

## Written Questions answered between 11 and 18 July 2002

[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

### The Minister for Wales Abroad

**Nick Bourne:** What activities has the First Minister planned that the Minister for Wales Abroad will undertake in relation to his cross-cutting responsibilities in the next 12 months? (WAQ19202)

**The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan):** Activities undertaken by the Minister for Wales Abroad will be consistent with the Welsh Assembly Government's policies for promoting Wales abroad and within the resources previously agreed.

## Questions to the Deputy First Minister and Minister for Rural Development and Wales Abroad

### Vale of Clwyd

**Ann Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on the ways in which the Welsh Assembly Government's rural development policies have benefited the Vale of Clwyd since May 1999? (WAQ18776)

*Revised answer issued on 16 July:*

**The Deputy First Minister and Minister for Rural Development and Wales Abroad (Michael German):** The Vale of Clwyd has benefited from a range of Welsh Assembly Government policies since 1999. Our policies are aimed at benefiting the whole of Wales.

Relative to the Wales average, Denbighshire has received a higher percentage increase in its central funding in the three years since 1999-2000.

Projects specifically in the Vale of Clwyd:

- the current LEADER+ programme, which is supporting the new Cadwyn-Clwyd group.
- the business plan for Cadwyn-Clwyd has been approved and it has been formally advised of its financial allocation.

### Initiatives within the Minister's Portfolio

**Ann Jones:** Further to his answer to WAQ18776, will the Minister specify which of the initiatives that he points to actually lie within his portfolio? (WAQ19151)

**Michael German:** An error of procedure led to a number of points being incorrectly included in the answer originally issued. The points that lie within my portfolio are:

- the current LEADER+ programme, which is supporting the new Cadwyn-Clwyd group.
- the business plan for Cadwyn-Clwyd has been approved and it has been formally advised of its financial allocation.

A revised answer to WAQ18776 has now been issued.

### Further information on Projects in the Vale of Clwyd

**Ann Jones:** Further to his answer to WAQ18776, will the Minister provide further information on the five projects mentioned in bullet point one? (WAQ19152)

**Michael German:** The five projects mentioned in the answer originally issued are inward investment projects and of those, two projects have been formally announced. They are: Pachem GmbH, Rhyl, a new project to manufacture innovative label solutions for the food industry; and General Domestic Appliances Ltd, a project to expand its existing white goods manufacturing facility at Bodelwyddan.

I also refer you to the answer given to your WAQ19162 answered on 11 July, which details regional selective assistance projects in the Vale of Clwyd.

### **Communities First Projects**

**Ann Jones:** Further to his answer to WAQ18776, will the Minister provide further information on the three Communities First projects in the Vale of Clwyd constituency mentioned in bullet point three? (WAQ19153)

**Michael German:** Please accept my apologies. The Communities First projects, identified in the answer originally issued as being in the Vale of Clwyd, are in fact in the county of Flintshire.

A revised answer has now been issued.

### **Bovine Tuberculosis**

**David Davies:** What percentage of slaughtered cattle have been found to be bovine TB positive? (WAQ19166)

**Michael German:** In the period January to May 2002 inclusive, there were 226 new herd breakdowns in Wales (one or more animals in the herd suspected of having bovine TB) of which 116 herds (51 per cent) were confirmed as having bovine TB. During this period 1,389 animals were slaughtered as reactors, 33 as inconclusive reactors, and 201 as direct contacts.

### **Bovine TB Testing Programme**

**David Davies:** Will the Minister make a statement on the effectiveness of the new bovine TB testing programme? (WAQ19167)

**Michael German:** The interim programme on bovine TB has been put in place to further reduce the backlog of outstanding tests and to address the spread of the disease in Wales. Significant progress has been made; the number of overdue tests has reduced from 5,135 at 30 November 2001 to 3,907 at 31 May 2002, a 25 per cent decrease.

### **Overseas Promotion of Welsh Agricultural Produce**

**Owen John Thomas:** Will the Minister make a statement on the overseas promotion of Welsh agricultural produce? (WAQ19168)

**Michael German:** The National Assembly, together with the Welsh Development Agency Food Directorate and the Agri-food Partnership, is working continuously to aid the promotion and selling of Welsh agricultural produce both at home and overseas. The WDA Food Directorate offers a range of support services to help Welsh food companies in pursuing international opportunities.

### **Labelling and Branding of Welsh Goods**

**Owen John Thomas:** Will the Minister make a statement on the labelling and branding of Welsh goods? (WAQ19169)

**Michael German:** The WDA Food Directorate has taken forward a project to develop a clear strategic direction and brand positioning for Welsh food and drink. The aim is to give Welsh products a clear identity, with promotion and marketing geared around 'the True Taste'.

### **Prisiau Llaeth i Gyhyrchwyr**

**Dafydd Wigley:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad ar y camau a gymerir i gynorthwyo prisiau llaeth i gynhyrchwyr? (WAQ19170) [W]

**Michael German:** Mae pris a dderbynia ffermwyr am laeth wedi cael ei orfodi i lawr yn gyson ers hydref 2001. Y prif ffactorau dros benderfynu ar y pris isel presennol yw'r gorgynhyrchu yn y DU ynghyd â marchnadoedd gwan drwy'r byd am gynnyrch llaeth. Nid yw Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru na Llywodraeth y DU yn medru rheoli pris llaeth. Mae'r prisiau yn cael eu negodi rhwng y cynhyrchwyr a'r proseswyr fel mater masnachol preifat.

Mae Llywodraeth y Cynulliad yn gwneud pob dim o fewn ei gallu i helpu cynhyrchwyr llaeth ond nid oes yna ateb hawdd ar gael i'r broblem. Mae cyflawni'r cynllun gweithredu ar gyfer y sector llaeth yn datblygu marchnadoedd newydd, yn annog prosesu a hybu'r galw yn y farchnad. Y strategaeth yw i ychwanegu gwerth i laeth, a chystadlu ar safon nid ar bris. Mae Cyfarwyddiaeth Fwyd Awdurdod Datblygu Cymru yn helpu proseswyr i ddatblygu marchnadoedd a chynnyrch newydd yn ogystal â gwella effeithlonrwydd y cynhyrchu ar y ffermydd drwy ddatblygu rhwydwaith o ffermydd arddangos. Mae Llywodraeth y Cynulliad wedi cynyddu'r galw am laeth drwy ei gynllun llaeth cyfnod allweddol 1 ar gyfer disgyblion pump i saith oed yng Nghymru.

### **Prices for Milk Producers**

**Dafydd Wigley:** Would the Minister make a statement on the action taken to aid prices for milk producers? (WAQ19170) [W]

**Michael German:** There has been sustained downward pressure on the farmgate price of milk since autumn 2001. Surplus UK production, combined with continued weak world markets for dairy products, are the main factors in determining the current low price. The Welsh Assembly Government and the UK Government cannot control the price of milk. Prices are negotiated between producers and processors as a private commercial matter.

The Assembly Government is doing what it can to assist milk producers but there are no quick fixes. Implementation of the action plan for the dairy sector is developing new markets, encouraging processing and boosting market demand. The strategy is to add value to milk, competing on quality, not price. The Welsh Development Agency Food Directorate actively assists processors to develop new markets and products as well as improving the efficiency of production on farms through developing a network of demonstration farms. The Assembly Government has increased the demand for milk through its key stage 1 school milk scheme for five to seven-year-old pupils in Wales.

### **Rural Development Plan Budget**

**Peter Rogers:** Was there an underspend of the 2001 rural development plan budget? (WAQ19172) [R]

**Michael German:** The implementation of the rural development plan was adversely affected by the foot and mouth disease outbreak in 2001, since a number of schemes being implemented as part of the plan require consultants to visit farms, and this was not possible during the outbreak. Nevertheless, expenditure during 2001 was €93.8 million compared to a planned figure of €106.4 million.

## **Encouraging the Public Sector to Procure Food Locally**

**Peter Black:** What is the Welsh Assembly Government doing to encourage public sector services to procure food locally? (WAQ19173)

**Michael German:** We are committed to exploring opportunities, in partnership with the Welsh Development Agency Food Directorate and other bodies such as the Meat and Livestock Commission, for local food procurement.

I am examining ways in which I am about to take forward this important task, by examining experiences in other member states to ensure that whatever proposals I bring forward are compliant with European legislation.

## **Agricultural Chemicals**

**Brian Gibbons:** Would the Minister make a statement on the implications of the unsafe use of agricultural chemicals? (WAQ19174)

**Michael German:** Codes of good agricultural practice for air, soil and water regulate the safe use of agricultural chemicals. The Environment Agency has responsibility for monitoring the contamination of land and water and is able to prosecute in cases where contamination has occurred. Incidents involving public or user exposure to pesticides or veterinary medicines are investigated by the Health and Safety Executive and the Veterinary Medicines Directorate respectively. In Wales, cases of wildlife or pets being poisoned by the unsafe, negligent or deliberate misuse of agricultural chemicals are investigated and monitored by Welsh Assembly Government officials as part of the wildlife incident investigation scheme.

