

Written Questions answered between 12 and 19 May 2005

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

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

Contents

[Questions to the First Minister](#)

[Questions to the Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport](#)

[Questions to the Minister for Economic Development and Transport](#)

[Questions to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning](#)

[Questions to the Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside](#)

[Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services](#)

[Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration](#)

Questions to the First Minister

Lisa Francis: What is the Welsh Assembly Government doing to develop stronger scientific links between Wales and China? (WAQ42722)

The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan): Building on the strategic alliance I signed last year between Wales's technium network and China's prestigious Fudan science park, we are now planning to take a delegation of technium companies to China later this year.

Alun Cairns: What policies has the Welsh Assembly Government introduced to co-ordinate funding needs that cross the education and social care portfolios? (WAQ42732)

The First Minister: On 24 January, I announced a change in responsibility for a number of children's

policies. Funding relating to the children's commissioner, Cymorth, integrated centres, play and childcare and children and families organisation grant was, therefore, transferred to the education and lifelong learning main expenditure group in the March supplementary budget. The annual budget planning exercise also takes account of inter-departmental priorities within our policies.

Questions to the Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport

Lisa Francis: What assessment has been made by the Minister and his officials regarding the reorganisation of Sgrîn and the impact it will have on Skillset's screen academies? (WAQ41788)

Lisa Francis: What assessment has been made by the Minister and his officials regarding the reorganisation of Sgrîn and the impact it will have on Skillset's business academy? (WAQ41789)

Lisa Francis: What assessment has been made by the Minister and his officials regarding the reorganisation of Sgrîn and the impact it will have on Skillset's £1 million new entrant fund launched on 19 April 2004? (WAQ41790)

Lisa Francis: What assessment has been made by the Minister and his officials regarding the reorganisation of Sgrîn and the impact it will have on Skillset's pilot in higher education screenwriting courses? (WAQ41791)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport (Alun Pugh): There would be no impact at all on Skillset's work with regard to the Screen Academy. Skillset has now short listed several potential screen academies and will be making the final announcement as to who has been successful, and if there will be one in Wales, in the next few weeks. As a result of the creative industries strategy, the Welsh Assembly Government, WDA and others will be working closely together on screen academies in Wales.

There was no bid for the business academy from Wales, and it will be going to a London-based business school. The screen academy will be working with the business academy and the work will be linked to the creative industries strategy. All interested parties, including Sgrîn, will be kept up to date.

The £1 million new entrant fund is UK-wide and both new entrants from Wales and training providers will be able to benefit from this fund. There is no known impact on Skillset by the reorganisation of Sgrîn.

Skillset is approving screenwriting courses in further and higher education throughout the UK. Courses that are approved by Skillset will be fit for industry and frequently involve industry experts as part of the teaching process. There is, therefore, no real link to the reorganisation of Sgrîn.

Lisa Francis: What assessment has the Minister made of the contribution of the National Eisteddfod

towards fulfilling the Assembly Government's cultural and Welsh Language objectives? (WAQ42724)

(Alun Pugh): An independent study into the economic, linguistic, cultural and social effects of the National Eisteddfod was commissioned following the Llanelli eisteddfod in 2000. It showed that activities in Welsh, and access to arts and cultural activities had increased as a result of the eisteddfod.

In June 2003, the Assembly Government's 'Strategy for National Events in Wales' emphasised the importance of major events and concluded that the National Eisteddfod was one of the key events within the strategy.

The Stevens report, published in 2003, acknowledged that the National Eisteddfod was fundamentally important for the Assembly Government in terms of meeting the aspirations embodied in 'Iaith Pawb', 'Creative Future—A Cultural Strategy for Wales' and in 'A Winning Wales—the National Economic Development Strategy'.

The Welsh Language Board considers the National Eisteddfod's contribution to the Welsh language as part of its annual grant awarding process.

Questions to the Minister for Economic Development and Transport

Lisa Francis: What is the Welsh Assembly Government doing to ensure that there is sufficient capital investment and skills development to aid the success of manufacturing and engineering companies in Wales? (WAQ42684)

The Minister for Economic Development and Transport (Andrew Davies): The manufacturing task and finish group report highlighted the importance of continuing support for both capital investment and skills development. In the 2004-05 financial year, 87 offers of regional selective assistance worth a total of £46 million were made to manufacturing companies investing in developing their capacity. We are introducing a wide range of measures to help employers raise the skills of their workforce, and these are set out in the skills and employment action plan 2005. Those include the introduction of workforce learning accounts and boosting support for investors in people. ELWa's budget is planned to rise by 11 per cent to some £576 million by 2007-08 to allow it to respond to the skills challenge.

Lynne Neagle: Will the Minister make a statement on Assembly Government support for the Torfaen economy? (WAQ42692)

Andrew Davies: The Welsh Assembly Government has done a great deal to contribute to the Torfaen economy. For example, since the inception of the Assembly, 50 offers of regional selective assistance worth some £30 million have been made to companies in Torfaen. These offers are expected to lever in over £108

million investment and create or safeguard almost 4,000 jobs.

