential parking spaces. That raises the issue of where the money would come from to build such parking facilities.

[139] **Michael German:** The point about enforcement is also a matter for the police, if people are parking illegally, or in a way that the police would consider to be dangerous. I wonder whether we could also draw that to the attention of the Minister.

[140] I will address the first two bullet points in the petition; Andrew has addressed the third one. We were clearly told that there has been no application or plan to build any more car parking facilities on the site. The Minister does not address that in her reply; I do not know why there is silence on that, but perhaps we could clarify that with the Minister, because if it is the policy that no further parking is to be provided on site, then we could focus on where one might want to go next, and whether it is onsite or offsite parking, because there was a suggestion that there might also be offsite opportunities, including park and ride.

1.40 p.m.

[141] Members would agree that any decision on where services are located should be based on clinical evidence, but sometimes there may be opportunities for certain services to be decentralised. The Minister has responded in her letter on the centralising point, but not the decentralising point, so can we ask whether there is any clinical evidence for decentralising any of the services already on the Heath site? If there is no clinical evidence for decentralisation, then that matter would not be followed through.

[142] **Val Lloyd:** We have to go by clinical evidence, and I agree that we need to say that we need clinical evidence for it.

[143] **Bethan Jenkins:** If the Minister does not believe that she is centralising services, she has nothing to decentralise, has she?

[144] **Michael German:** I do not think that she has answered the question; that is the point. She has taken the line that she has no plans to centralise, which means more services coming. Decentralising is quite the opposite—it is about what you already have being moved away. The Minister has not addressed that issue.

[145] **Val Lloyd:** She said that there is no policy that advocates centralising—it must be based on clinical need.

[146] **Michael German:** Exactly. I am seeking clarity, and I think that we should ask whether there is any clinical evidence for decentralising services.

[147] **Val Lloyd:** I do not think that we should necessarily discount what the trust is planning to do, because I have evidence from Singleton Hospital in Swansea. Admittedly it is a different site, but it is a very busy site. It has been encouraging car-sharing, which has reduced the number of cars by 30 per cent, from 89 per cent to 59 per cent, in a reasonably short space of time.

[148] **Michael German:** Sorry, I was not suggesting that what was proposed was bad; it is just that we have not had an answer on the point that was raised in evidence to us today, which is whether there any plans to increase the numbers, and we were told that there were not, but we do not know that for certain.

[149] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I would like to come back on that, because it goes on to the point that I raised about asking Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust, as well as the Minister, what its strategic plan is for alleviating this problem. In the light of what we receive back, we might want to have Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust in to hear what it has said. As you pointed out, Val, there is a good example at Singleton hospital.

[150] **Val Lloyd:** I was reading something today, and that is how the figures remained in my mind, that there is good practice there. The Singleton site is smaller than the Heath site, but it suffers from the same problem, as does any major hospital. Therefore, we have agreed to send a transcript, and we are going to ask—. Sorry, I cannot read my own writing.

[151] **Ms Webber:** I have noted that we will ask the Minister about whether health boards are under an obligation to audit the land that they are looking to sell, and whether considerations are given to parking. We need some reassurance that the trusts are taking seriously the obligations on them to be good neighbours. We also need to seek the Minister's views on the robustness of travel plans. Then there is asking the Minister a question about council enforcement officers.

[152] **Val Lloyd:** No, we cannot do that because it is not the Minister's responsibility—we need to write to the police or the council about it.

[153] **Michael German:** It is not only the council—it is also the police.

[154] **Val Lloyd:** Yes, so we need to write to the police and the council, because it is probably two-pronged.

[155] **Ms Webber:** We also want to send a transcript and a copy of the map to the Minister, and ask about whether or not there any plans for parking.

[156] **Michael German:** Yes, about onsite and offsite parking.

[157] **Ms Webber:** Yes, and also to ask about the evidence for decentralisation.

[158] **Val Lloyd:** Thank you very much. On the second part of our evidence-gathering session about the federal college, what are Members' wishes?

