

Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

29th Meeting, 2022 (Session 6), Tuesday, 25 October 2022

Public Petitions

Note by the clerk

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to invite the Committee to consider and agree how it wishes to proceed with scrutiny of four public petitions which have been referred to the Committee.

Background

2. At its meeting on 9 June 2022, the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions (CPPP) Committee took joint evidence from the petitioners of the following four petitions:
 - [PE1845: Agency to advocate for the healthcare needs of rural Scotland](#)
 - [PE1890: Find solutions to recruitment and training challenges for rural healthcare in Scotland](#)
 - [PE1915: Reinstate Caithness County Council and Caithness NHS Board](#)
 - [PE1924: Complete an emergency in-depth review of Women's Health services in Caithness & Sutherland](#)
3. Full details of the evidence session can be read in the meeting [official report](#).
4. Following this evidence session, at its meeting on 15 June 2022, the CPPP Committee agreed to refer the four petitions to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee under Rule 15.6.2 of Standing Orders, to ensure that consideration can continue
5. The referral notes for the petitions advise that as part of the CPPP Committee's consideration, members took evidence from the petitioners and subsequently agreed that each petition could be considered in the context of work being undertaken on wider health inequalities.
6. They also state:

“A detailed investigation into the challenges faced by rural communities and the support required for access to rural healthcare is encouraged by the Committee.”

7. Further details of each petition, and the scrutiny undertaken by the CPPP Committee on each, is detailed below.

Petition details

Petition PE1845: Agency to advocate for the healthcare needs of rural Scotland

Petitioner: Gordon Baird on behalf of Galloway Community Hospital Action Group

Petition summary: Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to create an agency to ensure that health boards offer 'fair' and 'reasonable' management of rural and remote healthcare issues.

Date published: 23 November 2020

8. The CPPP Committee (previously the Public Petitions Committee) considered the above petition at its meetings on 13 January, 10 March, and 18 September 2021 and 4 May, 8 June and 15 June 2022. Over the course of these meetings the Committee requested written evidence from the Scottish Government, the then Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport, the Scottish Rural Health Partnership, the Remote and Rural General Practice Short Life Working Group and to rural health boards. The Committee also took oral evidence from the petitioner on 8 June 2022.
9. The petition has [16 written submissions](#) attached to it.
10. Having heard this evidence, the Committee agreed to refer the petition to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee under Rule 15.6.2 of Standing Orders for consideration "in the context of work being undertaken on wider health inequalities".
11. The most recent note by the clerk to the CPPP Committee (attached at Annexe A) provides an overview of some of the issues raised during the course of CPPP Committee's consideration of the issue.

Petition PE1890: Find solutions to recruitment and training challenges for rural healthcare in Scotland

Petitioner: Maria Aitken on behalf of Caithness Health Action Team

Petition summary: Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to find ways for localised training, recruiting and retaining healthcare staff in difficult to recruit positions in Scotland.

Date published: 19 August 2021

12. The CPPP Committee considered the above petition at its meetings on 3 November 2021, 4 May, 8 June and 15 June 2022. Over the course of these meetings the Committee requested written evidence from the Scottish

Government and NHS Highland. The Committee also took oral evidence from the petitioner on 8 June 2022.

13. The petition has [6 written submissions](#) attached to it.
14. Having heard this evidence, the Committee agreed to refer the petition to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee under Rule 15.6.2 of Standing Orders for consideration “in the context of work being undertaken on wider health inequalities”.
15. The most recent note by the clerk to the CPPP Committee (attached at Annexe B) provides an overview of some of the issues raised during the course of CPPP Committee’s consideration of the issue.

Petition PE1915: Reinstate Caithness County Council and Caithness NHS Board

Petitioner: William Sinclair

Petition summary: Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to reinstate Caithness County Council and Caithness NHS Board.

Date published: 2 December 2021

16. The CPPP Committee considered the above petition at its meetings on 23 February, 8 June and 15 June 2022. Over the course of these meetings the Committee requested written evidence from the Scottish Government and NHS Highland. The Committee also took oral evidence from the petitioner on 8 June 2022.
17. The petition has [5 written submissions](#) attached to it.
18. Having heard this evidence, the Committee agreed to refer the petition to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee under Rule 15.6.2 of Standing Orders for consideration “in the context of work being undertaken on wider health inequalities”.
19. The most recent note by the clerk to the CPPP Committee (attached at Annexe C) provides an overview of some of the issues raised during the course of CPPP Committee’s consideration of the issue.

Petition PE1924: Complete an emergency in-depth review of Women's Health services in Caithness & Sutherland

Petitioner: Rebecca Wymer

Petition summary: Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to complete an emergency in-depth review of Women's Health services

in Caithness & Sutherland. Women's health services are now breaching basic human rights and we fear someone will lose their life due to the lack of gynaecology care.