Val Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on the value of regional selective assistance? (WAQ42693)

Andrew Davies: Regional selective assistance is available in the assisted areas covering much of Wales. It is a powerful tool enabling the Welsh Assembly Government to help businesses to invest, move up the quality ladder and create jobs.

Laura Anne Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on the small business sector in Wales? (WAQ42694)

Andrew Davies: The Assembly Government is committed to supporting small businesses throughout Wales, as it recognises that these businesses are the bedrock of the economy in Wales. A range of publicly funded support is available to develop businesses in Wales. Underpinning that is Business Eye, which offers free, impartial information and signposting about business services from the public, private and voluntary sector. The entrepreneurship action plan includes a range of programmes that are actively encouraging an increase in the number of new small businesses and helping develop the potential of existing ones.

According to the latest statistics, National Assembly For Wales First Release, 30 September 2004—size analysis of Welsh business, the small business sector, that is, enterprises employing up to 249 people but not including those employing 250 or more, accounts for 99.1 per cent of the total number of business sector enterprises in Wales. The small business sector also accounts for 42.7 per cent of total business sector turnover and is responsible for the employment of 58.5 per cent of total business sector workforce.

Laura Anne Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on any assessment he has made on how sporting events benefit the economy in Wales? (WAQ42695)

Andrew Davies: The Welsh Assembly Government provides around £7 million per annum to support a wide range of major events, including sporting events. Our support ensures that these events generate a wide range of benefits to Wales. As well as direct benefits—jobs, more visitors, increased spending within the economy and local supply chains—our support for events can also lead to secondary benefits such as investment in infrastructure and community development.

Promoting Wales to the world as a premier events destination also provides the catalyst for secondary tourist visits, inward investment and the attraction of other events.

John Griffiths: Will the Minister make a statement on the steel industry in Wales? (WAQ42696)

Andrew Davies: After a period of major restructuring, the steel industry in Wales is undergoing a period of high investment and production capacity growth.

The First Minister and I attended the opening of Corus's new £79 million continuous caster at Port Talbot this week, which is part of a £200 million wider capital programme for Corus in south Wales. Port Talbot is now the biggest production plant in the UK, having increased slab output capacity by 25 per cent to 4.7 million tonnes annually, and is able to service both its own mills and those of its sister plant at Llanwern without the need to bring in slab from elsewhere.

Corus's investments in south Wales should ensure substantial performance benefits which, in turn, would contribute to a continuing profitable UK Corus business.

With substantial capital investments well underway at Alphasteel in Newport, new melt shop plans for Celsa at Cardiff, and substantial recent investment by Sims and Dunn Bros. in scrap provision to feed the furnaces, Wales is once again proving itself a major player in steel production.

John Griffiths: Will the Minister make a statement on economic development in south-east Wales?
(WAQ42697)

Andrew Davies: I am delighted to report positive progress on economic development in south-east Wales with 21,000 more people in employment than in 1999.

Peter Black: Will the Minister make a statement on the funding of road safety schemes in Wales?
(WAQ42698)

Andrew Davies: Road safety schemes in Wales are funded in number of ways. The Assembly Government has a targeted trunk road safety budget and has also implemented a rural town and village trunk road initiative that has provided a better environment for those communities that are situated on trunk roads.

Since 2000 the Assembly Government has provided local authorities with direct funding in the form of a local road safety special grant to address local safety problems. Local authorities can also use their capital grant allocations to improve safety on the local road network.

Nick Bourne: What is the Minister doing to improve transport infrastructure across Wales? (WAQ42699)

Andrew Davies: I set out my £8 billion, 15-year programme to improve transport infrastructure and

services across Wales when I announced the outcome of my transport review last December.

Lisa Francis: What estimation has the Welsh Assembly Government made of the total number of job losses in Wales resulting from the closure of MG Rover? (WAQ42721)

Andrew Davies: The Welsh automotive taskforce has estimated that some 600 manufacturing jobs could be at risk as a result of the closure, with the potential for additional job losses in the MG Rover dealership network. The Assembly Government is working with the task force and the UK Government to help minimise the risks of these losses.

Lisa Francis: What assessment has the Minister made of the contribution of the National Eisteddfod to the Welsh economy? (WAQ42723)

Andrew Davies: An independent formal assessment was made on the economic benefits to the local economy as a result of the Llanelli National Eisteddfod in 2000. The research showed that the Eisteddfod had generated a gross economic benefit of £6.4 million for Carmarthenshire, with the majority of this concentrated on Llanelli itself. For every £1 spent in the area as a result of the Eisteddfod, a further £4.13 was generated for the local economy. The direct spending on staging and supporting the Eisteddfod was over £1.55 million. This included the money spent on preparing the Eisteddfod field, parking facilities, specific local services, local marketing, accommodation for staff, labourers and contractors as well as a contribution from local partners such as Carmarthenshire County Council.