[159] **Bethan Jenkins:** Nid wyf yn credu y byddem yn gall i ddiystyru'r dystiolaeth ynglŷn â'r bwrdd a'r ffaith nad oes myfyrwyr nag aelodau o RhAG ar y pwyllgor. Yr wyf yn nodi'r hyn y mae'r ddeiseb yn ofyn **Bethan Jenkins:** I do not think that it would be wise to dismiss the evidence about the board and the fact that no students or RhAG members sit on it. I acknowledge what the petition asks for, but events have moved on

amdano, ond mae pethau wedi symud ymlaen ers hynny. Felly, byddai'n deg i ni ysgrifennu at y Gweinidog gyda'r pwyntiau hynny yn gofyn i'r bwrdd gynnwys y grwpiau hynny. Nid wyf yn siŵr am y pwynt arall ynglŷn â'r datganiad i'r wasg. Os nad yw rhai aelodau yn hapus â'r drefn bresennol, efallai fod angen i'r bwrdd drafod yn fewnol sut mae'n gweithredu. Fodd bynnag, credaf y dylid ystyried ei gynnwys yn rhan o'r drafodaeth.

since then. So, it would be reasonable for us to write to the Minister with those points asking the board to include those groups. I am not sure about the other point regarding the press release. If some members are not happy with the current arrangements, perhaps the board should discuss internally how it operates. However, I believe that including it as part of the discussion should be considered.

[160] **Michael German:** I would like to amplify that slightly. The whole basis for this petition was that the board was not operating as it was felt it should operate. Yet, when I asked whether the petitioners were happy with the terms of reference, they said that they were, which is important. So, it is about the internal operations of the board. Therefore, all that we can do is address the issues that are in the Minister's letter of 12 August, in which she states that the group of experts should include student bodies, which it does not. The Minister indicated that it should include student bodies, and perhaps she can tell us why it does not. She also stated that it should include other interested parties. It might be useful to ask her what she meant by 'other interested parties' and whether it includes parents and the other people that we have been talking about.

[161] I absolutely agree that we cannot interfere in the internal workings of a panel, when there is agreement that the terms of reference are right. It is for those who are on the panel to make their views known and to try to convince it of them. Otherwise, any individual on an independent board set up for whatever purpose who felt that he or she could not get their point across in a meeting and felt aggrieved could draw up a petition about it. I do not think that that would be the appropriate way for members of boards or committees to behave. From what we have heard, it is clear that the Minister outlined the representation that she expected to see on the board, and it seems to have fallen short.

[162] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I agree with that. Events have overtaken us. The Minister has outlined her path—whether you like that path or not is another matter. It is the Government's prerogative to do what it wishes. We have heard evidence today that the representation is somewhat disappointing. I am surprised that the National Union of Students is not on the board, but it is for others to make that decision.

[163] **Val Lloyd:** It is represented. Ben Gray of NUS Wales is a member of the board.

[164] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I thought that I had seen that on the list, but I do not have the list in front of me. He is the president of NUS Wales, I believe.

[165] **Bethan Jenkins:** Credaf mai mudiadau prifysgolion eraill yr oedd yn sôn amdano, megis Undeb Myfyrwyr Cymraeg Aberystwyth ac Undeb Myfyrwyr Cymraeg Bangor—yr undebau Cymraeg.

Bethan Jenkins: I think that he was talking about other university organisations, such as Undeb Myfyrwyr Cymraeg Aberystwyth and Undeb Myfyrwyr Cymraeg Bangor—the Welsh unions.

[166] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** The petitioners did refer to the National Union of Students. The Record of Proceedings will show what was said.

[167] **Michael German:** Can we check the transcript?

[168] **Val Lloyd:** We will take Mike's suggestion forward. That is the correct thing for the committee to do. Time moves on, inevitably. It says 'school and student bodies', and we can

respond to the Minister along those lines.

[169] **Bethan Jenkins:** Yr oedd y bobl a oedd wedi dod i siarad â ni yn dweud mai ym Mehefin yr oedd y pwyllgor yn dod â'r trafodaethau at ei gilydd. A allwn ofyn i Jane Hutt yn y llythyr ynglŷn â'r amserlen am gael y coleg ffederal yn weithredol?

Bethan Jenkins: The presenters said that the discussions were being collected together in June. Can we ask Jane Hutt in the letter about the timetable for getting the federal college operational?

[170] **Val Lloyd:** That was not discussed today, was it? It is not part of our remit to ask that. You can ask it outside of the meeting, but not as a member of the Petitions Committee, because we can only deal with what we have had here today. If you wish to ask that, other ways of doing so are available to you as an Assembly Member.

[171] **Michael German:** You could ask an oral question of the Minister.

