



PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

14th Meeting, 2017 (Session 5)

Thursday 29 June 2017

Present:

Johann Lamont (Convener)
Brian Whittle
Maurice Corry

Angus MacDonald (Deputy Convener)
Rona Mackay

Also present: Kate Forbes (PE1651), Christine Grahame (PE1653), Alex Neil (PE1458)

The meeting opened at 9.15 am.

1. **Consideration of a continued petition:** The Committee considered a continued petition—

PE1458 by Peter Cherbi on register of interests for members of Scotland's judiciary and took evidence from Lord Carloway, Lord President of the Court of Session. The Committee agreed to invite the petitioner to provide a written response to the Lord President's evidence and to reflect on the evidence and the petitioner's response at a future meeting.

2. **Consideration of new petitions:** The Committee considered the following new petitions—

PE1651 by Marion Brown on behalf of recovery and renewal on prescribed drug dependence and withdrawal and took evidence from Marion Brown, Psychotherapist, Recovery and Renewal self-help support group. The Committee agreed to write to the Scottish Government, the British Medical Association, the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Prescribed Drug Dependence, the Scottish Association for Mental Health and Samaritans.

PE1653 by Michaela Jackson on behalf of Gorebridge Community Trust on active travel infrastructure and took evidence from Michaela Jackson, Dave DuFeu, Member, Spokes, The Lothian Cycle Campaign and David French, Member, Spokes, The Lothian Cycle Campaign. The Committee

agreed to write to the Scottish Government, Sustrans, Scottish Environment LINK and WWF Scotland.

3. **Consideration of continued petitions:** The Committee considered the following continued petitions—

PE1592 by Shaheen McQuade on group B strep information and testing. The Committee agreed to close the petition under Standing Orders Rule 15.7 on the basis that the UK National Screening Committee has reviewed the latest evidence in March 2017 and does not recommend screening for group B streptococcus but has asked the National Institute of Health Research to commission a UK-wide clinical trial to compare universal screening for GBS against usual risk-based care.

PE1621 by James Robertson on sepsis awareness, diagnosis and treatment. The Committee agreed to write to the Scottish Government.

PE1623 by Spencer Fildes on behalf of Scottish Secular Society on unelected church appointees on local authority education committees. The Committee agreed (by division: For 3; Against 1; Abstentions 1) to close the petition under Standing Orders Rule 15.7 on the basis that the Scottish Government has given a commitment to consider the issues raised in the petition as part of its Education Governance Review, and has confirmed that it will carry out an Equality Impact Assessment on any policy changes made through that review. The Committee also agreed to highlight the issues raised to the Education and Skills Committee.

PE1626 by Pat Rafferty on behalf of Unite Scotland on regulation of bus services. The Committee agreed to write to the Scottish Government.

PE1629 by Jennifer Lewis on MRI scans for ocular melanoma sufferers in Scotland. The Committee agreed to write to the Scottish Government and National Institute For Health and Clinical Excellence.

PE1630 by Fiona Webb on nursery funding for 3 year olds. The Committee agreed to close the petition under Standing Orders Rule 15.7 on the basis that the Scottish Government has published an action plan for the expansion of early learning and childcare in Scotland and has made a commitment to publish an evaluation report of the expansion by the end of 2017.

PE1632 by Amanda Macdonald on concessionary transport for carers. The Committee agreed to write to the Scottish Government and COSLA.

PE1638 by Sean Clerkin on local housing allowance (bedroom tax 2). The Committee agreed to write to the Scottish Government, the Department for Work and Pensions. The Committee also agreed to seek clarification from relevant subject committees as to whether the subject of local housing allowance is included in their future work programmes.

PE1643 by Jack Douglas, LGBT+ Officer on behalf of NUS Scotland on Introduce individual risk-based blood donation in Scotland. The Committee agreed to write to the Scottish Government and the Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood, Tissues and Organs.

The meeting closed at 11.36 am.

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