Lisa Francis: Will the Minister make a statement on the number of public sector jobs in Wales, each year since 1999? (WAQ42733)

Lisa Francis: Will the Minister make a statement on the number of private sector jobs in Wales, each year since 1999? (WAQ42734)

Andrew Davies: The available information from the Labour Force Survey is given in the table. These figures rely to some extent on respondents' self-assessment of the sector in which they work. Compared to employer-based statistics, currently only available for the UK as a whole, the LFS tends to overstate the size of the public sector. However, there is no reason to suggest any bias in the trend over time in the LFS estimates. According to these estimates, both public and private sector employment in Wales increased by around 8 per cent between 1999 and 2004.

Public and private sector employment in Wales (thousands) (1)

	Public sector	Private sector	Total
1999 (2)	338	870	1,207
2000	357	865	1,222
2001	349	871	1,220
2002	360	893	1,253
2003	370	935	1,305
2004	363	940	1,303
Change: 1999 to 2004	26	70	96

Source: Labour Force Survey

1. excludes a small number in employment for whom sectoral details are not available.
2. all years are four quarter averages running from March to February. e.g. 1999 = March 1999 to February 2000.

Lisa Francis: Will the Minister make a statement on the impact of trade missions to China on Welsh companies? (WAQ42752)

Andrew Davies: Since its inception the Welsh Assembly Government, through WalesTrade International, has organised six trade missions to China.

The total number of delegates is 62, though the two most recent missions have accounted for 35 in total which reflects the growing interest in the Chinese market from Wales-based companies. In September 2004 the First Minister led a delegation to Shanghai, Beijing and Xiamen. The next WTI mission to China is in October, visiting Shanghai and Beijing.

Overall 27 companies new to the market have been assisted and six were new exporters. To date the companies have so far reported deals to the value of £1.467 million and identified opportunities to the value of some £26 million.

Lisa Francis: Will the Minister make a statement on the number of households in Mid and West Wales that have fast-track internet access, and for those who do not yet have access, when can they expect this?
(WAQ42753)

Andrew Davies: According to BT statistics there are 208,000 broadband users in Wales. Out of this 208,000 there are 9,000 users in Pembrokeshire, 9,000 users in Carmarthenshire, 8,000 users in Powys and 5,000 users in Ceredigion. These figures only account for those who connect to broadband via BT and do not include others who choose to connect to high-speed internet access via other forms of technology such as wireless. In total it is estimated that there are almost 500,000 broadband users in Wales utilising a variety of technologies for access. These additional technologies give estimates of 11,200 users in Powys, 22,500 in Carmarthenshire, 15,000 in Pembrokeshire and 7,800 in Ceredigion, (source = Broadband Wales census research February 2005).

With regards to those who cannot currently connect to broadband, I refer you to the answer given to WAQ42755.

Lisa Francis: Will the Minister make a statement on how the Welsh Assembly Government will ensure access to broadband in areas of social deprivation? (WAQ42754)

Lisa Francis: What is the Welsh Assembly Government doing to ensure the availability of broadband for everyone in Wales? (WAQ42755)

Andrew Davies: As outlined in the revised broadband Wales strategy 2005-07, the Assembly Government is committed to ensuring access to a first generation broadband connection for everyone in Wales. I am hopeful that this will be achieved through the RIBS project, which will call for a fair and open procurement process that will use a broadband service provider to build the infrastructure and required broadband services. The project has already been notified to the European Commission and the early signs are positive. We are hopeful to receive a final decision within a month or so.

Lisa Francis: Will the Minister make a statement on whether there is a digital divide in Wales?
(WAQ42756)

Andrew Davies: There is a digital divide in Wales and that was the principal reason why I launched the broadband Wales programme in July 2002. The economics of broadband deployment generally means that the roll out in rural areas costs more than it does in our more urban conurbations. Therefore, it is possible that Assembly Government intervention may often be necessary in rural areas in certain circumstances to ensure there is no digital divide.

Lisa Francis: What is being done to increase high-technology Chinese investment into Wales?
(WAQ42757)

Lisa Francis: Will the Minister make a statement on the success/failure of the link between the Swansea Technium and Shanghai's Fudan Science Park? (WAQ42758)

Lisa Francis: Will the Minister make a statement on what long term strategy is in place to attract high-value, high-technology companies from China? (WAQ42760)

Lisa Francis: As a result of the links between the Swansea Technium and Shanghai's Fudan Science Park, has/when will Golden Prosperity establish a manufacturing plant in Wales? (WAQ42761)

Andrew Davies: Our efforts in China are designed to attract investments that would sit within and enhance the Welsh economy. They embrace a wide range of opportunity including manufacturing, sales and marketing, research and development. Research and past experience tells us that Wales is well placed in all of these areas as is evidenced by the presence here of Axiom Manufacturing (a contract manufacturer), Fudan Science Park Company Limited and Golden Prosperity Limited, both of which have established a representation in the Technium at Swansea and Datex Technologies also in Swansea.

The very close links that we have established with Fudan University and with Fudan Science Park Company Limited and the focus that we have placed upon the Technium in Swansea as a destination for Chinese high technology companies are all part of our long-term strategy to attract high value, high- technology companies from that market. This, however, is just one strand of a more comprehensive approach to the Chinese market.