[172] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I suppose that we should keep the petition open to ensure that we are observing what happens. Given that the petition refers explicitly to a 'One Wales' commitment, I do not think that it is unreasonable to ask the Minister what sort of timescale she envisages for responding to the report that the committee will create by the end of June 2009, and, following that response, how she sees herself being able to take this forward to meet the commitment.

1.50 p.m.

[173] **Val Lloyd:** I think that we are straying from what the petition is asking us to do.

[174] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** The petition clearly asks, in the first line, that the 'One Wales' agreement pledge be kept.

[175] **Val Lloyd:** However, it does not say by when it should be kept and the 'One Wales' agreement does not necessarily state that everything within it should be sorted by the end of the four-year term.

[176] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** The Minister could come back to say that it could be resolved by the end of the four-year term.

[177] **Val Lloyd:** Why are we asking the question if we know that that will be the answer?

[178] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** Because we do not have it written down.

[179] **Val Lloyd:** My point is that it is not directly in the petition. The petition states that

[180] 'A Federal College must include the following elements'.

[181] They are not asking for that to be delivered to a timescale. If you want to know what that timescale is, you too have a way of asking the question. Petitions Committee members must be careful that we do not try to mind-read. You may be right in what you are saying in this instance, but we cannot do that for every petition. I think that we should stick with asking the Minister what Mike suggested on the school and student bodies—

[182] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I disagree with you on that, and we are not a committee that normally disagrees. Please correct me if I am wrong, but this is my reading of the first part of the petition. It states:

[183] 'We call upon the Assembly Government to keep its 'One Wales' agreement promise of establishing a Welsh-language Federal College.'

[184] The petitioners then go on to say what they believe a federal college must include. So, the first sentence is almost seeking some form of time frame. As I understand it, the 'One Wales' agreement has a four-year time frame, but it might be that, because this review has been established, which will not report until June, the Minister feels that it is not possible for it to be fulfilled within the time that the 'One Wales' agreement has left to run.

[185] **Michael German:** Perhaps we could compromise, Chair, and ask the Minister in a letter whether she still considers that this commitment will be met by May 2011?

[186] **Val Lloyd:** I agree with that because that is in the 'One Wales' document, which we all know has that timescale.

1.52 p.m.

Deisebau Newydd New Petitions

[187] **Val Lloyd:** I will read out the petition wording for the first new petition for the sake of clarity for anyone watching these proceedings.

[188] 'We, the undersigned, hereby petition the Welsh Assembly Government to improve road safety in the village of Llanspyddid, Brecon, Powys, through implementation of traffic calming measures such as a reduction in the current speed limit, improved roadside lighting and improved signage on the A40.'

[189] This petition was raised by the Llanspyddid Residents Association and collected 67 signatures. What are Members' wishes with regard to this petition?

[190] **Michael German:** First, I think that we should ask the Minister what the Government's intentions are in respect of this action on this stretch of trunk road, and to ask about its policy on roadside lighting and signage on the A40, which is an important road. It is one of the arterial roads in Wales.

[191] **Val Lloyd:** Does it ask for improved lighting?

[192] **Michael German:** The petition asks for improved roadside lighting and signage. We need to know what the current overarching Government policy is on speed limits and improved road lighting and signage, so that, if necessary, we can test the decision against the Government's policy.

[193] **Val Lloyd:** I agree with that. Are there any further comments on that? I see that there are not.

[194] Our next new petition is on the improvements to the A487. I will paraphrase the petition wording because it is quite long. The petition collected 820 signatures. I do not know the area at all so, I am sorry, I cannot summarise it, but the petition is due to the increasing number of accidents occurring on the A487 between Bryn Hendre and Rhydtir railway bridge. The petitioners wish for five measures to be taken, which they list. I have difficulty in visualising this. Is it possible to ask for a map before the next meeting? Would that be helpful?

[195] **Bethan Jenkins:** That would be helpful for other committee members.

[196] **Michael German:** I believe that we should repeat what we have done with the last petition and ask the Minister, when we have seen the map, what he is proposing to do, but also what the policy is on trunk roads in terms of roundabouts, lighting, speed limits and crossings. We have three of those from the previous letter, so the only extra one this time is roundabouts.

[197] **Val Lloyd:** I think that that would be very useful, and we would also have the policy for any future petitions then, would we not?