## **Animal Welfare Bill**

**Alun Cairns:** What role will the Assembly play in the development of the animal welfare Bill? (WAQ19196)

**Michael German:** The aim of an animal health Bill would be to consolidate and update existing legislation. Consultation by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on possible inclusions finished on 30 April and responses are being considered. Powers under any new Bill might fall to the National Assembly to implement and the Welsh Assembly Government would contribute to the legislative process.

## **Farmers' Markets in Wales**

**Nick Bourne:** What is the government of Wales doing to promote farmers' markets in Wales? (WAQ19236)

**Michael German:** Over the past few years the number of farmers' markets in Wales has grown considerably. The WDA Food Directorate, through the Agri-food Partnership, is supporting a number of initiatives throughout Wales and all regions of Wales have seen the development of new farmers' markets.

The National Assembly recognises that farmers' markets can offer farmers valuable outlets for their products, particularly in tourist areas and areas of substantial population. They can also help to stimulate both the rural economy and urban market centres.

## **Illegal Import of Meat**

**Nick Bourne:** What representations is the Government of Wales making regarding controlling the illegal import of meat from overseas into Great Britain (including Wales)? (WAQ19246)

**Michael German:** The Welsh Assembly Government is represented on all the relevant working groups and I will maintain regular contact with Mrs Beckett on these issues. The Government is making progress on the action plan announced in March.

### **Business Support Schemes**

**Alun Cairns:** Would the Minister please list all business support schemes that the Countryside Council for Wales administers? (WAQ19276)

**Michael German:** The main schemes that the Countryside Council for Wales administers which can be construed as providing a form of business support are: management agreements with farmers, and other land owners, for the management and protection of land to conserve or enhance its nature conservation interest; the Tir Gofal and Tir Cymen agri-environment schemes; and Adfywio (jointly administered with the Wales Tourist Board) which supports projects that integrate tourism and leisure opportunities with the environment.

## **Questions to the Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language**

### **The Island Games**

**Peter Rogers:** What contacts has the Minister had with Ynys Môn council with regard to attracting the Island Games to Anglesey? (WAQ19175) [R]

**The Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language (Jenny Randerson):** Following my meeting with officials from the Isle of Anglesey County Council, the Welsh Assembly Government is providing £10,000 to assist the council in conducting a feasibility study that will help determine whether it will submit a bid to host the Island Games in 2009.

### **The Culture Strategy**

**Cynog Dafis:** Will the Minister make a statement on progress in delivering her culture strategy? (WAQ19177)

**Jenny Randerson:** Significant progress has been made in delivering my culture strategy, 'Creative Future: Cymru Greadigol'. I have placed a copy of the report on progress in the Library.

### **Promoting Dance**

**Janet Ryder:** How is the Minister's culture strategy promoting dance across Wales? (WAQ19178)

**Jenny Randerson:** My culture strategy, 'Creative Future: Cymru Greadigol', asks the Arts Council of Wales to develop a new action plan for dance. It has incorporated this into its five-year arts development strategy for 2002 to 2007 and will be reviewing and updating its current plans during 2002-03 and implementing the proposals from the review during 2003-04.

### **Funding of Welsh Sport**

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on the funding of Welsh sport? (WAQ19180)

**Jenny Randerson:** Within this financial year, the Welsh Assembly Government will provide the Sports Council for Wales with £9.4 million in grant in aid. In addition, the sports council administers the Sportlot lottery fund and will aim to distribute over £11 million to a range of projects that will benefit sport throughout Wales.

### **Sponsoring of Sporting Events**

**Brian Gibbons:** Has the Minister made representations to commercial organisations about the advantages of sponsoring sporting events and organisations in Wales? (WAQ19183)

**Jenny Randerson:** I recently attended the Sportsmatch Cymru Awards and addressed a wide cross-section of businesses. I emphasised the importance of investing in Welsh sport, in particular in grass-roots development, and endorsed the advantages of working in partnership with the Welsh Assembly Government through the innovative Sportsmatch scheme.

### **South Wales Film Commission**

**David Davies:** Will the Minister make a statement on the South Wales Film Commission? (WAQ19185)

**Jenny Randerson:** I understand that the South Wales Film Commission does not form part of the current arrangements for film commissioning work in Wales which have been established by Sgrîn, the WDA, Education and Learning Wales and unitary authorities. Since the South Wales Film Commission is operating independently of the current Wales Screen Commission arrangements, it would not be appropriate for me to comment on its activities.

### **Ariannu Sianel Pedwar Cymru**

**Owen John Thomas:** Pa drafodaethau diweddar sydd wedi bod rhyngoch chi a Gweinidogion San Steffan ynghylch ariannu Sianel Pedwar Cymru (S4C)? (WAQ19186) [W]

**Jenny Randerson:** Nid yw trefniadau ariannu S4C wedi'u datganoli i Gynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru, ond mae S4C yn dylanwadu ar sawl agwedd ar fywyd diwylliannol Cymru sydd yn fy mhorthffolio fel Gweinidog. Ym mis Ionawr, ysgrifennais at yr Ysgrifennydd Gwladol dros Ddiwylliant, y Cyfryngau a Chwaraeon i gefnogi cais S4C am fwy o gyllid yn adolygiad o wariant 2002. Anfonwyd copi o'r llythyr hwn at Ysgrifennydd Gwladol Cymru.

### **Funding of Sianel Pedwar Cymru**

**Owen John:** What recent discussions has the Minister had with Westminster Ministers regarding the funding of Sianel Pedwar Cymru (S4C)? (WAQ19186) [W]

**Jenny Randerson:** The funding arrangements for S4C have not been devolved to the National Assembly for Wales but S4C has an impact on a number of aspects in cultural life in Wales that are within my Ministerial portfolio. I wrote to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport in January to support S4C's bid for additional funding in the 2002 spending review. This letter was copied to the Secretary of State for Wales.

### **Public Exhibition of Works**

**Owen John Thomas:** Will the Minister make a statement on any progress towards the public exhibition of works of art other than in the galleries of the National Museum in Cardiff? (WAQ19187)

**Jenny Randerson:** I have made additional funding available to upgrade the facilities at three local museums and galleries so that they can display items from the National Museums and Galleries of Wales's collections. Also, the Arts Council of Wales's draft arts development strategy proposes a network of galleries which could stage exhibitions, and provide facilities for individual artists.

In addition, my culture strategy indicates that we will explore the possibility of a Wales gallery of contemporary art. This, and other options, are currently being considered as part of the NMGW consultation on the future display of art.

### **Football Association of Wales**

**Brian Gibbons:** Has the Minister had talks with the Football Association of Wales and other bodies to see about the possibility of forming more football academies in Wales? (WAQ19188)

**Jenny Randerson:** In October last year I established the football forum, which includes representatives from the Football Association of Wales. The forum is tasked with putting forward a detailed strategy for the development of football for young people in Wales and I look forward to receiving its report shortly.

## **Questions to the Minister for Economic Development**

### **Task and Finish Groups**

**Alison Halford:** Would the Minister provide a table listing (a) in chronological order the names of all the task and finish groups commissioned by his department since May 1999 until July 2002 (b) the membership of all these task and finish groups and (c) names of any planned task and finish groups? (WAQ19137)

**The Minister for Economic Development (Andrew Davies):** The list deposited in the Library in response to Alun Cairns's written question (WAQ16769) remains current as far as my ministerial responsibility is concerned. The list details such things as group membership, dates of establishment and gender ratio. There are no further task and finish groups planned at this stage.

### **Core Responsibilities of Task and Finish Groups**

**Alison Halford:** Would the Minister explain the core roles and responsibilities of the task and finish groups his department establishes? (WAQ19138)

**Andrew Davies:** Task and finish groups are established when need arises, with their membership being drawn from a range of backgrounds and interests that are considered relevant to the policy issues under consideration. Core roles and responsibilities will be set when a clear need for such a group is identified. There are no new groups planned for the foreseeable future.

### **Publicising the Benefits of Broadband**

**Alison Halford:** What action has the Minister taken to publicise the benefits of broadband to potential business and home users in north Wales? (WAQ19139)

**Andrew Davies:** I launched the 802.11b wireless broadband project called 'e-fro' on 19 June in Bethesda and I will be opening the north Wales e-celt conference tomorrow.

The broadband Wales programme, which was launched today, will seek to demonstrate the benefits of broadband to those living and working throughout Wales. It will give them practical help and support in utilising broadband to best effect. I give that programme my full backing and support.

Furthermore, the Assembly Government supports the OpportunitE Wales project which operates in north Wales as well as the information and communications technology business support centres which operate in the area.