At this stage, it is too early to say when Golden Prosperity will establish a manufacturing plant in Wales, but we do anticipate expansions of those that we have already attracted and we expect further collaboration between Chinese companies and companies based in Wales. Experience shows that sales and marketing offices and development offices are often a precursor to something much bigger.

Questions to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

Alun Cairns: How many courses does ELWa fund aimed at special needs pupils? (WAQ42708)

Alun Cairns: Would the Minister make a statement on further education courses available for special needs pupils? (WAQ42709)

Alun Cairns: What plans does the Minister have to review the courses available for special needs pupils? (WAQ42710)

Alun Cairns: Would the Minister make a statement on what is termed 'disproportionate expenditure', when

assessing the costs of courses for special needs pupils? (WAQ42711)

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning (Jane Davidson): ELWa, in partnership with LEAs, funds a range of provision suitable for post-16 students with special educational needs, having regard to its statutory responsibilities under the Learning and Skills Act 2000 for the needs of people with learning difficulties and disabilities. Provision includes placements at further education colleges, specialist residential colleges and work based learning providers within Wales, other parts of the UK, and overseas.

Most further education institutions provide discrete courses for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In addition, they obtain supplementary funding from ELWa to enable learners to access learning in the mainstream environment with the aim of securing equality of opportunity for all learners. Similar arrangements are in place for the work based learning environment. The types of courses undertaken by learners with special educational needs include a wide variety of mainstream activity and also specialist provision. This extends to independent living skills courses, which are offered by further education institutions and schools to assist students with learning difficulties to move on successfully to become independent members of their communities. There are no plans to review the courses that are currently available.

Information is not available centrally on courses within mainstream provision that attract learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In 2004-05, ELWa made available some £4.6 million for further education supplementary funding and for work-based learning additional learning support to underpin mainstream arrangements. It also allocated £6.5 million for the adaptation of buildings and equipment at further education institutions. In the same year, ELWa and its providers managed 140 residential placements for learners that could not be accommodated within the mainstream.

ELWa normally funds college courses for a maximum duration of two years although, in exceptional cases, it will consider funding for a further year to enable a learner to complete a particular programme of study. ELWa has specific duties under the Learning and Skills Act 2000 to secure provision for learners and it manages the available budget to achieve best value overall from the public expenditure at its disposal.

Questions to the Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside

Nick Bourne: What representations has he made to Westminster colleagues regarding the forthcoming revision of the less favoured area by the EU? (WAQ42735)

The Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside (Carwyn Jones): The Welsh Assembly Government is fully engaged at London in shaping the UK negotiation position and at the European level on discussions relating to the entirety of the European Commission's draft EU rural development regulation, including matters on less favoured areas.

Nick Bourne: What is the Minister doing to promote honest labelling of food and farm assurance schemes? (WAQ42736)

Carwyn Jones: The Food Standards Agency is responsible for food labelling matters and is committed to promoting good labelling practice in order to help consumers make informed choices. The Welsh Assembly Government is also working with key partners, including Hybu Cig Cymru to help develop and promote improved farm assurance schemes.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister make a statement on milk prices in Wales? (WAQ42737)

Carwyn Jones: I am aware of the current downward pressure on farm-gate milk prices. However, the Welsh Assembly Government has no role in setting the prices Welsh producers receive. That is a commercial matter for the market to determine.

Nick Bourne: What discussions has the Minister had with a view to relaxing beef export controls in conjunction with the over-thirty-months scheme? (WAQ42738)

Carwyn Jones: I have had a number of discussions with my Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs ministerial colleagues, during which I have stressed the need for the UK Government to work closely with the European Commission in order to relax beef export controls at the earliest opportunity.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister undertake to review arrangements for the disposal of fallen stock as a matter of urgency? (WAQ42739)

Carwyn Jones: My officials are working closely with the National Fallen Stock Company plus industry representatives in reviewing the national fallen stock scheme to identify areas that need improvement and to improve systems for the future.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister provide an update of measures that he is taking to tackle bovine TB in Wales? (WAQ42740)

Carwyn Jones: On 1 March 2005, the Assembly Government, DEFRA and the Scottish Executive published the Government strategic framework for the sustainable control of bovine tuberculosis in Great Britain. The aim of the framework is to slow down and prevent the geographic spread of bovine tuberculosis

to areas currently free of the disease, and achieve a sustained reduction in disease incidence in cattle in high incidence areas. It will put in place an effective mechanism for co-ordinating approaches to bovine tuberculosis across GB but also allow for the development of different approaches to recognise differences in disease incidence within GB. The Wales TB action group, set up in response to the report of the Environment, Planning and Countryside Committee inquiry into bovine tuberculosis, is an example of this being put into effect. I will shortly be receiving the advice of the action group on measures that the Assembly Government might take to tackle this disease in Wales.

