

## **Written Questions answered between 7 and 14 August 2003**

[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 Minister for Economic Development and Transport

### Valleys Communities under Priority (5)4

**Leighton Andrews:** What is the allocation set aside for Valleys communities under priority (5)4 of the Objective 1 programme? (WAQ27639)

**The Minister for Economic Development and Transport (Andrew Davies):** Within the Objective 1 programme, priority 5, measure 4, 'promoting the adaptation and development of rural areas', is spatially targeted to cover rural parts of the Objective 1 area. Eligible areas have been chosen according to population density. For the current programming period of 2000-06, a total of £1.8 million of the grant funds available under this measure has been set aside to certain wards within the eight Valleys local partnership areas of Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Neath Port Talbot, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Swansea, and Torfaen.

### Wards Classified as 'Rural'

**Leighton Andrews:** How many Valleys wards are classified as 'rural' for the purposes of Objective 1 bids, and which are they? (WAQ27640)

**Andrew Davies:** For the purpose of addressing the development needs of rural areas via the Objective 1 programme, measures 4 and 6 within priority 5 are spatially targeted. For these measures, a total of 69 wards within the eight Valleys local partnership areas are classed as 'rural'. These are noted below:

Objective 1 Valleys local partnership areas	Wards classed as 'rural' for the Objective 1 programme priority 5, measures 4 and 6
Blaenau Gwent	Cwm; Sirhowy
Bridgend	Blackmill; Blaengarw; Cefn Cribwr; Cornelly; Llangeinor; Llangynwyd; Nant-y-Moel; Newcastle Higher; Ogmere Vale; Pencoed
Caerphilly	Abercarn; Argoed; Darren Valley; Maesycwmmmer; Nelson; St James; Tirphil; Twyncarno; Ynys-ddu
Merthyr Tydfil	Belinog; Plymouth; Vaynor
Neath Port Talbot	Aberdulais; Blaengwrach; Bryn and Cwmavon; Cadoxton; Coed-ffranc West; Crynant; Cwmllynfell; Cymmer; Glyncoerwg; Glynneath; Gwynfi; Lower Brynamman; Margam; Onllwyn; Pelenna; Pontardawe; Resolven; Rhos; Seven Sisters; Tonna
Rhondda Cynon Taf	Bryna; Llanharan; Llanharry; Llwydcoed; Maerdy; Mountain Ash East; Pontyclun; Y Rhigos; Taffs Well; Treherbert; Ynysybwl
Swansea	Dulais East; Gowerton West; Llangyfelach; Mawr; North Gower; Pennard; Penllergaer; Pontarddulais; South Gower
Torfaen	Abersychan; Blaenavon; Cwmyniscoy; Two Locks; Wainfelin

### The Rehabilitation of Buildings for Community Use

**Leighton Andrews:** Can Objective 1 funds be used to support the rehabilitation of buildings for community use, such as listed buildings and buildings representative of Wales's industrial heritage, such as miners' institutes and coalfield buildings. If so, under what categories would applications be accepted and are there any examples of this, and if so, what examples are there? (WAQ27642)

**Andrew Davies:** Grant funds within the Objective 1 programme for west Wales and the Valleys can be used to support the rehabilitation of buildings for community use. Such project activity can be supported, for example, via the following priorities and measures of the Objective 1 programme:

- priority 3, measure 3: regeneration of deprived areas through community-led action;
- priority 3, measure 4: support for the creation and development of business in the social economy; and
- priority 5, measure 6: promoting local economic development.

Project examples include Groundwork Caerphilly's 'Parc Penallta—development of community park' project; the 'Aber valley community regeneration strategy' project; and the 'Penallta community resource, cultural and enterprise centre development' project. The 'Tondu park—phase II' project run by Groundwork Bridgend is a further example.

### **Welsh European Funding Office**

**Elin Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on the abolition of the Welsh European Funding Office? (WAQ27650)

**Elin Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on any discussions with the European Commission regarding the abolition of the Welsh European Funding Office and the decision to administer European funds from within the Assembly? (WAQ27651)

**Elin Jones:** Were any of the chairpersons of the programme monitoring committees of Objective 1, 2 or 3 administered by the Welsh European Funding Office informed of the decision to abolish WEFO and administer European funds from within the Assembly prior to the Minister's announcement to *The Western Mail* on 24 July 2003? (WAQ27655)

**Andrew Davies:** I made no such announcement, to *The Western Mail* or to any other body. The Welsh European Funding Office has not been abolished and will be carrying on with business as usual.

