

Answers issued to Members on 26 November 2008

[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 Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport

Eleanor Burnham (North Wales): Will the Minister confirm that the initial service of the new Cardiff-Holyhead train (which will run on 15/12/2008) will be available to members of the public? (WAQ52774)

The Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport (Ieuan Wyn Jones): Yes.

Irene James (Islwyn): What discussions has the Minister had with Arriva Trains Wales with regard to providing adequate capacity on the Ebbw Valley line for a) the 2008 autumn international rugby matches, and b) the six nations in 2009? (WAQ52778)

The Deputy First Minister: This is a matter Arriva Trains Wales need to address in response to the information provided at the Millenium Stadium Events Liaison Group, which is attended by officials.

Irene James (Islwyn): Will the Minister outline (a) How many Arriva Trains Wales' trains are currently on hire to First Great Western and (b) When will these trains be returned to Arriva Trains Wales? (WAQ52779)

The Deputy First Minister: Five Class 150 (two carriage) trains are sub-leased to First Great Western. My officials are discussing future rolling stock requirements with Arriva Trains Wales.

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): Will the Minister provide the names of those who attended a meeting with him on 11 November 2008 regarding matters relating to Blaenau Ffestiniog and the organisations they represented? (WAQ52785)

The Deputy First Minister: On 11 November I met with representatives of Gwynedd Council. Those attending included Cllr. Dewi Lewis, Cllr Gwilym Euros Roberts, Mr Dewi Rowlands and Mrs Sioned Williams. Also attending were Andrew Nicholas, John Williams and Dave Thomas, Officials of the Welsh Assembly Government.

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): Will the Minister please make a statement about roadworks in the community of Cynghordy in Carmarthenshire? (WAQ52786)

The Deputy First Minister: There have not been any roadworks on the trunk road in Cynghordy recently. However BT have undertaken tree clearance works from around their poles and equipment in the area over the past 2 weeks. They had temporary traffic lights in operation for the duration.

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): Is the Welsh Assembly Government giving any consideration to the opening of new railway lines in Wales and, if so, will the Minister give details of any such projects? (WAQ52792)

The Deputy First Minister: I will shortly be making an announcement on the Welsh Assembly Government's forward rail programme.

Alun Cairns (South Wales West): Will the Minister make a statement on any potential RSA reclaim as a result of the loss of Marketsafe in Bridgend? (WAQ52799)

The Deputy First Minister: The transfer of Marketsafe from Bridgend to Caerphilly will not in itself trigger any reclaim of grant.

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

Alun Cairns (South Wales West): Will the Minister make a statement on whether the Holocaust has been removed from the national curriculum? (WAQ52807)

The Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Jane Hutt): There have been some statements in the press claiming that the holocaust has been removed from the curriculum. These reports are misleading. A number of opportunities exist within the revised school curriculum in Wales for pupils to learn about and from the Holocaust.

The history curriculum at Key Stage 2, for example, requires pupils to study life in a period of the twentieth century. The choice of period is one for each individual school to make, but many choose to study aspects of the Second World War, and to refer to the Holocaust in a way appropriate to the age and abilities of their pupils.

At Key Stage 3, schools are required to teach aspects of twentieth-century world history. Again, the choice is one for the school to make, but many choose to study the Second World War as one of the events which has shaped the modern world. As part of this study, they will have the opportunity to learn about the Holocaust.

Additionally, the Framework for Personal and Social Education requires that each subject in the curriculum, as appropriate, sets out to develop PSE skills, attitudes and values. One of the main aims is for pupils to become active citizens; this will include fostering community cohesion and challenging discrimination. Consideration of the Holocaust fits well within that context.

These aspects of active citizenship are also taken up within Religious Education where teachers, who are familiar with dealing with challenging and controversial issues on a daily basis, deal with the sensitivities of exploring the religious beliefs, teachings and practice of the principal religions represented in Great Britain. The new Exemplar Framework for Religious Education is skills-based and provides opportunities for pupils to explore fundamental questions raised by the world, human experience and religion. This allows teachers to explore such fundamental questions as are raised by the Holocaust—questions about the nature of good and evil, hope and suffering, commitment and despair and the theology of the Holocaust.

Questions to the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing

Irene James (Islwyn): How many Welsh Local Authorities participate in kerb side collection schemes for cardboard? (WAQ52801)

The Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing (Jane Davidson): Fifteen Welsh Local Authorities currently participate in kerbside collection schemes for cardboard. These are:

- Isle of Anglesey (part of a new trial)
- Carmarthenshire
- Caerphilly (small amounts only)
- Cardiff
- Ceredigion
- Gwynedd

- Merthyr Tydfil
- Monmouthshire
- Neath
- Newport
- Pembrokeshire
- Powys
- Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Swansea
- Vale of Glamorgan

The Welsh Assembly Government continues to encourage local authorities to increase recycling of all recoverable materials including cardboard. Recyclate collection is the responsibility of local authorities and the types of material collected for recycling depend on factors such as market values and available infrastructure. I anticipate that recycling of cardboard will increase in future as authorities develop services to meet higher recycling and landfill diversion targets.