Helen Mary Jones: A wnaiff y Gweinidog gyflwyno manylion ar y fformiwla newydd a ddefnyddiwyd ar gyfer system taliadau newydd Tir Gofal? (WAQ42741) [W]

Carwyn Jones: Adolygwyd y cyfraddau talu sydd ar gael o dan y cynllun Tir Gofal er mwyn cydymffurfio â rheoliadau'r Undeb Ewropeaidd, sy'n ei gwneud hi'n ofynnol i aelod-wladwriaethau waredu iawndal am unrhyw gymhorthdal a gollwyd wrth gydymffurfio â gofynion y cynllun. Yn ystod yr adolygiad, edrychwyd hefyd ar nifer o ffactorau eraill, gan gynnwys newidiadau i'r costau llafur a rheoli yn ogystal ag effaith trawsgydymffurfio a'r rheoliadau sy'n ymwneud â'r asesiadau o'r effaith amgylcheddol. Bydd y cyfrifiadau sy'n berthnasol i'r holl gyfraddau newydd arfaethedig yn cael eu cyhoeddi cyn hir.

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister provide details of the new formula used for the new Tir Gofal payment system? (WAQ42741) [W]

Carwyn Jones: The payment rates available under Tir Gofal have been reviewed to comply with EU regulations, which require member states to remove compensation for loss of subsidy incurred in complying with scheme prescriptions. The review also examined a number of other factors, including changes in labour and management costs, as well as the impact of cross-compliance and the environmental impact assessment regulations. The calculations behind all the proposed new rates will be published shortly.

Helen Mary Jones: A wnaiff y Gweinidog fanylu ar ba ohebiaeth a roddwyd i aelodau cynllun Tir Gofal o'r newidiadau i'r system taliadau newydd? (WAQ42742) [W]

Carwyn Jones: Cafodd y ffermwyr i gyd wybod am yr adolygiad o'r taliadau drwy gyfrwng *Gwlad* a nifer o lythyrau gan Lywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru. Yn ogystal â hynny, mae Cyngor Cefn Gwlad wedi cynnwys datganiad ysgrifenedig ynglyn â'r adolygiad mewn cysylltiad â'r holl geisiadau a hawliwyd ers mis Gorffennaf diwethaf ac wedi ysgrifennu at holl ddeiliaid y cytundebau ym mis Ionawr a mis Ebrill.

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister detail what correspondence was sent to members of the Tir Gofal scheme about the changes to the payment system? (WAQ42742) [W]

Carwyn Jones: The payment review has been publicised to all farmers via *Gwlad* and numerous letters

from the Welsh Assembly Government. In addition, the Countryside Council for Wales has included a written statement about the review with all claims made since last July and it wrote to all agreement holders in January and April.

Helen Mary Jones: A wnaiff y Gweinidog fanylu ar ba gynlluniau amaeth-amgylcheddol eraill fydd yn cael eu heffeithio o ganlyniad i'r newidiadau i system taliadau newydd Tir Gofal a sut? (WAQ42743) [W]

Carwyn Jones: Mae'r adolygiad o'r taliadau wedi edrych ar bob cynllun amaeth-amgylcheddol sy'n cael ei ariannu gan yr Undeb Ewropeaidd. Yn eu plith, mae Tir Gofal, Tir Cymen, ardaloedd amgylcheddol sensitif, a'r cynllun cynefinoedd a ffermio organig.

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister detail what other agri-environmental schemes will be affected as a result of changes to the new Tir Gofal payment system and how? (WAQ42743) [W]

Carwyn Jones: The payment review has looked at all EU funded agri-environment schemes. These include Tir Gofal, Tir Cymen, environmentally sensitive areas, and the habitat and organic farming scheme.

Helen Mary Jones: Pryd bydd y newidiadau i system taliadau newydd Tir Gofal yn dechrau? (WAQ42744) [W]

Carwyn Jones: Ni chaiff y cyfraddau newydd arfaethedig eu cyflwyno hyd nes y bydd yr undebau amaethyddol wedi cael cyfle i'w harchwilio a gwneud sylwadau ynghylch y cyfrifiadau manwl. Bydd yn rhaid i'r cyfraddau newydd gael eu cymeradwyo hefyd gan yr Undeb Ewropeaidd a Chynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru.

Helen Mary Jones: When will the changes to the new Tir Gofal payment system start? (WAQ42744) [W]

Carwyn Jones: The proposed new rates will not be introduced until the farming unions have had an opportunity to examine and feed back on the detailed calculations. The new rates will also be subject to both EU and National Assembly for Wales approval.

Helen Mary Jones: Pa hawl gytundebol sydd gan y Llywodraeth i ostwng gwerth taliadau Tir Gofal? (WAQ42745) [W]

Carwyn Jones: Mae pob cytundeb Tir Gofal yn cynnwys cymal sy'n datgan y gall y cyfraddau taliadau gael eu cynyddu neu eu lleihau o ganlyniad i unrhyw adolygiad a gynhelir yn y dyfodol.

Helen Mary Jones: What contractual right does the Government have to lower the value of Tir Gofal payments? (WAQ42745) [W]

Carwyn Jones: All Tir Gofal agreements include a clause that states that payment rates may go up or down as a result of any future review.

