

Answers issued to Members on 9 June 2009

[R] signifies that the Member has declared an interest.

[W] signifies that the question was tabled in Welsh.

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Questions to the First Minister

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): How much has been spent on legal services for the area for which you are responsible in each year since 2003? (WAQ54264)

The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan): As stated in my response to WAQ53893, WAQ53904, WAQ53888, WAQ53886, WAQ53890, WAQ53895 and WAQ53891 it is not possible to provide a breakdown of legal costs by Ministerial Department as departmental responsibilities have changed significantly over time, most recently after the last Assembly election. Total spend from Central Administration budgets on external legal advice is summarised in the table below along with the running costs for the Welsh Assembly Government's Legal Services Department.

Costs of Legal Services

Financial Year	External Legal Services £'000	Legal Services Department £'000	Total Legal Services £'000
2003-2004	1,684	3,200	4,884
2004-2005	830	3,331	4,161
2005-2006	922	3,901	4,823

Post ASPB merger

2006-2007	1,359	5,278	6,637
2007-2008	1,337	6,170	7,507

Please note that:

- increase in costs between 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 is mainly due to the merging of the Assembly Government with the former ASPBs;
- the increase in Legal Services Department costs between 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 is mainly due to the introduction of the Government of Wales Act 2006;
- the figures for 2008-2009 will be available following the audit of the Welsh Assembly Government's accounts; and
- there is likely to have been some additional expenditure on external legal services in direct support of the Welsh Assembly Government's policy objectives which would have been recorded against programme budgets. This information is not held centrally.

Questions to the Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): How much has been spent on legal services for the area for which you are responsible in each year since 2003? (WAQ54266) *Transferred for answer by the First Minister.*

The First Minister: I refer you to the answer to WAQ54264.

Questions to the Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): How much has been spent on legal services for the area for which you are responsible in each year since 2003? (WAQ54276) *Transferred for answer by the First Minister.*

The First Minister: I refer you to the answer to WAQ54264.

Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire): Does the Welsh Assembly Government have any plans to introduce a free school meal programme in Wales as recently seen in Scotland? (WAQ54306)

The Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Jane Hutt): The Welsh Assembly Government's current focus is on improving the nutritional standards of food and drink provided in schools through our Appetite for Life Action Plan rather than widening eligibility for free meals.

School meals, and especially the provision of free school meals, are an important aspect of our anti-poverty strategy. In deprived areas, where many of the meals served are free, their quality sets the standard for the whole service. Our successful Primary School Free Breakfast initiative is already helping children have a healthy start to the day, with around 960 primary schools participating in the scheme.

We will continue to monitor and learn from developments across all parts of the UK—this will help inform how we take forward our whole school approach to improving food and nutrition in schools in Wales.

Questions to the Minister for Finance and Public Service Delivery

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): How much has been spent on legal services for the area for which you are responsible in each year since 2003? (WAQ54270) *Transferred for answer by the First Minister.*

The First Minister: I refer you to the answer to WAQ54264.

Questions to the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): How much has been spent on legal services for the area for which you are responsible in each year since 2003? (WAQ54268) *Transferred for answer by the First Minister.*

The First Minister: I refer you to the answer to WAQ54264.

Kirsty Williams (Brecon and Radnorshire): Will the Minister make a statement on fees for the displaying of Green Flag Awards in National Parks? (WAQ54294)

The Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing (Jane Davidson): Securing Green Flag status by schools is a great achievement and I can appreciate that they want to display it for all to see. However, the external display of the Green Flag requires advertisement consent, and therefore a fee is payable to the local planning authority.

Application fees are mandatory, and reflect the resources used for notification and consultation requirements imposed on local planning authorities when determining applications.

In general, an advertisement displayed within a building does not usually require advertisement consent. If the Green Flag is displayed internally within the school it is unlikely to require advertisement consent.