## **Academic and Non-academics in Delyn**

**Alison Halford:** How exactly will academic and non-academics in Delyn benefit from the recently announced £18 million funding of broadband? (WAQ19140)

**Andrew Davies:** £9.9 million of the £18.4 million broadband budget was for the provision of multimedia equipment for schools. Flintshire local education authority received an allocation of £486,500 from this £9.9 million. The balance of the funding was to procure the core national Welsh lifelong learning network which provides a 100 Mbps feed to each local authority. Benefits for educational users include:

- fast, 'always on' and affordable internet provision;
- access to a reliable high-speed backbone network based on the local access points;
- room for growth if the 100 Mbps feed becomes congested;
- centrally-funded internet service provider provision: the fee for this service will be met centrally by the Welsh Assembly Government, thereby releasing funding for local users to reinvest in local networks as existing contracts expire;
- the ability to develop voice over IP telephony and IP-based video conferencing.

The Assembly is also exploring options to maximize wider benefits from the investment in the core network by using it to provide broadband connectivity for other local authority functions, other public sector agencies and for strategic business parks.

## **Use of Optic Fibre**

**Alison Halford:** What steps have you taken to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is put in place to enable all optic fibre that has already been laid in north Wales to be available for use by the maximum amount of consumers? (WAQ19141)

**Andrew Davies:** As you know, the Welsh Assembly Government has spare capacity on the fibre it owns running along the A55. The Assembly Government sought expressions of interest and invited tenders from companies who expressed an interest in exploiting this fibre for wider use than just the Assembly Government's transport network.

Negotiations are underway with a preferred bidder. I am hopeful that these negotiations can be concluded as swiftly as possible, subject to statutory requirements.

## **VDSL**

**Alison Halford:** What action has the Minister taken to ensure all hard/software bought to aid the rollout of broadband is compatible with VDSL (very high speed data subscriber line)? (WAQ19142)

**Andrew Davies:** A variety of organisations across Wales are responsible for procuring equipment required to meet their particular broadband requirements. In doing so I have no doubt that they ensure compatibility with other technologies that will need to interface with broadband provision, including that delivered by VDSL. Because of local variation I do not think that it is feasible or appropriate for the Assembly Government to intervene in what must necessarily be a matter of local choice.

## **Town Improvement Grant Programmes for Rhyl, Prestatyn and Denbigh**

**Ann Jones:** Further to his answer to WAQ18781, how much money has been allocated in town improvement grant programmes for Rhyl, Prestatyn and Denbigh? (WAQ19157)

**Ann Jones:** Further to his answer to WAQ18781, in which specific ways have the town improvement grant programmes for Rhyl, Prestatyn and Denbigh improved the public realm? (WAQ19158)

**Andrew Davies:** During the 2001-02 financial year, £1.006 million was spent in Rhyl, Denbigh and Prestatyn (£727,000 in Rhyl, £248,000 in Denbigh and £31,000 in Prestatyn) out of the town improvement grant budget. In this financial year, some £1.358 million will be available to the three towns.

Last year the majority of the TIG funding in Denbighshire was spent on five projects which contributed to the improvement of the public realm through:

1. the renovation of a derelict hotel into high quality managed flats in Rhyl;
2. the renovation of a derelict warehouse into a new vibrant business (Roger Jones & Co.) in Rhyl;
3. improvements to public car parks;
4. renovation of a formerly unused building into a new community college satellite for Coleg Llandrillo; and
5. the renovation of the unused Hen Gartref building in Denbigh, bringing it back into economic use.

### **Small Towns and Villages Enterprise Initiative**

**Ann Jones:** Further to his answer to WAQ18781, will the Minister provide a breakdown of the grants to businesses within the Vale of Clwyd constituency offered by the small towns and villages enterprise initiative (STVEI)? (WAQ19159)

**Ann Jones:** Further to his answer to WAQ18781, will the Minister specify how the award of STVEI grants to businesses in Ruthin benefits the Vale of Clwyd constituency? (WAQ19160)

**Andrew Davies:** The grants directly available to business under the small towns and villages enterprise initiative are:

- i) a marketing grant of up to £3,000 per project @ max 50 per cent rate,
- ii) a business competitiveness grant of up to £5,000 per project @ max 50 per cent rate,
- iii) a computer grant of up to £500 per project @ max 50 per cent rate.

The initiative was launched in May this year in the Ruthin and Denbigh areas. To date there have been two STVEI grants applications in Denbigh, and business action groups are in the process of being formed in both towns.

Businesses and community groups in small towns and villages throughout north Wales provide services that are essential for sustaining rural communities. They create wealth and employment and are an essential part of the fabric of the society they contribute to.

The STVEI is a programme that recognises this input and offers support measures by the way of both grant aid and advice to those businesses or community groups where other sources of funding are not obtainable.

Grant assistance and specialist advice is available for both individual small and medium-sized enterprises and community or business groups to help with costs of marketing, improving competitiveness, community transport initiatives and environmental improvements.

### **Regional Selective Assistance in the Vale of Clwyd**

**Ann Jones:** Will the Minister provide a breakdown of the amount of RSA grant awarded to businesses in the Vale of Clwyd constituency since May 1999, along with the number of jobs each award has been responsible for creating and the firms to which it has been awarded? (WAQ19162)

**Andrew Davies:** Since May 1999, RSA grants worth £12,956,000 have been offered towards 23 projects in the Vale of Clwyd. In total, these projects involve £45.3 million of private sector investment, with 402 jobs to be created and 1,432 existing jobs to be safeguarded as a result of the investment. As RSA projects

have a life-cycle of some three to four years, many of these are still in progress; to date, £5,473,000 of grant has been paid and 1,227 jobs have been created and/or safeguarded.

Details of individual projects are regarded as commercially confidential and are not normally disclosed. However, some data on offers of £75,000 or more is published in 'Labour Market Trends', following payment of the first instalment of grant. The following table lists the published details of offers made since May 1999 in the Vale of Clwyd area.

Name	Offer Value (£)	SIC
Craig Bragdy Design Ltd	100,000	Manufacture of other ceramic products
Pilkington Special Glass Ltd	1,800,000	Manufacture of other glass, including technical glass
Pachem UK Ltd	1,250,000	Manufacture of plastic products
B and S Electronic Services Ltd	100,000	Manufacture of electronic valves and tubes
Diehl Ako Stiftung Co. KG	120,000	Manufacture of electric domestic appliances
General Domestic Appliances Ltd	5,600,000	Manufacture of electric domestic appliances

### Objective 1 Funds in the Vale of Clwyd

**Ann Jones:** Will the Minister provide a breakdown of the ways in which Objective 1 funds are being spent in the Vale of Clwyd constituency? (WAQ19163)

**Andrew Davies:** Objective 1 funds a variety of projects that are either located in the Vale of Clwyd or benefit the residents of the constituency. These projects are submitted through the Denbighshire local partnership and the Objective 1 regional partnerships.

A complete breakdown of the use of funds in the constituency is not available, but just two examples of the number of projects impacting on people in the Vale of Clwyd are the Denbighshire rural key fund, promoting local economic development with £183,000 of structural funds, and the Rhuddlan visitor enhancement project, receiving grant of £245,000.

### Objective 1 Funding in the Vale of Clwyd

**Ann Jones:** What is the total amount of Objective 1 funding to date, (a) committed and (b) spent in the Vale of Clwyd constituency? (WAQ19164)

**Andrew Davies:** The information is not held in the form requested and could only be provided at disproportionate cost. For Denbighshire, a total of 26 projects has been approved for the Denbighshire Objective 1 local partnership to date, which includes the Vale of Clwyd, committing in total £6.9 million of European structural funds. There are also projects submitted through the various regional partnerships that will spend money in that partnership area.

### Parliament Building in Machynlleth

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Government of Wales make money available for the enhancement of the parliament building in Machynlleth? (WAQ19245)

**Jenny Randerson:** The parliament building at Machynlleth is not in public ownership, but is listed Grade I because of its great importance to Welsh history. Grant assistance from Cadw for projects of historic repair are available to buildings judged outstanding on account of either their architectural or historical associations, and depending on the circumstances of any project put forward by its owners, development funding might be available from other sources.

## Questions to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

### All-Wales Capital Renewal Programme

**Ann Jones:** Will the Minister provide a breakdown of funding allocated to schools in the Vale of Clwyd from the all-Wales capital renewal programme? (WAQ19156)

**The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning (Jane Davidson):** I am unable to provide figures by constituency. Allocations under the school buildings improvement grant are provided to local authorities and it is for them to decide which of their schools benefit in any given year in light of local needs and priorities.