Helen Mary Jones: A wnaiff y Gweinidog fanylu, yn sgîl system taliadau newydd Tir Gofal, ar werth gwasanaethau y telir amdanynt o dan y taliad sengl a gwerth y gwasanaethau hynny o dan Tir Gofal? (WAQ42746) [W]

Carwyn Jones: Fel rheol, gellir priodoli rhwng 25 y cant a 30 y cant o'r rhan fwyaf o daliadau rheoli Tir Gofal i iawndal ar gyfer cymhorthdal a gollwyd. Byddai peidio â diddymu'r iawndal hwn o Tir Gofal yn golygu y byddai'r ddau gynllun yn talu ffermwyr dros £4 miliwn y flwyddyn am yr un peth.

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister detail, in the light of the new Tir Gofal payment system, the cost of services that are funded under the single farm payment and the cost of those services under the Tir Gofal scheme? (WAQ42746) [W]

Carwyn Jones: Compensation for loss of subsidy generally makes up between 25 per cent and 30 per cent of most Tir Gofal management payments. Not removing this compensation from Tir Gofal would result in the two schemes paying farmers over £4 million a year for the same thing.

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Helen Mary Jones: Pa ohebiaeth a roddwyd i ffermwyr, a oedd ar fin arwyddo cytundebau Tir Gofal, a oedd yn esbonio'r amgylchiadau pan fyddai taliadau yn newid oherwydd y system taliadau newydd? (WAQ42747) [W]

Carwyn Jones: Mae'r holl gytundebau newydd a gynigiwyd i ffermwyr ers mis Gorffennaf diwethaf wedi cynnwys datganiad clir yn rhybuddio ffermwyr ynglyn â'r adolygiad i'r cyfraddau taliadau.

Helen Mary Jones: What correspondence was sent to farmers, who were about to sign Tir Gofal agreements, that explained the circumstances in which payments would change as a result of the new payment system? (WAQ42747) [W]

Carwyn Jones: All new agreement offers made to farmers since last July have included a clear statement alerting farmers to the review of payment rates.

Nick Bourne: With regard to the internal inquiry into the Robbie Powell case, referred to in your letter of 22 April 2005, could you please indicate when the inquiry was set up and when it reported? (WAQ42700)

Nick Bourne: With regard to the internal inquiry into the Robbie Powell case, referred to in your letter of 22 April 2005, could you please indicate who was in charge of this internal inquiry and to whom the report was made? (WAQ42701)

Nick Bourne: With regard to the internal inquiry into the Robbie Powell case, referred to in your letter of 22 April 2005, were copies of the report given to individuals and, if so, who received them? (WAQ42702)

Nick Bourne: With regard to the internal inquiry into the Robbie Powell case, referred to in your letter of 22 April 2005, what witnesses were called in relation to the investigation and are they able to confirm what evidence they gave in this investigation? (WAQ42703)

Nick Bourne: With regard to the internal inquiry into the Robbie Powell case, referred to in your letter of 22 April 2005, will you please release documents relating to the investigation including, but not limited to, who was to give evidence to the internal investigation, what the time limits were, to whom the report was to be made, to whom the report was to be made available, and findings of the investigation et cetera? (WAQ42704)

The Minister for Health and Social Services (Brian Gibbons): I will answer the above questions with my response to your freedom of information request, dated 26 April 2005, in which you ask for further information on documents regarding this internal inquiry, already released to you with my letter to you of 22 April.

Lisa Francis: How many calls are needed to justify 24 hour ambulance cover in mid and west Wales? (WAQ42706)

Brian Gibbons: This is a matter for Health Commission Wales, as the commissioners of emergency ambulance services, and the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust to determine in line with Welsh Assembly Government targets.

Alun Cairns: What analysis has the Minister made of the long term costs for social care for Down's syndrome pupils if they fail to achieve independence by the time they complete their formal education? (WAQ42707)

Brian Gibbons: No such analysis has been undertaken by the Assembly Government, or, to my knowledge, by the Down's Syndrome Association. The transition into adulthood forms part of our draft national service

framework for children guidance. This draft guidance proposes that the transition process should commence when the young person is aged 14 and should normally encompass preparing individuals and their families/carers for the autonomy and independence that comes with adulthood.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: What steps has the Minister taken to establish the efficacy of medicines for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease? (WAQ42727)

Brian Gibbons: The Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency is responsible for the licensing of drugs in the UK. Under this process, it ensures that medicines for human use, sold or supplied in the UK, are of an acceptable standard of safety, quality and efficacy. The MHRA acts on behalf of the decentralised Governments since this function has not been devolved.

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence has responsibility for producing guidance to the NHS in England and Wales on the use of new and existing medicines, treatments and procedures within the NHS.

In 1999, and as part of its second wave work programme, Ministers at the Department of Health and Welsh Assembly Government asked NICE to undertake a technology appraisal of Donepezil, Rivastigmine and Galantamine for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease. NICE subsequently published its guidance on this topic in January 2001 (No. 19).