Darren Millar (Clwyd West): Does the Minister have any plans to review the guidance given to Local Authorities on the provision of gypsy/travellers sites? (WAQ54305)

Jane Davison: I have no plans to review planning guidance on the provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites. Comprehensive planning guidance was published in 2007. The guidance takes forward the land use planning recommendations arising from the National Assembly Equality of Opportunity Committee Review of Service Provision for Gypsies and Travellers and the Assembly Government research report, commissioned from Birmingham University, to consider the Accommodation needs of Gypsy-Travellers in Wales.

Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): How much has been spent on legal services for the area for which you are responsible in each year since 2003? (WAQ54274) *Transferred for answer by the First Minister.*

The First Minister: I refer you to the answer to WAQ54264.

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): Is the Minister aware of any proposed changes in the opening hours of Departments at Llandrindod Wells Hospital that may affect services? (WAQ54313)

The Minister for Health and Social Services (Edwina Hart): My Officials have confirmed with Powys Teaching LHB officers that they currently have no plans or proposals to change the opening hours of any of the Departments at Llandrindod Wells Hospital. If however you have any specific information about changes I would be happy to follow this issue up further.

Questions to the Minister for Heritage

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): How much has been spent on legal services for the area for which you are responsible in each year since 2003? (WAQ54282) *Transferred for answer by the First Minister.*

The First Minister: I refer you to the answer to WAQ54264.

Kirsty Williams (Brecon and Radnorshire): Will the Minister make a statement on the future of the regional tourism partnerships? (WAQ54283)

The Minister for Heriatge (Alun Ffred Jones): Current regional and local structures for marketing, including the Regional Tourism Partnerships, have been examined recently under the auspices of the Destination Management and Marketing Review that has been undertaken.

The Task and Finish group that I have established is considering the Review's recommendations in this area and will submit their findings to me for consideration in the autumn.

I cannot add to this until I have seen the Group's report, other than to say that I remain committed to ensuring we have an effective tourism structure for delivery at all levels.

Kirsty Williams (Brecon and Radnorshire): Will the Minister make a statement on the destination management and marketing of Wales? (WAQ54284)

Alun Ffred Jones: I gave an update on what we are doing to manage and market destinations in Wales as part of the statement I gave in plenary on 19 May.

A Destination Management and Marketing Review has been undertaken which looked at the current arrangements in Wales for developing and marketing our tourism areas and recommended what changes are needed in order to deliver a higher quality experience. It also examined regional and local structures for marketing Wales, the relationship to other marketing activity and the need to make more effective use of limited resources.

I have established a Task and Finish group to consider the Review's recommendations and to agree an appropriate action plan to take forward this work and ensure that the right structures are put in place at national, regional and local level.

It is hoped that the group will be in a position to finalise an action plan for taking forward agreed recommendations from the review by early autumn, and submit that to me for consideration.

The consultation summary report and consultation responses can be accessed here.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/tourism/development/develop/responses/?lang=en>

Kirsty Williams (Brecon and Radnorshire): What discussions has the Minister had with the Minister for Economy and Transport with regards to tourism being a part of the green jobs strategy? (WAQ54285)

Alun Ffred Jones: I have had no specific discussions with the Minister for Economy and Transport with regards to tourism being a part of the Green Jobs strategy, although the Strategy has been discussed at cabinet level.

My officials within Visit Wales have fed into the Green Jobs strategy development process via policy gateway meetings and the consultation process and as a result tourism priorities have been taken into consideration and some included in the Green Jobs strategy consultation document.

Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): How much has been spent on legal services for the area for which you are responsible in each year since 2003? (WAQ54280) *Transferred for answer by the First Minister.*

The First Minister: I refer you to the answer to WAQ54264.

Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): How much has been spent on legal services for the area for which you are responsible in each year since 2003? (WAQ54272) *Transferred for answer by the First Minister.*

The First Minister: I refer you to the answer to WAQ54264.

Questions to the Counsel General

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): How much has been spent on legal services for the area for which you are responsible in each year since 2003? (WAQ54278) *Transferred for answer by the First Minister.*

The First Minister: I refer you to the answer to WAQ54264.