### The Minister for Wales Abroad

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on whether the Minister for Wales Abroad will represent Wales in relation to the functions for which you are accountable, and what budget has been set aside in relation to these activities? (WAQ19200)

**Jane Davidson:** I refer you to the First Minister's reply to WAQ19202.

### Spending per Pupil in England and Wales

**Nick Bourne:** Has separate account ever been taken of the position of London in relation to spending per pupil in England and Wales, either before the commencement of the National Assembly or since? (WAQ19216)

**Jane Davidson:** The Education and Lifelong Learning Committee of the Assembly considered an analysis of school funding in England and Wales for 2001-02 in December 2001. The analysis is available on the Assembly intranet site as follows:

Paper:

[http://assembly/committees/EducationandLifeLongLearningCommittee/2001/19-01%20\(12%20Dec\)/ELL%2019-01\(p.9\)a\\_e.html](http://assembly/committees/EducationandLifeLongLearningCommittee/2001/19-01%20(12%20Dec)/ELL%2019-01(p.9)a_e.html)

Tables:

[http://assembly/committees/EducationandLifeLongLearningCommittee/2001/19-01%20\(12%20Dec\)/ELL%2019-01\(p.9\)b\\_e.pdf](http://assembly/committees/EducationandLifeLongLearningCommittee/2001/19-01%20(12%20Dec)/ELL%2019-01(p.9)b_e.pdf)

Table 2 of the analysis showed that in 2001-02, Welsh local education authorities budgeted spend per pupil on school services was higher than that in all non-metropolitan areas in England, but lower than that in London and the metropolitan areas of the West Midlands and the north-west.

The average budgeted spend per pupil on school services in 2001-02 was £3,134 for Wales, and £3,177 for England. Excluding inner London, with a budgeted spend per pupil of £4,025, and outer London with a budgeted spend per pupil of £3,421, the England average is reduced to £3,095 per pupil, lower than that for Wales.

A similar comparative analysis will be carried out for 2002-03 when the figures are available in the autumn.

### Discontinuance of Courses by Coleg Powys

**Nick Bourne:** Has the Minister received any representations in relation to the discontinuance of courses at Brecon, Llandrindod Wells and Newtown by Coleg Powys? (WAQ19218)

**Jane Davidson:** I have received correspondence in relation to the decision by Coleg Powys to withdraw some courses at its Llandrindod Wells campus. I understand that the decision was taken in response to a decline in demand for some courses at Llandrindod Wells together with the loss of European funding for specific information technology courses. Coleg Powys has made every effort to ensure that existing students are able to complete their studies and that prospective students are offered suitable alternative courses.

I also understand that Powys community consortium for education and training is to undertake a general review of the local need for ICT provision in the area. The resulting report will help inform both Coleg Powys and the National Council—ELWa as to the extent of provision required locally.

### **Discontinuance of Courses by Further Education Colleges in Wales**

**Nick Bourne:** Are there any guidelines in relation to the discontinuance of courses by further education colleges in Wales? (WAQ19219)

**Jane Davidson:** Further education institutions are autonomous, independent bodies responsible for the management of their own affairs, including the range of courses that they offer to meet the needs of learners in the areas they serve.

While the institutions are responsible for their own curriculum decisions, they must endeavour to make the most effective use of public moneys made available to them by the National Council—ELWa. In that connection they have to take account of the demand for specific courses; any decision to withdraw an individual course being based upon an assessment of its viability compared with the demand for other courses and the resources available.

While there are no central guidelines relating to the discontinuance of courses by FE institutions, the National Council—ELWa requires each institution to have in place a ‘student charter’ setting out the service arrangements learners might expect to receive. I would expect such charters to cover action to be taken in circumstances where courses may be discontinued.

### **The Williams Report**

**Nick Bourne:** What is the reaction of the Government of Wales to the Williams report on the University of Wales? (WAQ19220)

**Jane Davidson:** The Williams report on the University of Wales is primarily a matter for the University and its constituent members. However, I have met representatives of the University of Wales to discuss the next steps and this will be part of an ongoing dialogue.

### **Hardship Grants**

**Nick Bourne:** Has the Government of Wales given consideration to the award of hardship grants to students in Wales of an equivalent amount to the student tuition fee that has to be paid by students? (WAQ19221)

**Jane Davidson:** If, by hardship grants, you mean grants made available by institutions from the hardship funds which they hold, the amounts made under these awards are discretionary; they range between £100 and £3,500 and are awarded by the institutions according to the perceived need of the applicant. If, however, you mean the Welsh Assembly Government’s new Assembly learning grant, those higher education students who are eligible will qualify to have their fees paid under other existing provisions.

The scheme under which the Assembly learning grant will be paid will enable learning grants to be paid to those most in need of financial assistance on a means-tested basis.

## **Nurture Projects**

**Rosemary Butler:** What programme and funding exists for developing nurture projects in Wales? (WAQ19247)

**Jane Davidson:** I refer you to the answer to written question (WAQ18971), which I gave to Pauline Jarman on 5 July 2002.

## **Business Support Schemes**

**Alun Cairns:** Would the Minister please list all business support schemes that ELWa administers? (WAQ19275)

**Jane Davidson:** The National Council—ELWa operates three schemes under its business skills development programme. These comprise: the small firms training initiative, which aims to promote planned training activity in small companies by improving in-house expertise in training and development; Investors in People which seeks to increase employers' commitment to developing the workforce and improving performance; and management development, which provides assistance in identifying management training and development needs, aimed at small to medium-sized companies. In addition the National Council supports a range of schemes and projects geared to business support from within its innovation and development programme, including business and workforce development and company learning accounts, which aim to assist small businesses in finding bespoke solutions to their upskilling and workforce development needs.

The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales—ELWa does not support business directly but channels funds to its higher education institutions to enable them in various ways to support business, commerce and the community more widely. In May this year, HEFCW brought its several economic development initiatives together to form the higher education economic development fund. This subsumes the former Training and Consultancy Services, Contract Research, funding for commercial managers at selected higher education institution centres of expertise, and spinout initiatives.

Separately HEFCW is also responsible for the Graduate Wales and Cymru Prosper Wales programmes. In addition, the block grants provided to higher education institutions for teaching and research, as well as a number of smaller research-related initiatives, contribute indirectly to the support higher education is able to offer the business community.

HEFCW also administers the knowledge exploitation fund, which aims to cultivate entrepreneurship and assist the transfer of technology from academia into the commercial world. It does this through support for entrepreneurship scholarships, the exploitation of institutions' public relations, and improvements in FE and HE staff responsiveness to business.

## **Questions to the Minister for Environment**

### **The Minister for Wales Abroad**

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on whether the Minister for Wales Abroad will represent Wales in relation to the functions for which you are accountable, and what budget has been set aside in relation to these activities? (WAQ19198)

**The Minister for Environment (Sue Essex):** I refer you to the First Minister's reply to WAQ19202.

## **North-South Road Links**

**Nick Bourne:** What representations have been received with regards to improvements to north-south road links? (WAQ19226)

**Sue Essex:** Since July 2001 I have answered seven Assembly questions and have received 24 letters (eight from Assembly Members, 12 from members of the public and four from other Government departments and local authorities) on north-south road links.

### **Traffic Calming measures in Crickhowell**

**Nick Bourne:** What proposals are there for traffic calming measures in Crickhowell? (WAQ19227)

**Sue Essex:** Within the last two years traffic calming schemes have been installed on both approaches to the town. These have included islands, roadmarkings, enhanced signing and a new zebra crossing to the west of the town near the school.

No further traffic calming work at Crickhowell is currently planned.

### **A40 Trunk Road through Crickhowell**

**Nick Bourne:** What assessments of volume of traffic have been made on the A40 trunk road through Crickhowell, and will the Minister publish these? (WAQ19228)

**Sue Essex:** In 2001 the annual average daily flow on the A40 trunk road through Crickhowell was 9,755 vehicles per day. Much of this traffic will have an origin or destination within the town, and these flows cannot therefore be described as through traffic. Detailed origin and destination surveys would be needed to determine what proportion of this traffic actually travelled through the town.

### **Traffic Travelling through Rhayader**

**Nick Bourne:** What assessments of traffic flow and traffic volume have been made in relation to traffic travelling through Rhayader, and will the Minister publish these? (WAQ19229)

**Sue Essex:** In 2001 the annual average daily flow on the A470 trunk road just to the south of Rhayader was 3,412 vehicles per day. Much of this traffic will have an origin or destination within the town, and these flows cannot therefore be described as through traffic. Detailed origin and destination surveys would be needed to determine what proportion of this traffic actually travelled through the town.

### **Traffic Travelling through Llandrindod Wells**

**Nick Bourne:** What assessments of traffic flow and traffic volume have been made in relation to traffic travelling through Llandrindod Wells, and will the Minister publish these? (WAQ19230)

**Sue Essex:** The annual average daily flow figure for the A483 trunk road just to the south of Llandrindod Wells at Howey is 5,850 vehicles per day, and the figure just to the north of the town at Crossgates is 5,896 vehicles per day. Much of this traffic will have an origin or destination within the town, and these flows cannot therefore be described as through traffic. Detailed origin and destination surveys would be needed to determine what proportion of this traffic actually travelled through the town.