NICE is currently conducting a technology appraisal of Donepezil, Rivastigmine, Galantamine and Memantine for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease, including a review of its existing guidance No. 19. NICE published its appraisal consultation document on 1 March, which contained its preliminary recommendations, and expects to publish its final guidance in October 2005. Until then, the existing guidance (No. 19) remains in force.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: What estimate can the Minister make of the cost to NHS Wales of the prescription of medicines to patients with Alzheimer's disease? (WAQ42728)

Brian Gibbons: Since we do not hold patient information, we cannot estimate the cost to NHS Wales of the prescription medicines prescribed to patients with Alzheimer's disease. However, during 2004, expenditure in primary care on the four drugs specifically indicated for Alzheimer's disease (Donepezil, Galantamine, Memantine and Rivastigmine) amounted to £1,605,588. This does not include any prescribing that may have occurred in secondary care. This information is not readily available.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: What meetings has the Minister had during the last two months about the prescription of medicines to people with Alzheimer's disease? (WAQ42729)

Brian Gibbons: I have not had any meetings on this subject to date.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: What written representations has the Minister had over the last two months regarding the prescription of medicines to patients with Alzheimer's disease? (WAQ42730)

Brian Gibbons: As a direct result of the interim guidance issued by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence on 1 March, as part of its technology appraisal of Donepezil, Rivastigmine, Galantamine and Memantine for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease, including a review of its existing guidance no. 19, I have received written representations from nine Assembly Members, six Members of Parliament, four members of the public and the Alzheimer's Society Wales office.

My officials have made NICE aware of the concerns raised in this correspondence.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: How many patients with Alzheimer's disease in Wales are estimated to receive regular prescriptions of medicines? (WAQ42731)

Brian Gibbons: This information is not centrally held.

Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration

Lynne Neagle: Will the Minister outline the Welsh Assembly Government's main achievements in the field of social justice and regeneration in Torfaen? (WAQ42712)

The Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration (Edwina Hart):

- Regeneration

As part of the Welsh Assembly Government's commitment to improve health and develop strong and safe communities, Torfaen has benefited from £7.4 million in funding to assist the council with regenerative work in the areas of Blaenafon, Abersychan and Pontypool.

- Communities First

This remains essential to our vision of building a better Wales. There are three Communities First areas in Torfaen. Two of them, Trevethin and St Cadocs and Penygarn, have come together to form a single partnership. The other is based on Thornhill in Upper Cwmbran. Good progress is being made and the

partnerships are working hard to build up capacity, confidence and self-esteem in the communities. These conditions are essential to enable communities to move forward, draw up action plans and help bring about regeneration.

- Safer communities fund

This aims to reduce the fear of crime and addresses drug-related crime, including effective treatment for addicts. Torfaen has been awarded £37,041 in 2003-04 and £102,087 in 2004-05 and is set to receive £155,378 in 2005-06. Funding has focused on intervention and prevention work targeted at young people at risk. In addition, Torfaen has received funding to tackle local substance misuse (£264,807 in 2004-05 and £317,560 in 2005-06)

Lynne Neagle: What discussions has the Minister had with UK Government Ministers on eliminating child poverty in Wales? (WAQ42713)

Edwina Hart: My Deputy Minister will be taking forward the Assembly Government's strategy for tackling child poverty, 'A Fair Future for Our Children', including developing an implementation plan. I will look to discussions with the UK Government Ministers within this context.

Laura Anne Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on how she is tackling anti-social behaviour in Wales? (WAQ42714)

Edwina Hart: I am looking to enhance the very effective action that is being taken in Wales to tackle anti-social behaviour, in particular, through the promotion of concerted, multi-agency work addressing all aspects of anti-social behaviour.

Laura Anne Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on drug abuse in Wales? (WAQ42715)

Edwina Hart: We are tackling drug and alcohol misuse through the delivery of our national strategy. The 22 community safety partnerships in Wales are implementing the strategy at a local level by the delivery of their local action plans.

Carl Sargeant: Will the Minister outline the Welsh Assembly Government's main achievements in the field of social justice and regeneration in Flintshire? (WAQ42716)

Edwina Hart: The Welsh Assembly Government has had many achievements in the field of social justice and regeneration in Flintshire. Details of some of these achievements can be found below.

The local voluntary sector scheme ensures an effective support structure for voluntary organisations in all fields of activity in each local authority area. The overall budget for 2005-06 is £2.694 million of which Flintshire local voluntary council will receive £114,461. Additionally, Flintshire Volunteer Bureau will receive £43,000 in 2005-06 to provide a direct service to volunteers in the area.

Since November 2002, £893,409 has been allocated to community projects in Flintshire under the community facilities and activities programme (CFAP).