Irene James (Islwyn): Does the Minister have a target date for all local authorities to participate in kerbside collections of cardboard? (WAQ52802)

Jane Davidson: There is currently no specific target for local authorities to participate in kerbside recycling of cardboard. There are however Assembly recycling targets and strict EU target years in 2012-2013 and 2019-2020 for the diversion of Biodegradable Municipal Waste from landfill by local authorities under the EU Landfill Directive. This will need to include increasing amounts of cardboard which is, of course, biodegradable.

Irene James (Islwyn): What discussions has the Minister had with local authorities with regards to offering Tetra Pak recycling through kerbside collections? (WAQ52803)

Jane Davidson: The Welsh Assembly Government continues to encourage local authorities to increase recycling of all recoverable materials including Tetra Paks. Tetra Paks require a specialist type of recycling due to the nature of the materials in the product and all local authorities in Wales have set up collection systems for them mostly through recycling banks.

Kerbside collection is clearly an efficient and effective method of collecting materials, and there are now three authorities, Carmarthenshire, Merthyr Tydfil and RCT that provide kerbside collections for Tetra Paks.

Alun Cairns (South Wales West): When does the Minister expect to take a decision on the RWE Npower planning application for LNG plant in Pembrokeshire? (WAQ52808)

Jane Davidson: Applications for power stations in excess of 50MW, such as RWE Npower's proposal at Pembroke, are determined by the UK Government through the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC). The Welsh Assembly Government has provided comments of a factual nature to DECC. The proposed power station would be fuelled by gas drawn from the National Transmission Network rather than using LNG specifically.

Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire): When will the final TAN 16 'Sport, Recreation and Open Space' be published? (WAQ52809)

Jane Davidson: Work to amend the TAN, particularly to take account of the responses to public consultation, the findings of an Assembly Government funded research project, and work by Fields in

Trust to review its 'Six Acre Standard', has been completed. I propose to publish the revised TAN early in the new year.

Questions to the Minister for Heritage

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): Will the Minister detail any assistance the Welsh Assembly Government has provided Tourist Information Centres? (WAQ52787)

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): What assessment has the Minister made of the role of Tourist Information Centres? (WAQ52788)

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): Has the Welsh Assembly Government given any directions to local authorities with regard to the management and role of Tourist Information Centres? (WAQ52789)

The Minister for Heritage (Alun Ffred Jones): The Welsh Assembly Government provides support to the Network of Tourist Information Centres (TICs) in Wales, with a budget of £125,000 for 2008-09. This is used to fund staff training, the corporate image of the TIC (including staff uniforms), promotion, research and also monitoring of the Service Level Agreements between the core funders (usually local authorities) and managers of TICs and the Assembly Government. In addition the Assembly Government also pays the salaries of 1.5 officers who help deliver these support functions.

A TIC review paper for the Tourism Advisory Panel is currently being prepared. This will be completed by December 2008. This is further to regular reviews and research into the use and value for money provided by the TIC network in Wales.

TICs comply with a series of Service Level Descriptors which define the range and level of service they must deliver, alongside guidelines on good practice.

Compliance with these descriptors is monitored by the Welsh Assembly Government through annual assessment visits by an Assembly Government Official and a monthly 'Mystery Shopper' exercise.

Alun Cairns (South Wales West): Will the Minister state when he plans to announce the results of the grant application for Beyond Borders at St Donats? (WAQ52798)

Alun Ffred Jones: As you know, Welsh Assembly Government arts funding is channelled through Arts Council Wales (ACW), working within the strategic framework that we provide. In accordance with the arm's-length funding principle, I am not in a position to provide any direct funding or intervene in the individual funding decisions of the ACW. It is for ACW to determine its own priorities and how much funding organisations or individuals should receive, taking into account competing demands on its budget.

As such it is for ACW to advise applicants as to the success or otherwise of grant applications.

Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): Has any assessment been made about the withdrawal of street lighting in parts of Wales and the impact on social inclusion of older people? (WAQ52790) *Transferred for answer by the Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport.*

The Deputy First Minister: Currently street lights are only being turned off on the local road network which is the responsibility of the local authorities in Wales. The impact on the social inclusion of older people would be one of the many factors considered by an authority in making the decision to withdraw lighting from a location. My officials also take these factors into account when developing policies in relation to street lighting and energy saving for trunk roads and motorways in Wales.

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): What representations has the Minister received of the provision of street lighting in Wales and will he make available copies of the correspondence of whatever nature? (WAQ52791) *Transferred for answer by the Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport.*

The Deputy First Minister: Street lighting on the local road network is the responsibility of local authorities; for the trunk road and motorway network the responsibility lies with the Welsh Ministers. To date, 5 representations have been received by my Department regarding the provision of street lighting in Wales. The release of this correspondence will be considered under the Assembly's Code of Practice on Access to Information and the Deputy First Minister will write to you within 20 working days of the Assembly being notified of this question.

Nerys Evans (Mid and West Wales): Will the Assembly Government be applying to take over the management of post offices in Wales, as well as the subsidy, so that the Assembly can decide on their future? (WAQ52812)

The Deputy Minister for Regeneration (Leighton Andrews): No.