### **Severn Trent Water (Applications)**

**Nick Bourne:** Has the Minister received any applications from Severn Trent Water for development or expansion of reservoirs in the Elan Valley, and, if so, could she give details of this? (WAQ19251)

**Sue Essex:** Neither I nor any of the responsible bodies have received any applications from Severn Trent Water for development or expansion of reservoirs in the Elan Valley.

### **Severn Trent Water (Communications)**

**Nick Bourne:** What communication has the Minister had with Severn Trent Water regarding development, expansion or planning of reservoirs in the Elan Valley? (WAQ19260)

**Sue Essex:** I have had no communication with Severn Trent Water regarding development, expansion or planning of reservoirs in the Elan Valley. As a consequence of the recent press coverage, my officials have spoken to the Brian Duckworth, the managing director of Severn Trent Water and he has confirmed that neither he, his company, nor Water UK have any plans to develop a new reservoir or enlarge an existing one in the Elan Valley.

The Environment Agency is the body responsible for managing water resources in Wales. In 2001 it published its water resources strategy for Wales, which examined future demand for water along with current resource availability. Key uncertainties such as climate change and changing societal values were also tested well into the future. The report concluded that a scheme to enlarge Craig Goch reservoir, to meet demands in Wales and further afield, was not considered necessary.

## **Questions to the Minister for Finance, Local Government and Communities**

### **Task and Finish Groups**

**Alison Halford:** Will the Minister provide a table listing (a) in chronological order the names of all the task and finish groups commissioned by her department between May 1999 and July 2002, (b) the membership of all these task and finish groups and (c) names of any planned task and finish groups? (WAQ19135)

**Edwina Hart:** Details of the task and finish groups commissioned within my portfolio are set out in the attached table, and I confirm that no future groups are planned at present. My answer does not include task and finish groups established under the auspices of the Partnership Council.

#### **Task and finish groups established between May 1999 and July 2002**

<b>Name of taskforce</b>	<b>Date Established</b>	<b>Date Concluded</b>	<b>Members of the Group</b>
Four housing strategy task and finish groups  Group 1	September 1999	April 2000	Louise Barnden, Chartered Institute of Housing in Wales Malcolm Boorer, Welsh Local Government Association Mike Cuddy, Welsh Development Agency David Davies, Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Terry Hennegan, Welsh Tenants' Federation Gareth Hughes, Welsh Federation of Housing Associations Michael Sant, Royal Town Planning Institute Gareth Williams, House Builders Federation Robert Williams, Construction Confederation
Task group 2 Private housing	September 1999	April 2000	Prof. Peter Williams, Council of Mortgage Lenders, Chair Dr Robert Smith, Centre for Housing Management and Development, University of Cardiff John Lambert, Welsh Federation of Housing Associations Thomas George, Residential Property Management Robert Howard, Welsh Tenants' Federation John Puzey, Shelter Cymru Wendy Bourton, Care and Repair Cymru Robert Mitchard, Welsh Local Government Association Philip Toms, House Builders Federation Peter Laing, Principality Building Society Andrew Bowden, Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (Wales) David Dixon, Cardiff Law School Mike Friel, Cardiff Housing Help Centre Aled Davies, Gwynedd County Council



<b>Name of taskforce</b>	<b>Date Established</b>	<b>Date Concluded</b>	<b>Members of the Group</b>
Task group 3 Sustainable social housing for the twenty-first century	September 1999	April 2000	Keith Edwards, Tenant Participation Advisory Service Cymru David Hedges, Welsh Federation of Housing Association Rhian Thomas, Chartered Institute of Housing Steve Partner, Welsh Local Government Association Winnie Davies, Welsh Tenants' Federation Sarah Centelo, Welsh Women's Aid
Task group 4 Vulnerable households	September 1999	April 2000	Prof. David Clapham, Centre for Housing Management and Development, University of Wales Lynda Bransbury, Welsh Local Government Association John Lambert, Welsh Federation of Housing Associates John Puzey, Shelter Cymru Sarah Cantelo, Welsh Women's Aid Sharon Mainwaring, Care and Repair Cymru Jackie Dix, Age Concern Graham Findlay, Disability Wales Monica Keeble, Tenant Participation Advisory Service (Cymru) Ashley Williams, Tenant Participation Advisory Service (Cymru) Neil Sullivan, All Wales National Assembly Black and Ethnic Consultative and Participatory Association Allen Wilson, Iechyd Morgannwg Health Authority Mandy Acres, Welsh Tenant's Federation Maureen Campbell, Cardiff Law Centre
Housing strategies operational plans review working group members	January 2001	April 2001	Stephen Phipps, National Assembly for Wales James Watkins, National Assembly for Wales Geraldine Newbery, National Assembly for Wales Steve Thomas, Welsh Local Government Association Alan Morgan, National Assembly for Wales Mohammed Field, National Assembly for Wales David P. Lewis, Gwynedd County Council (representing local authorities) Keith Reeve, Council of Mortgage Lenders Gareth Williams, House Builders Federation (representing private house builders) Frances Beecher, Llamau (representing the voluntary sector) Terry Henneghan, Welsh Tenant's Association Keith Edwards, Chartered Institute of Housing Rhian Thomas, Chartered Institute of Housing Mike Harmer, National Assembly for Wales John Gwyn Jones, Cymdeithas Tai Clwyd Cyf – Chair of Welsh Housing Federation Prof. Peter Williams, Council of Mortgage Lenders Andrew Heywood, Council of Mortgage Lenders Steve Tucker, Lovell Partnerships Martin Lloyd, Lloyd Williams
Homelessness Commission	January 2001	August 2001	Peter Black, AM, Deputy Minister for Local Government Gwenda Thomas, AM, Chair of the Local Government and Housing Committee Kirsty Williams, AM, Chair of the Health and Social Services Committee Paul Bevan, Newport Action for the Single Homeless -(Adviser to the Commission) Libby Burn, Pembrokeshire Action for the Single Homeless Steve Gamgee, Wallich Clifford Community Angela Hoare, Barnado's Cymru Paul McHugh, North Wales Housing Association Mutale Nyoni, Black Association of Women Step Out Bridget Price, Welsh Local Government Association John Puzey, Shelter Cymru Phil Roberts, Welsh Local Government Association Malcolm Russell, Welsh Local Government Association
Commission on local government electoral arrangements task and finish groups	June 2001	July 2002	Prof. Eric Sunderland Charlotte Williams Tony Roberts Jacky Tonge Alun Williams Martha Ann Eleri Ebenezer Lord Thomas of Gresford QC Angharad Closs Stephens Mari James

Name of taskforce	Date Established	Date Concluded	Members of the Group
Community housing mutual model task force	October 2001	January 2002	Andrew Heywood, Policy Officer, Council of Mortgage Lenders WFHA, Director of Welsh Federation of Housing Associations Keith Reeve, Nationwide Building Society Keith Edwards, Director of Chartered Institute of Housing Simon Jones, Chief Executive of Wales Co-operative Centre Ltd Carol Kay, Director of Tenant Participation Advisory Service Nic Bliss, Confederation of Co-operative Housing Rukhsana Nabi, Director of Bower Mattin Housing Services Jeff Zitron, Director and Company Secretary of HACAS Chapman Hendy Malcolm Temple, Beha Williams Norman Ltd Andrew Bowden, Conwy CBC Arnold Phillips, Swansea City Council
Task and finish group to develop local authority guidance under the Communities First programme	January 2002	May 2002	Lynda Bransbury, Welsh Local Government Association Derith Powell, Community Development Cymru Rhys Jones, Anglesey County Council Peter Mortimar, Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council James Cawley, Vale of Glamorgan Council Brian Adcock, Newport County Borough Council Andrew Bowden, Conwy County Borough Council Trevor Samuel, Welsh Assembly Government Lynne Schofield, Welsh Assembly Government

### Roles and Responsibilities of Task and Finish Groups

**Alison Halford:** Will the Minister explain the core roles and responsibilities of the task and finish groups that her department establishes? (WAQ19136)

**Edwina Hart:** The core roles and responsibilities of the task and finish groups established within my portfolio are set out in the table below.