Date published: 20 December 2021

20. The CPPP Committee considered the above petition at its meetings on 9 March, 8 June and 15 June 2022. Over the course of these meetings the Committee requested written evidence from the Scottish Government and took oral evidence from the petitioner on 8 June 2022.
21. The petition has [3 written submissions](#) attached to it.
22. Having heard this evidence, the Committee agreed to refer the petition to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee under Rule 15.6.2 of Standing Orders for consideration “in the context of work being undertaken on wider health inequalities”.
23. The most recent note by the clerk to the CPPP Committee (attached at Annexe D) provides an overview of some of the issues raised during the course of CPPP Committee’s consideration of the issue.

Conclusion

24. The Committee is invited to consider and agree:
 - What action it wishes to take in relation to the four petitions.

ANNEXE A

**Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee
11th Meeting, 2022 (Session 6), Wednesday 15 June 2022
PE1845: Agency to advocate for the healthcare needs of
rural Scotland**

Note by the Clerk

Introduction

1. The Committee last considered this petition at its meeting on [8 June 2022](#), where it heard evidence from the Petitioner and the petitioners of petitions PE1890, PE1915, and PE1924 on a range of issues relating to rural healthcare. At that meeting, the Committee agreed to consider the evidence heard at a future meeting.
2. The petition summary is included in Annexe A and the Official Report of the Committee's last consideration of this petition is at Annexe B.
3. Written submissions received prior to the Committee's last consideration can be found on the [petition's webpage](#). All written submissions received on the petition before May 2021 can be viewed on the petition on the [archive webpage](#).
4. Further background information about this petition can be found in the [SPICe briefing](#) for this petition.
5. The Scottish Government's initial position on this petition can be found on the [petition's webpage](#).

Action

- The Committee is invited to consider what action it wishes to take. Clerk to the Committee

Clerk to the Committee

ANNEXE B

Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee

11th Meeting, 2022 (Session 6), Wednesday 15 June 2022

PE1890: Find solutions to recruitment and training challenges for rural healthcare in Scotland

Note by the Clerk

Introduction

1. The Committee last considered this petition at its meeting on [8 June 2022](#), where it heard evidence from the petitioner and the petitioners of petitions PE1845, PE1915, and PE1924 on a range of issues relating to rural healthcare. At that meeting, the Committee agreed to consider the evidence heard at a future meeting.
2. The petition summary is included in Annexe A and the Official Report of the Committee's last consideration of this petition is at Annexe B.
3. Written submissions received prior to the Committee's last consideration can be found on the [petition's webpage](#).
4. Further background information about this petition can be found in the [SPICe briefing](#) for this petition.
5. The Scottish Government's initial position on this petition can be found on the [petition's webpage](#).
6. The Committee may wish to note that on 9 June 2022, a [Members' Business Debate](#) was held on motion S6M-04464 in the name of Rhoda Grant, on NHS staff recruitment and retention, where some of the issues raised by this petition were highlighted.

Action

- The Committee is invited to consider what action it wishes to take.

Clerk to the Committee

ANNEXE C

Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee

11th Meeting, 2022 (Session 6), Wednesday 15 June 2022

PE1915: Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to reinstate Caithness County Council and Caithness NHS Board

Note by the Clerk

Introduction

1. The Committee last considered this petition at its meeting on [8 June 2022](#), where it heard evidence from the petitioner and the petitioners of petitions PE1845, PE1890, and PE1924 on a range of issues relating to rural healthcare. At that meeting, the Committee agreed to consider the evidence heard at a future meeting.
2. The petition summary is included in Annexe A and the Official Report of the Committee's last consideration of this petition is at Annexe B.
3. The Committee has received a new response from the Petitioner, which is set out in Annexe C.
4. Written submissions received prior to the Committee's last consideration can be found on the [petition's webpage](#).
5. Further background information about this petition can be found in the [SPICe briefing](#) for this petition.
6. The Scottish Government's initial position on this petition can be found on the [petition's webpage](#).

Action

- The Committee is invited to consider what action it wishes to take.

Clerk to the Committee

ANNEXE D

**Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee
11th Meeting, 2022 (Session 6), Wednesday 15 June 2022**

**PE1924: Complete an emergency in-depth review of
Women's Health services in Caithness & Sutherland**

Note by the Clerk

Introduction

1. The Committee last considered this petition at its meeting on [8 June 2022](#), where it heard evidence from the Petitioner and the petitioners of petitions PE1845, PE1890 and PE1915 on a range of issues relating to rural healthcare. At that meeting, the Committee agreed to consider the evidence heard at a future meeting.
2. The petition summary is included in Annexe A and the Official Report of the Committee's last consideration of this petition is at Annexe B.
3. The Committee has received a new response from the Petitioner, which is set out in Annexe C.
4. Written submissions received prior to the Committee's last consideration can be found on the [petition's webpage](#).
4. Further background information about this petition can be found in the [SPICe briefing](#) for this petition.
5. The Scottish Government's initial position on this petition can be found on the [petition's webpage](#).

Action

- The Committee is invited to consider what action it wishes to take. Clerk to the Committee

Clerk to the Committee