PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

13th Meeting, 2019 (Session 5)

Thursday 27 June 2019

Present:

Rachael Hamilton
Johann Lamont (Convener)
Angus MacDonald (Deputy Convener)
David Torrance
Brian Whittle

Also present: John Finnie (PE1722 and PE1637) and Finlay Carson (PE1610 and PE1657)

The meeting opened at 9.15 am.

1. Decision on taking business in private: The Committee agreed to take items 4 and 5 in private.

2. Consideration of a new petition: The Committee considered the following new petition—

PE1722 on Parking charges at island lifeline ferry ports. The Committee agreed to write to the Scottish Government, Argyll and Bute Council, Transport Scotland, Caledonian Maritime Assets, CalMac Ferries and other island local authorities.

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

PE1596 on In Care Survivors Service Scotland and took evidence from Flora Henderson and Shona MacGregor, Future Pathways. The Committee agreed to invite the petitioner to provide a written submission in advance of the next consideration of the petition, and to invite him to give evidence at a future meeting.

PE1548 on National Guidance on Restraint and Seclusion in Schools. The Committee agreed to invite the petitioner to respond to the Deputy First Minister’s submission and to invite the Children’s Commissioner to give
evidence at a future meeting.

PE1610 on Upgrade the A75 and PE1657 on A77 upgrade. The Committee agreed to defer holding a round table discussion with relevant stakeholders until after the Scotland’s Futures Forum event “Our Future Scotland: Dumfries and the South West” has taken place. It also agreed to the write to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity.

PE1631 on Child Welfare Hearings. The Committee agreed to close the petition under Standing Order Rule 15.7 on the basis that work is being progressed by the Scottish Government and the Scottish Civil Justice Council relevant to the action called for in the petition of which the petitioner is supportive.

PE1635 on Review of section 11 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995. The Committee agreed to close the petition under Standing Order Rule 15.7 on the basis that the Scottish Government intends to introduce a Family Law Bill which is expected to address the issues raised in this petition, in particular the regulation of child contact centres and ensuring that the interests of children are at the heart of the system and that their voices are heard.

PE1637 on Ship-to-ship oil transfers and trust port accountability. The Committee agreed to write to the Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural Environment.

PE1645 on Review of legal aid in Scotland. The Committee agreed to close the petition under Standing Order Rule 15.7 on the basis that the Scottish Government has met the action called for in the petition with the establishment of a panel to review legislation relating to legal aid and intends to consult publicly to help inform future reforms.

PE1668 on Improving literacy standards in schools through research-informed reading instruction. The Committee agreed to refer the petition to the Education and Skills Committee for consideration.

PE1682 on Access to specialist support for hidradenitis suppurativa sufferers in Scotland. The Committee agreed to invite the petitioner to respond to the submissions received to date. It also agreed to write to NHS Boards, the NORSE clinic and the Scottish Government.

PE1698 on Medical care in rural areas. The Committee agreed to refer the petition to the Health and Sport Committee for consideration as part of its ongoing inquiry work in relation to primary care in Scotland.

PE1699 on Release of murder victim bodies for funeral arrangements. The Committee agreed to write to the Scottish Government; and PE1703 on Access to broadband in rural Scotland. The Committee agreed to refer the petition to the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee for consideration.

4. **Work programme (in private):** The Committee considered a note by the clerk and agreed to undertake a number of fact-finding visits in connection with its inquiry into mental health support for young people in Scotland.

5. **Business Planning (in private):** The Committee considered a note by the clerk and agreed to revise the Determination on Proper Form of Petitions. It also agreed to review the operation of the petitions system at a future meeting.
The meeting closed at 11.37 am.

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