#### Task and finish groups established between May 1999 and July 2002 Roles and Responsibilities

Name of Task Force	Date Established	Date Concluded	Role and Responsibility
Four national housing strategy task and finish groups  Group 1	September 1999	April 2000	1. To consider the issues (and proposals) set out in the 'Framework for a National Housing Strategy for Wales' and develop well-reasoned policy proposals that the National Assembly for Wales can consider for inclusion in a national housing strategy. 2. Proposals should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be framed within the Assembly's existing functions and legislative powers, as set out in the Government of Wales Act 1998 and the National Assembly for Wales (Transfer of Functions) Order 1999. Where proposals require action outside the Assembly's functions and /or powers (e.g. changes to primary legislation) this should be identified separately;</li> <li>• take account of the overall level of resources that the Assembly has been allocated in the public expenditure survey, and the amount of these resources that the Assembly might realistically allocate for implementation of housing policies in light of competing priorities;</li> <li>• be linked effectively (as far as is feasibly possible) to proposals being developed by the other housing strategy task groups; and</li> <li>• be set out in priority order according to level of importance and timescale for implementation.</li> </ul>
Task group 2 private housing	September 1999	April 2000	
Task group 3 sustainable social housing for the twenty-first century	September 1999	April 2000	
Task group 4 vulnerable households	September 1999	April 2000	
Housing strategies operational plans review working group members	January 2001	April 2001	To conduct a study of the local authority housing strategy and operational plan process in order to evaluate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the actual, and potential, contribution of the housing strategy and operational plan process to achieving: the strategic aims in 'BetterWales.com', the actions in the annual Government business programme, and the goals of the national housing strategy for Wales;</li> <li>• the actual, and potential, effectiveness of the housing strategy and operational plan as a strategic planning</li> </ul>

			<p>mechanism for local authorities' housing functions, and its contribution to meeting their responsibilities for promoting the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of their areas; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how the housing strategy and operational plan can most efficiently and effectively be integrated with local authorities' wider responsibilities for community planning and achieving Best Value.</li> </ul>
Homelessness commission	January 2001	August 2001	<p>The commission will advise the Assembly on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivering the objectives in BetterWales.com to reduce (by 2003) the 'number of homeless families in temporary housing to below 500' for 'the need for rough sleeping to be eliminated,' and to 'improve the access to health services for those sleeping rough and the homeless'.</li> <li>Taking forward the recommendations in the Assembly report 'Rough Sleeping in Wales' and the recommendations of the housing strategy task groups relating to homelessness and rough sleeping.</li> <li>Delivering local homelessness strategies in all Welsh local authorities.</li> <li>Setting targets and outcomes.</li> <li>Measuring homelessness and rough sleeping—and to investigate the methodologies adopted by local authorities for counting rough sleepers on census night 2001.</li> <li>The options for the long-term funding for homelessness services in Wales, particularly in relation to 'Supporting People'.</li> </ol> <p>Its tasks were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To map current information on homelessness and rough sleeping in Wales, and existing and planned provision, and identify gaps and overlaps.</li> <li>To devise a common methodology for counting rough sleepers in Wales.</li> <li>To consider definitions of homelessness and rough sleeping and propose definitions for Wales.</li> <li>To consider how to monitor single homelessness across Wales</li> <li>To consider targets (and the feasibility of targets) and outcomes for tackling homelessness and rough sleeping in Wales.</li> <li>To review and evaluate best practice in tackling homelessness and rough sleeping, and to publish the review on the Assembly website.</li> <li>To develop a model local authority homelessness strategy.</li> </ol>
Commission of local government electoral arrangements task and finish groups	June 2001	July 2002	<p>Terms of reference for the commission's work are:</p> <p>to identify the objectives of an electoral system for local government in Wales, giving consideration to all factors that the commission consider relevant and including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the level of participation in local government elections;</li> <li>• the capacity of each elected member to represent his or her electors in ways that reflect the expectations of electors;</li> <li>• the capacity of the whole council to reflect the diversity of interests and values in the local community;</li> <li>• the capacity of the council to provide effective and transparent leadership which reflects the electoral choices of the electorate; and</li> <li>• the capacity of the council to provide effective arrangements for scrutinising and holding its leadership to account.</li> </ul> <p>To have regard for the developments in political management which follow from the Local Government Act 2000; forms of management that are required to be efficient, transparent and accountable, with clear delegations of responsibility for decision making and with effective arrangements for scrutiny and accountability.</p> <p>To have regard for the diversity of geographical circumstances of councils in Wales: diversity in the size and dispersion of populations served, the relationship between electoral areas and natural communities.</p> <p>To have regard to the tradition in some parts of Wales of elected</p>

			<p>members who are independent of political parties.</p> <p>To make recommendations on the electoral term; i.e. what should be the period of time for which a councillor is elected.</p> <p>To make recommendations on whether a whole council should be elected at one time or whether elections should be organised so that a proportion of the council is elected at any one time.</p> <p>To consider making recommendations on electoral procedures having regard to the considerations currently being undertaken by the Home Office:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the timing of local elections</li> <li>• the location of polling stations</li> <li>• the potential for increasing postal voting</li> <li>• the potential for electronic voting</li> </ul> <p>To make recommendations on whether there is a need for significant change in the number of elected members on any or all local authorities in Wales</p> <p>To make recommendations on the system of election, giving consideration to any system that the Commission considers relevant and including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• first past the post</li> <li>• list systems</li> <li>• additional member system</li> <li>• alternative vote and supplementary vote</li> <li>• single transferable vote</li> <li>• a combination of alternative vote and additional member</li> </ul>
Community housing mutual model taskforce	October 2001	January 2002	<p>A community housing mutual model was commissioned by the Assembly from Cobbetts Solicitors and was developed in conjunction with a number of key partners.</p> <p>A small working group was convened to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assist in the development of the model for Wales; and</li> <li>• review draft documentation and provide feedback to the Assembly and Cobbetts.</li> </ul> <p>The model rule set is available to any local authority that wishes to consider it as an option for transferring council owned housing stock.</p>
Task and finish group on to develop local authority guidance under the communities first programme	January 2002	May 2002	<p>To develop specific guidance for local authorities on their role in Communities First.</p>

### The Minister for Wales Abroad

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on whether the Minister for Wales Abroad will represent Wales in relation to the functions for which you are accountable, and what budget has been set aside in relation to these activities? (WAQ19201)

**Edwina Hart:** I refer you to the First Minister's reply to WAQ19202.

### Dog Wardens

**Alun Cairns:** What action can the Minister take if a local authority does not offer the facilities of dog wardens? (WAQ19231)

**Edwina Hart:** Section 149 of the Environment Protection Act 1990 requires, in relation to Wales, every county or county borough council to appoint an officer for the purposes of dealing with stray dogs found

in their area. The duty to do so rests with the council concerned, and the Assembly does not have the power to require a council to appoint such an official if it fails to do so.

### **Animal Welfare**

**Alun Cairns:** Will the Minister make a statement on the responsibilities that local authorities have towards animal welfare? (WAQ19232)

**Edwina Hart:** Local authorities in England and Wales have wide responsibilities for securing the welfare of farmed, domestic and captive animals. These responsibilities derive from several separate pieces of legislation such as the Performing Animals (Regulation) Act 1925, Pet Animals Act 1951, Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963, Riding Establishments Act 1964 and 1970, Breeding of Dogs Act 1971 and Breeding of Dogs Act 1991, Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999, Zoo Licensing Act 1981, and the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976. The legislation includes provisions for local authorities to enter into premises to inspect the welfare of animals, license premises and take appropriate enforcement action, where the requirements of the Acts are not met. The UK Government has recently consulted on proposals to consolidate and bring the legislation that exists for promoting the welfare of animals up to date.

### **Local Government Electoral Reform**

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on the Sunderland proposals on local government electoral reform? (WAQ19235)

**Edwina Hart:** I made a statement on Tuesday, 16 July in Plenary regarding this issue and I have nothing to add to those comments.

### **Postal Voting**

**Nick Bourne:** What proposals does the Minister have to expand postal voting in Wales? (WAQ19253)

**Edwina Hart:** The Assembly does not have responsibility for any functions relating to postal voting. The responsibility for conduct of voting in elections lies with the Lord Chancellor's Department (previously the responsibility of the Department of Local Government and the Regions) and the Electoral Commission. However, my officials are working closely with both departments to ensure that sufficient guidance is provided to returning officers in time for the Assembly elections. The Electoral Commission is responsible for promoting a campaign to raise awareness of such issues.

### **Availability of Postal Voting**

**Nick Bourne:** Can local authorities make known the availability of postal voting when electoral registration forms are sent to electors? (WAQ19254)

**Edwina Hart:** The promotion of the availability of postal voting is a matter for the local authority returning officer, in accordance with legislation and the guidance of the Electoral Commission.

### **Encouragement of Postal Voting**

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister encourage local authorities to make known the availability of postal voting? (WAQ19255)

**Edwina Hart:** I would encourage activities by local authorities to raise awareness of electoral issues, including postal voting.

## **Sunderland Report**

**Nick Bourne:** Does the Government of Wales accept the majority report in the Sunderland report on local government electoral reform, or the minority report? (WAQ19264)

**Edwina Hart:** I made a statement on Tuesday, July 16th in Plenary regarding this issue and I have nothing to add to those comments.

## **Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services**

### **Local Health Boards**

**Alison Halford:** How are the members and the chairs of local health boards appointed? (WAQ19143)

**Alison Halford:** Are the re-appointments of members and chairs to all local health boards subject to open competition? (WAQ19144)

**Alison Halford:** What checks and balances are in place to ensure all appointments to local health boards are made in a balanced and neutral manner? (WAQ19145)

**Alison Halford:** What action is the Minister taking to boost young people's presence on local health boards? (WAQ19146)

**The Minister for Health and Social Services (Jane Hutt):** All appointments and re-appointments to local health board chairs are made in accordance with the established principles for public appointments, as set out in the National Assembly for Wales's code of practice on public appointments. These principles are based on the overriding principle of equality of opportunity and fairness to all in making the appointments, irrespective of age (there are no upper or lower age limits), sex, ethnicity, religion or social background.