[198] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** We may have discussed roundabouts previously; was there not a petition for a roundabout at a Tesco store?

[199] **Michael German:** Yes, but we did not ask for the policy that time, but I have thought about this since then. If we have the Government's policy on roundabouts on record, then at least it would be easier to judge next time.

[200] **Val Lloyd:** Does anyone know the area?

[201] **Bethan Jenkins:** I do.

[202] **Michael German:** So do I.

[203] **Val Lloyd:** I am in the minority then. Could we have a map, if that is possible?

[204] **Michael German:** It is all student land, and students are not particularly good at crossing roads and looking at the traffic, as far as I can remember.

[205] **Bethan Jenkins:** It is very dangerous.

[206] **Michael German:** Yes, and people drive very quickly on that road.

[207] **Val Lloyd:** The next new petition has been raised by David Rees, who has collected 39 signatures. The petition reads as follows:

[208] 'We call upon the National Assembly to lobby the Football Association of Wales to work with the three other football associations in the UK to put aside their vested interests to allow a Team GB football team to compete on home soil in London 2012, hopefully adding to our medal haul.'

[209] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** The danger here is that, although many questions have been raised in Plenary with the Minister for Heritage, the FAW is entitled to make its own decisions, as it is the governing council within Wales. Although there are differing views in this building, it is not for the Assembly to dictate on this—it might well lobby, but it is not allowed to dictate to the FAW.

[210] **Val Lloyd:** That was very nicely put.

[211] **Bethan Jenkins:** That does not mean that we cannot write to the FAW to inform it that a constituent has lobbied us on this matter and to raise that concern.

[212] **Michael German:** We can forward the petition to the FAW.

[213] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** There is no problem in doing that, but the Assembly has no remit to take on the petition. Individual Members have asked many questions in Plenary on

this issue. I support the idea, and I dare say that you are probably against it, Bethan.

[214] **Bethan Jenkins:** Yes, I definitely am.

[215] **Michael German:** As a lifetime supporter of Newport County Association Football Club, which was thrown out of the FAW for playing league football, along with Merthyr Tydfil Football Club, I am prepared to support the petitioner's view, but I think that it is a decision for the FAW. It would be right to forward it on to the FAW and to ask it whether it will reply to the petitioner.

[216] **Val Lloyd:** Yes; there is nothing else that we can do. Whatever our personal views are, and they may differ, we cannot do anything.

[217] **Michael German:** I can give you the history of Newport County AFC, which was called 'the exiles' for a long time.

[218] **Bethan Jenkins:** I know the history of Merthyr Tydfil FC.

[219] **Val Lloyd:** We can therefore close the petition. We will write to the petitioner to tell him that it has been closed and what we have done.

[220] The next petition is about post-19 students with additional learning needs. The petition reads as follows:

[221] 'We the undersigned request that the National Assembly for Wales address the issues that are facing 19+ students who have complex physical and learning disabilities. For students who do not wish to attend residential, there is no appropriate College in Wales for them to attend that can meet their complex needs.'

[222] We have some letters on this that the petitioner, Mrs Prosser, wrote to the Minister and the replies that she received.

[223] **Michael German:** This is obviously a much more complex issue when you consider it. I wonder whether it would be helpful to have a paper for our next meeting outlining the current policy in respect of the broader issue that this petition raises so that we could then judge whether any further evidence needs to be heard.

[224] **Val Lloyd:** Would this be a paper by the Members' research service?

[225] **Michael German:** Yes.

[226] **Val Lloyd:** I agree.

[227] **Michael German:** I was not suggesting that Joanest should write this one.

[228] **Val Lloyd:** She was looking at me, so I thought that I should check. *[Laughter.]* A working group has been established on this issue. Could we ask what progress it has made in order to widen our understanding of what I think is a complex issue, which probably needs to be addressed?

[229] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** It is an immensely complicated and challenging issue, but that does not mean that we should turn away from it; we should seek to address it. I think that it would be a very valuable piece of work.

[230] **Michael German:** We need to understand it before we can go forward.

[231] **Val Lloyd:** I think that the committee would agree that we would like to have more detail on this.

2.00 p.m.