These are:

Flintshire citizens advice bureau	£220,401.00
Broli Cymraeg Trust Ltd	£245,558.00
St Francis Church, Sandycroft	£77,592.00
Higher Shotton sports and community centre	£45,000.00
Mancot and Moor village hall	£100,000.00
Flintshire Local Voluntary Council	£148,108.00
RESULTS—Flintshire LVC	£56,750.00
Total	£893,409.00

The community safety partnership in Flintshire is making a vital contribution to the area implementing the local strategy to reduce crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour. The partnership will be supported by £194,392 from the Assembly's safer communities fund in 2005-06. In 2004-05, it received £127,721 from the fund, which it used to for, among other projects, a substance misuse worker to spearhead a variety of anti-drugs activities in primary and secondary schools, leisure equipment to divert young offenders from drugs, a part-time health worker to support offenders, a domestic abuse co-ordinator, high-impact reassurance policing, a mobile closed-circuit television unit to target hotspots and a vehicle arson project.

Welsh community safety partnerships have received over £60 million of Home Office and Assembly funding since 1999, of which £1.8 million has gone to Flintshire community safety partnership.

Physical regeneration of community facilities, townscapes and the environment contributes significant regeneration benefits for the economy, environment, health and community. It is critical to creating

confidence and opportunity in deprived communities and it strengthens and supports vital focal points of local and national life in Wales.

The physical regeneration fund was launched in March 2004 and operates in the 22 unitary authorities and three national park authorities in Wales

There are four priority themes:

- town centre regeneration
- physical regeneration that has a positive impact on Communities First areas
- enhancement of industrial areas, and
- tackling prominent dereliction or decay.

Development and implementation funding may be provided.

Flintshire has made three applications to the PRF scheme, one of which was successful. A grant of £550,000 was awarded last October in 2004 for a major regeneration scheme in Holywell. The start of work is imminent.

Last year we invested £7,559,000 in housing-related support under the auspices of supporting people.

We are providing £109,551 of rough sleeping and homelessness grant to local voluntary organisations to support services such as housing advice and bond guarantees.

Peter Black: Will the Minister make a statement on the progress of the social enterprise action plan?
(WAQ42717)

Edwina Hart: The first social enterprise strategy for Wales will be published in June. The strategy builds on the responses to the 2003 consultation on the social enterprise action plan and takes forward the 'Wales: A Better Country' commitment to support the development of grass-roots business.

The strategy has been developed in partnership with the social enterprise joint working group, which consists of members taken from social enterprise representative bodies, the voluntary sector as well as social enterprise practitioners.

The strategy sets out the strategic framework which will allow social enterprises in Wales to grow and flourish.

John Griffiths: Will the Minister make a statement on progress in regenerating the most deprived

communities in Wales? (WAQ42718)

Edwina Hart: The regeneration of our most disadvantaged communities remains at the heart of the Assembly Government's agenda and our policies are focused towards building stronger and more sustainable communities, and we are making good progress towards these goals. Communities First is our flagship programme to target these areas and there are now 137 Communities First partnerships across Wales taking forward a wide range of capacity building and community development activities.

The other Assembly programmes aim to support communities and aid regeneration, such as the physical and local regeneration funds, which local authorities and national park authorities can use for tackling dereliction and decay or the enhancement of industrial areas.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister make a statement on measures the Welsh Assembly Government is taking to tackle anti-social behaviour? (WAQ42719)

Edwina Hart: The Welsh Assembly Government is looking to enhance the very effective action that is being taken in Wales to tackle anti social behaviour, in particular, through the promotion of concerted, multi-agency work addressing all aspects of anti-social behaviour.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister make a statement on how the Welsh Assembly Government is addressing the problem of drug abuse? (WAQ42720)

Edwina Hart: I refer you to the answer I gave in relation to question OAQ0110 answered on 23 February 2005.

Lisa Francis: What is the input of the Welsh Assembly Government into the 'Make Poverty History' campaign? (WAQ42725)

Edwina Hart: None. The issues raised by the 'Make Poverty History' campaign are non-devolved matters, responsibility for which rests with central Government

Lisa Francis: What assessment has Welsh Assembly Government carried out to evaluate the costs of anti-social behaviour on Welsh businesses? (WAQ42762)

Edwina Hart: None.

Lisa Francis: What is the Welsh Assembly Government doing to tackle the effects of anti-social behaviour on businesses in Wales? (WAQ42763)

Edwina Hart: The 22 community safety partnerships in Wales each have in place an anti-social behaviour co-ordinator. The co-ordinators are building an accurate picture of the nature and extent of all anti-social behaviour, including its effects upon local businesses. The Welsh Assembly Government is implementing a business crime reduction strategy, which includes actions to tackle anti-social behaviour.

Lisa Francis: What is the Welsh Assembly Government doing to ensure businesses in Wales report incidents of crime against their business? (WAQ42764)

Edwina Hart: Tackling business crime is part of the Welsh Assembly Government's commitment to building safer communities throughout Wales. A business crime adviser has been in post since January 2004 and central to his role has been to develop a business crime reduction strategy, which encourages increased reporting of incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour affecting the business community. In addition, the community safety unit is supporting South Wales Police in developing a pilot system for the identification of business crimes as they occur in order to obtain a full understanding of the nature and extent of the problem. It is intended that this will serve as a model of best practice for other areas in Wales.