Appointments are made in a way that draws on applications from all sectors of society in Wales. The principles also provide a framework whereby all suitable members of society in Wales, especially hitherto under-represented sectors, feel able and encouraged to apply. For that reason, chair appointments to local health boards are open to a wide constituency of candidates.

Non-officer members are to be appointed through processes based on the principles of public appointment. Those processes are currently under discussion with the relevant nominating bodies.

The National Assembly for Wales's code of practice on public appointments provides for incumbent chairs, who seek re-appointment for the first time, to be re-appointed without interview, if they have been assessed as performing satisfactorily in their posts. However, the code also provides for such posts to be advertised subject to open competition in the normal way.

All appointments are made in an open and transparent way and the ethics, principles and characteristics expected of people in public office are being applied thoroughly and consistently with local health board members. They will be required to operate under the terms of the local health boards' standing orders and financial instructions. In addition, the appointment process for all chair and non-officer appointments will include arrangements for scrutiny and participation by an independent assessor from the list of accredited assessors provided by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

### **Task and Finish Groups**

**Alison Halford:** Will the Minister provide a table listing (a) in chronological order the names of all the task and finish groups commissioned by her department since May 1999 until July 2002 (b) the

membership of all these task and finish groups, and (c) names of any planned task and finish groups? (WAQ19147)

**Jane Hutt:** Task and finish groups concerned with health and social services issues are the prescribing task and finish group and the 10 task and finish groups established to take forward the aims of ‘Improving Health in Wales’. The membership and remit of these groups is given in full on the internet as follows.

Prescribing task and finish group

[http://www.wales.gov.uk/subihealth/content/consultations/Prescribing/consultation\\_e.html](http://www.wales.gov.uk/subihealth/content/consultations/Prescribing/consultation_e.html)

Task and finish groups listed in ‘Improving Health in Wales’

[http://www.wales.gov.uk/healthplanonline/workinggroups/task\\_finishhome.htm](http://www.wales.gov.uk/healthplanonline/workinggroups/task_finishhome.htm)

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Task and Finish Groups**

**Alison Halford:** Will the Minister explain the core roles and responsibilities of the task and finish groups that her department establishes? (WAQ19148)

**Jane Hutt:** Task and finish groups are an important part of the consultative process. They bring together stakeholder organisations and experts in the field to undertake specific pieces of work and to provide advice that informs policy development. The roles and responsibilities of individual task and finish groups are available on the intranet as follows:

Prescribing task and finish group

[http://www.wales.gov.uk/subihealth/content/consultations/Prescribing/consultation\\_e.html](http://www.wales.gov.uk/subihealth/content/consultations/Prescribing/consultation_e.html)

Task and finish groups listed in the ‘Improving Health in Wales’

[http://www.wales.gov.uk/healthplanonline/workinggroups/task\\_finishhome.htm](http://www.wales.gov.uk/healthplanonline/workinggroups/task_finishhome.htm)

### **Independent Care Home Sector**

**Ann Jones:** Further to her answer to WAQ18778, will the Minister provide a breakdown of the funding to support the independent care home sector and encourage joint working initiatives in the Vale of Clwyd constituency referred to in bullet point three? (WAQ 19154)

**Jane Hutt:** I cannot provide detailed figures for the Vale of Clwyd, but I can provide a breakdown on the funding made available to support the independent sector, reduce delays in the transfer of care and encourage joint working, for Denbighshire. Both of these grant schemes were introduced in 2001.

Delayed transfer of care and supporting the care home sector grant:

2001-02:	£129,956—almost all of which was used to support the independent sector.
2002-03:	£443,108—of which £268,000 is to be used to support the independent sector and the remaining £175,000 is allocated to support rehabilitation support services, joint assessment processes, and provide domiciliary care to enable timely discharges from hospital.

Flexibilities special grant: to encourage joint working.

2001-02:	£69,537—of which £19,500 was used to develop a speech therapy service within schools, £16,700 to develop a joint community bathing assessment service and £33,300 to develop multi agency services for older people, children, mental health and learning disabilities.
2002-03:	£174,000—of which £142,000 is to be used to continue the development of work begun in 2001-02 and £32,000 to employ a senior care co-ordinator who could commission care from a number of service providers.

At present, there are no plans to establish further task and finish groups.

### **Uned Hyfforddi Ddeintyddol ym Mangor**

**Dafydd Wigley:** Pa gyllid sydd wedi'i glustnodi, o fewn cyllideb y Gweinidog, ar gyfer sefydlu uned hyfforddi ddeintyddol ym Mangor? (WAQ19165) [W]

**Jane Hutt:** Tra'n adolygu cynlluniau'r gweithluoedd, canfuwyd angen i ehangu'r gwasanaeth deintyddol yn gyffredinol, ac yn fwy penodol yng ngogledd Cymru. Er hynny, byddai eisiau buddsoddi cyfalaf ar unrhyw ehangiad i'r gwasanaeth yng ngogledd Cymru. Cyn hir, bydd Coleg Meddygaeth Prifysgol Cymru yn cychwyn ar y gwaith o greu achos busnes a chaiff y materion cyllido eu hastudio ar ôl ei dderbyn.

### **Dental Training Unit in Bangor**

**Dafydd Wigley:** How much money has been allocated from the Minister's budget to establish a dental training unit in Bangor? (WAQ19165) [W]

**Jane Hutt:** While reviewing the workforce plans, a need for dental expansion generally, specifically in north Wales, was identified. However, any expansion to north Wales will require a capital investment. The University of Wales College of Medicine will soon commence work on a business case for this expansion and the funding issues will be examined upon its receipt.

### **All-Wales Child Health Database**

**David Lloyd:** What plans are in place for the development of an all-Wales child health database? (WAQ19189) [R]

**Jane Hutt:** The child health system is presently a national health service trust based system. Work on the child health information requirements project is examining the development of an all-Wales child health database based on the current child health system.

### **Doctors Practising in Rural Wales**

**David Lloyd:** How will the Minister ensure that benefits arising from the proposed new general practitioner contract will be accessible for the doctors practising in rural Wales? (WAQ19191) [R]

**Jane Hutt:** I keep in close touch with the NHS Confederation and other UK Health Ministers to ensure that the interests of all Welsh GPs are taken into account. April's framework agreement highlights the need to deal with the particular problems of remote and rural areas. The detail of how this is done will be worked out at the next stage of contract negotiations.

### **Baich Gweinyddol ar Feddygon Teulu**

**David Lloyd:** Sut mae polisiau'r Gweinidog yn lleihau baich gweinyddol meddygon teulu yng Nghymru? (WAQ19192) [W] [R]

**Jane Hutt:** Gwn yn dda iawn am y pwysau clinigol sydd ar feddygon teulu, ac mae angen inni sicrhau nad ydym yn ychwanegu at y pwysau hynny drwy ddisgwyl iddynt ymdopi gydag amrywiaeth eang o ddyletswyddau gweinyddol.

Ym mis Mawrth 2001, cyhoeddwyd adroddiad ar y cyd gan Swyddfa'r Cabinet a'r Adran Iechyd. Yn yr adroddiad hwnnw, tynnwyd sylw at sawl maes lle gellid lleihau gwaith papur meddygon teulu. Clustnodwyd 26 maes, ac yr oedd modd gweithredu nifer ohonynt yng Nghymru. Ar ddechrau'r flwyddyn, cyhoeddwyd cylchlythyr iechyd cymru i'r gwasanaeth yn ei hysbysu am yr adroddiad ac yn



dweud y câi'r meysydd perthnasol eu gweithredu mewn rhaglen a gâi ei chyflwyno'n raddol. Gweithredwyd eisoes ar un o'r meysydd, sef rhoi tystysgrifau salwch, gwaith sy'n cael ei gydnabod fel baich dianghenraid ar feddygon teulu. Cafwyd ymgyrch cyhoeddusrwydd i hyrwyddo arfer da wrth ddelio ag absenoldeb salwch ymhlith gweithwyr. Hefyd, anfonwyd llythyr at brif weithredwyr yr ymddiriedolaethau GIG yn eu cynghori i gynnwys tystysgrifau salwch wrth ryddhau cleifion o'r ysbyty ac wrth ddelio â chleifion allanol.

Yn ddiweddar, bu Swyddfa'r Cabinet a'r Adran Iechyd yn paratoi adroddiad arall, sy'n clustnodi 15 canlyniad newydd, i ostwng fwy fyth y lefelau o waith papur y mae'n rhaid i feddygon teulu ymdopi â hwy. Bydd fy swyddogion yn ystyried y meysydd newydd hyn gan ystyried hefyd a ellir eu gweithredu yng Nghymru.