[232] The next new petition has been raised by the Committee for Improvement of Hospital Services. The petition reads as follows:

[233] ‘The Committee for Improvement of Hospital Services calls upon the National Assembly for Wales: to hear, investigate, and respond to its concerns over the provision of acute medical and surgical services in Llanelli and the ability of people to access these services; and to urge the Minister for Health and Social Services to meet with the Committee for Improvement of Hospital Services to discuss its concerns.’

[234] I wish to give my view immediately on the second part of the petition. I think that this would be quite a dangerous path to take because it could mean that we would be seen simply as a post box for the Minister. If the Committee for Improvement of Hospital Services wishes to meet the Minister, there are other avenues that it can use. However, we should certainly respond to the first point.

[235] **Michael German:** Has it actually asked to meet the Minister and been refused? We do not know that, do we?

[236] **Val Lloyd:** No, we do not know.

[237] **Michael German:** I think that we need to get the Minister’s position on the provision of medical and surgical services in Llanelli, so that at least we will know where we are coming from to start with, and then we can come back to it at our next meeting.

[238] **Val Lloyd:** Yes. Is everyone content with that?

[239] **Michael German:** Can we find out whether it has asked the Minister for a meeting and was refused? That might be useful.

[240] **Val Lloyd:** If it has been refused, we will have to discuss that again.

[241] That is the last new petition.

2.01 p.m.

Y Wybodaeth Ddiweddaraf am Ddeisebau Blaenorol Updates on Previous Petitions

[242] **Val Lloyd:** The first petition is a very large one from the Welsh Canoeing Association. Joane, do you have any legal information on the wider implications of this petition?

[243] **Ms Jackson:** Yes. At the present time, the Assembly would have no competence to act in this area. I would revise the section on the legal advice given in the briefing paper as it is probably a lot more complicated than one field of Schedule 5 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 requiring to be amended. I think that it would probably involve a competence Order, which would probably require matters to be placed in more than one field. It is a very wide-ranging issue, and we might need some evidence on this in order to ascertain exactly what would be required to achieve the aims of the petition.

[244] **Michael German:** The petition refers to a Bill. I presume that it would have referred to a proposed Measure if it understood the words that we use. In order to have a proposed Measure, we would have to have an LCO; I think that that is what has been said here. Chair, do you think that the wording prevents our discussing whether the appropriate route would be to propose an LCO?

[245] **Val Lloyd:** I will have to take legal advice on that.

[246] **Ms Jackson:** I do not think that it would, because it is actually a step along the way to producing a Measure. It is part and parcel of the process; you cannot do one without the other.

[247] **Michael German:** I am glad that Joanest said that, because I think that we would need a brief paper on what sort of LCO would be necessary in order to progress the petition, and only Joanest can write that paper, which is a problem, is it not? [*Laughter.*]

[248] **Val Lloyd:** Should we call in the petitioners to give evidence?

[249] **Michael German:** Yes, but before they come in, it would be helpful, if we were going to accept any further steps, to know how far we have to go. If we accepted that there is a reason to progress this then someone, somewhere would have to introduce a legislative competence Order and you know what it is like recommending other committees to do things of this sort.

[250] **Val Lloyd:** Thank you very much. Therefore, we will take a two-pronged approach: Joanest will give us a paper on the legal situation and we will invite the petitioners in to give evidence—and I mean ‘in’ because we are not going outside to sit on the water.

[251] The unadopted roads petition has been before us in the past. We have received a response from the Minister. At our October meeting, we agreed to ask the Deputy First Minister for details of the regime that applies. However, when his previous letter was reviewed, it was there; the answer was already there. We have also received evidence from the Welsh Local Government Association.

[252] **Michael German:** The question seems to me, Chair, to be whether the ‘Manual for Streets’, which is what the guidance is, actually makes it easier for local unitary authorities to take over unadopted roads while minimising the burden on frontagers. Whether that is right or wrong, I do not know—that is not the point. The point is whether the guidance, which is contained in that document, makes it easier without burdening frontagers. I do not know the answer to that.

[253] **Val Lloyd:** I read the letter that Steve Thomas from the WLGA sent us. It says absolutely nothing on the type of adoption that we are looking at. However, I have to put that with a health warning and state that I am reading it as a lay person. It is comprehensive in terms of developers, and I took that to be referring to the building of new roads and estates. I could not find anything that referred to what we were looking for.

[254] **Michael German:** If it were the case—I am sorry for developing the argument a bit further—that the guidance was insufficient at present to fulfil the purpose of the petition, there might be a case for taking this further and looking at whether the guidance should be amended.