Hefyd, mae rhaglen sylfaen mewn technoleg gwybodaeth a chyfathrebu ar gael ar gyfer meddygfeydd meddygon teulu. Caiff hon ei harwain gan y gwasanaeth dros dair blynedd, ac mae'n cael arian cyfatebol gan y Cynulliad a'r GIG. Un o brif amcanion y rhaglen yw cyflwyno prosiect i sicrhau manteision cynhwysfawr a fydd yn clustnodi ac yn hyrwyddo arfer da a dulliau gwell o weithio gyda TGCh. Yn ei dro, bydd hynny'n arwain at lai o waith papur.

Caiff unrhyw bolisiau newydd a allai effeithio ar faich gwaith meddygon teulu eu trafod gyda phwyllgor y meddygon teulu a, lle bo hynny'n bosibl, bydd y baich gweinyddol yn cael ei gadw cyn lleied ag y bo modd.

### **Administrative Burden on GPs**

**David Lloyd:** How do the Minister's policies reduce the administrative burden of general practitioners in Wales? (WAQ19192) [W] [R]

**Jane Hutt:** I am only too aware of the clinical pressures that GPs are under, and we need to ensure that we do not add to that by expecting them to cope with a wide variety of administrative duties.

A joint Cabinet Office and Department of Health report, published in March 2001, identified a number of areas where GP paperwork can be reduced—36 areas were identified, many of which were also relevant for implementation in Wales. A Welsh health circular was issued to the service earlier this year, informing them of the report and that relevant areas would be implemented in a phased programme. One area that has already been actioned is that of sickness certification, which is recognised as an unnecessary burden on GPs. A publicity campaign was undertaken to promote best practice in dealing with sickness absence among employees. A letter has also been issued to chief executives of NHS trusts advising them to integrate sickness certification into hospital discharge and outpatient processes.

The Cabinet Office and Department of Health have recently produced a second report, which identifies 15 new outcomes to further reduce levels of paperwork with which GPs have to contend. My officials will consider these new areas and whether they are relevant for implementation in Wales.

There is also an information communications technology foundation programme for general medical practices, which is a service-led programme over three years that is being match funded by the Assembly and the NHS. One of the principal objectives of the programme is to deliver a comprehensive benefits realisation project, which will identify and promote best practice and improved ways of working with ICT which, in turn, will lead to a reduction in paperwork.

Any new policies that may have an impact on GPs' workload is consulted on with the general practitioner's committee and, where possible, the administrative burden is kept to a minimum.

### **Adleoli Preswylwyr Bryn y Neuadd**

**Gareth Jones:** Faint o arian y mae'r Gweinidog wedi'i glustnodi ar gyfer adleoli preswylwyr Bryn y Neuadd? (WAQ19193) [W]

**Jane Hutt:** Am y tair blynedd 2002-03 i 2005-06 yn gynwysedig, amcangyfrifir y bydd Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru yn rhoi cyfanswm o £19.5 miliwn o gyllid mewn grantiau gofal cymdeithasol i bobl gael eu hadleoli yn y gymuned. Mae hyn yn cynnwys costau pontio eraill, y cytunais i'w talu yn ddiweddar, sydd ynghlwm wrth raglen adleoli Bryn y Neuadd.

### **Relocation of Bryn y Neuadd Residents**

**Gareth Jones:** How much money has the Minister allocated for the relocation of Bryn y Neuadd residents? (WAQ19193) [W]

**Jane Hutt:** For the years 2002-03 to 2005-06 inclusive, the Welsh Assembly Government's funding of the social care grants for people to be resettled into the community together with other bridging costs associated with the Bryn y Neuadd resettlement programme, which I recently agreed, is estimated to total £19.5 million.

### **National Information Management and Technology**

**David Lloyd:** What is the current timetable in the implementation of a national information management and technology development plan? (WAQ19194) [R]

**Jane Hutt:** The information task and finish group, established as part of the implementation machinery for 'Improving Health in Wales', has produced a report called 'Informing Healthcare'. That includes the case for change, a strategic vision with recommendations on its delivery, and some proposed immediate next steps. This has been submitted to the Welsh Assembly Government with the request that it be developed into a strategic implementation programme and Assembly policy. My officials and I are currently considering next steps.

### **New Hospital in the Tenby area**

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister report on progress in relation to the project to build a new hospital in the Tenby area of South Pembrokeshire? (WAQ19204)

**Jane Hutt:** I understand that Pembrokeshire and Derwen NHS Trust prepared a strategic outline case for the re-provision of Tenby Cottage Hospital, which went before the Pembrokeshire strategic partnership board on 18 April 2002. The board agreed to the strategic outline case, subject to the inclusion of an additional option.

Two main options, each with sub-options within them, are being considered.

Pembrokeshire and Derwen NHS Trust submitted the strategic outline case to the Welsh Assembly Government on 11 July and this is currently being assessed. If approved, the next step would be for the trust to prepare the outline business case, which contains a full option appraisal and identifies the preferred option.

### **Reforms of Health Authorities**

**Nick Bourne:** What is the anticipated cost of the proposed reforms to health authorities and local health groups? (WAQ19209)

**Jane Hutt:** The anticipated costs of the proposed reforms are set out in my monthly report to the Health and Social Services Committee, to be presented to the Committee on 17 July 2002. This paper is available from the Committee's web pages (paper HSS-16-02 p.1).

### **Reform of the Health Service**

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister publish representations that she has received in relation to the proposals to reform health authorities and local health groups? (WAQ19210)

**Jane Hutt:** Responses to the structural consultation to reform health authorities and local health groups, which took place last summer, have been placed in the Assembly Libraries and are available for colleagues to examine. My conclusions on the responses given were delivered in a statement to Plenary on 15 November.

### **Care Homes in Llanrwst**

**Nick Bourne:** Has the Minister had any discussions with Conwy Borough Council regarding the closure of care homes in Llanrwst? (WAQ19212)

**Jane Hutt:** No. However I continue to monitor the sector and am very aware of the problems that it faces. I am also aware of some local difficulties in finding suitable places in care homes for individuals, particularly those with specialist needs, but that the picture is not uniform across Wales.

At the strategic level, the Wales care strategy group is addressing and will provide advice to me on the strategic issues affecting the care sector as a whole—residential, domiciliary and care provided as an adjunct to housing. The aim is to help bring more stability and confidence to the care sector in the short term and help to ensure that it is ready to meet changing care needs in the medium to long term. This group will also cover training and business development issues.

### **Attracting Dentists to Ceredigion**

**Nick Bourne:** What efforts are being made to attract dentists to Ceredigion? (WAQ19213)

**Jane Hutt:** The responsibility for the provision of dental services in Ceredigion remains with the Dyfed Powys Health Authority, in accordance with section 35 of the National Health Service Act 1977.

The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to ensuring that a high-quality NHS dental service is available to those who wish to use it wherever they live, and I will continue to assist the health authority to attract dentists through the Welsh dental initiative.

First launched in 1995, the scheme is designed to attract new dentists into parts of Wales where they are most needed. It has enabled us to offer unprecedented levels of funding to dentists willing to make a sustained commitment to the NHS.

In my written statement to Assembly Members on 19 March, I was pleased to announce the introduction of stage three of the initiative. The package of measures includes an increase in the basic grant aid available from £25,000 to £40,000 in designated areas, introduction of a £20,000 grant to establish a vocational training practice and payments to dentists returning to the profession after an absence of two years.

As a direct result of the grant aid available through this scheme, the health authority has reported that agreement in principle has been reached with a practitioner prepared to open a new practice in Aberystwyth.

### **Attracting Dentists to Brecon and Radnorshire**

**Nick Bourne:** What efforts are being made to attract dentists to Brecon and Radnorshire? (WAQ19214)

**Jane Hutt:** The responsibility for the provision of dental services in Brecon and Radnorshire remains with the Dyfed Powys Health Authority, in accordance with section 35 of the National Health Service Act 1977.

As I have indicated in my reply to your written question WAQ19213, the Welsh Assembly Government is committed to ensuring that a high-quality NHS dental service is available to those who wish to use it, wherever they live. I will continue to assist the health authority to attract dentists through the Welsh dental initiative.

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Although Brecon and Radnorshire was not nominated by the health authority as a designated area, Builth Wells, Llandrindod Wells and Presteigne have been designated as localities in need of grant aided assistance. Regrettably, there have been no expressions of interest yet from dentists about these localities.

#### **Mental Health Services**

**Kirsty Williams:** What arrangements will be put in place for the commissioning of mental health services from April 2003? (WAQ19248)

**Jane Hutt:** Local health boards will be responsible for the commissioning of all primary and most secondary mental health services. The Specialised Health Services Commission for Wales will continue to be responsible for forensic psychiatry and some other specialist services.

I recognise the need to support local health boards in this vital task, and I shall ensure that the new regional offices are able to provide guidance and monitor performance in this area.