[255] **Val Lloyd:** The way that I ended up looking at it, after reading it a couple of times, was that the definition of a developer is a broad one. I read the word ‘developer’ in this

context to be referring to a developer of a new place. However, you would still have to follow the same guidance if you were a frontager, would you not?

[256] **Michael German:** I do not know the answer to that question, Chair, and whether local authorities follow the guidance that is before us today when considering adopting roads.

[257] **Val Lloyd:** It was sent to us by the WLGA. Therefore, you would think that it would have had a view on it.

[258] **Michael German:** I wonder whether the WLGA has misunderstood slightly, because this is not about new development, where an estate has been developed and the local authority has to take over the roads, but about long-established roads, where the issue goes so far back that nobody knows.

[259] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** There are two distinct parts. Most people are now well versed that councils have become very wary so that, when someone is granted planning permission, there is a belt-and-braces approach. Historically, particularly in more industrial areas, there is an inordinate number of pieces of land and roads that no-one wants to touch with a bargepole. Yet, many residents and businesses have to use these areas. The guidelines seem to be a bit on the grey side rather than giving clear guidance for people to work to.

[260] **Val Lloyd:** Local authorities might have their own policies.

[261] **Michael German:** As you rightly say, the guidance is about moving the emphasis away from developers. What I am seeking to do is address the issue of the older roads. We all know of them. Obviously, a local authority can resist, but, when it wishes to do so, is it difficult for it to adopt the bits of road or lane that have been around for such a long time? Is it difficult for local authorities? I do not know.

2.10 p.m.

[262] **Val Lloyd:** I do not think that it is if the frontagers will pay. That is the line that most local authorities take.

[263] **Michael German:** So, this is about minimising the burden on frontagers. If that is already in place, that is fine, but I do not think that this particular section of the guidance, 'Manual for Streets', actually tells us that. However, if that is the case, I am satisfied. What I am asking for, Chair, is whether I can be satisfied that, in that sort of circumstance, it is easy for local authorities to adopt highways and it is not expensive for the frontagers, which is what the petitioners are asking for.

[264] **Val Lloyd:** There is a cost to frontagers; you cannot deny that, but I do not know how we can minimise—

[265] **Michael German:** Is there any guidance extant on that matter?

[266] **Val Lloyd:** We will have to write and ask that.

[267] **Michael German:** That is all. I was not going to labour the point.

[268] **Val Lloyd:** I understand where you are coming from because my postbag is as full as yours on this issue.

[269] **Michael German:** It would help me to resolve one issue that I have had on board for three years, concerning a lane that the council regularly cleans and cuts the grass and the

things on the side, but has not adopted. I do not know whether the one department that deals with maintenance does not know that it is not adopted.

[270] **Val Lloyd:** I think that that is about custom and practice.

[271] We will now move to petition P-03-130 on broadband in a specific area of Newport city. I think that we can do nothing other than close the petition. We raised the issue on behalf of the petitioners, the Minister replied, we sent his guidance to the petitioners, and they told us that they already knew that. I do not think that there is anything else that we can do.

[272] **Andrew R.T. Davies:** I believe that you are correct, Chair. We have done what we can, as the Petitions Committee of the National Assembly for Wales. Therefore, the petition should be closed.

[273] **Val Lloyd:** Thank you. Is everybody in agreement? I see that you are.

[274] Then, we have petition P-03-150 on the national cancer standards. We wrote to the Minister for Health and Social Services and had a reply on that. We could write to the petitioners, enclosing the Minister's reply, to see what their response would be to the changes. I think that the Minister's answer deals with the specifics that we asked about, and localises the response to that area, so it is not just a response about the overall strategy.

[275] **Michael German:** Fine.

[276] **Val Lloyd:** Then, we have petition P-03-156 on sleep apnoea. Again, the Minister for Health and Social Services has replied quite comprehensively. I note that the findings of the review were to be presented to her at the end of October and her letter was dated 14 October, so perhaps we could write to her asking for those findings. Shall we write to the petitioners, enclosing the letter that the Minister sent to us?

[277] **Michael German:** Yes, and we can also inform them of what we have done and what we will do.

[278] **Val Lloyd:** That is the final update paper and, therefore, I close the meeting. Thank you very much.

*Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 2.13 p.m.
The meeting ended at 2.13 p.m.*