The managing authority for the European structural funds in Wales is the Welsh Assembly Government. WEFO is, and always has been, part of the Welsh Assembly Government and continues to be staffed by civil servants. WEFO will continue to be referred to by its original name and be led by a chief executive. The change is therefore a modest administrative one, with WEFO no longer an executive agency, but part of the Assembly's broader economic development and transport department.

The change does fit with my broader agenda for simplifying the structures and processes associated with the structural funds. Indeed, the change will facilitate the adoption of a more strategic approach for the second half of the structural funds programmes in terms of simplifying the management arrangements and accountabilities and generating greater synergy with Assembly policies that are committed to improving Wales's economic prosperity.

The European Commission is aware of the changes and has raised no objection. The chairpersons of the programme monitoring committees for the structural funds programmes have been informed.

### **Colwyn Bay Train Station and Rail Services in North Wales**

**Brynle Williams:** What discussions has the Minister had with the relevant bodies with regard to improving facilities, safety and cleanliness at Colwyn Bay train station? (WAQ27664)

**Brynle Williams:** What discussions has the Minister had with the relevant bodies with regard to improving rail services in north Wales? (WAQ27665)

**Andrew Davies:** One of the first meetings I had upon taking over the transport portfolio was with the chairman of the Strategic Rail Authority, Richard Bowker. I have more recently met with the chairman of the Rail Passenger Committee for Wales, Paul Harley, where I discussed the improvement of station facilities and rail services in north Wales.

The Assembly Government's 'Vision for Rail Services in Wales and Borders', published in March 2002, recognises the value that we place upon the quality of passenger experience. It is vital that passengers feel safe and comfortable while waiting at stations.

A programme for the north Wales stations will be developed and taken forward, subject to affordability, in conjunction with the new franchise operator, and it will take into account schemes that have already been identified to us by the north Wales local authorities and the Rail Passengers Committee for Wales.

Whilst visiting north Wales on 1 August, Richard Bowker, the Strategic Rail Authority's chairman announced that Arriva Train Ltd was the preferred bidder for the Wales and borders rail franchise. I am committed to securing efficient and reliable rail services for Wales and the Assembly Government will work closely with Arriva over the 15-year period of the franchise to realise our vision for improving all aspect of rail travel in Wales.

## **Questions to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning**

### **The Fairbridge Charity**

**Leighton Andrews:** What support is given by the Welsh Assembly Government to the charity Fairbridge? (WAQ27507) *Transferred for answer by the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration.*

*Substantive reply further to the holding reply issued on 28 July 2003.*

**The Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration (Edwina Hart):** Fairbridge submitted an application seeking revenue support of £90,000 under the community facilities and activities programme. The funding was to be used to develop an action plan to train socially excluded young people between the ages of 13 and 25 in south-east Wales. The application was refused because, at the time, the community facilities and activities programme was essentially a capital programme and Fairbridge was seeking revenue support. The application also failed to provide adequate evidence of Fairbridge's links with partner organisations.

### **Manifesto Commitment of No Top-Up Fees**

**Laura Anne Jones:** Would the Minister explain how she plans to fund the Government's manifesto commitment of no top-up fees in Wales? (WAQ27643)

**The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning (Jane Davidson):** As I announced on 17 July, I am pleased to have reached agreement on the broad principles that should underpin the devolution provisions in connection with the student support system, including the tuition fees regime in forthcoming legislation.

There is much work to be done to clarify the financial, operational and practical implications of transferring the student support regime to Wales. Part of this will be to quantify the financial impact of our manifesto commitment to rule out variable fees for the lifetime of the current Assembly. We will address funding issues in future budget planning rounds.

### **Interest Rates on Student Loans for Students Studying in Wales**

**Laura Anne Jones:** Can the Minister confirm that she would oppose any moves to increase interest rates on student loans for students studying in Wales? (WAQ27708)

**Laura Anne Jones:** Would the Minister make a statement on any negotiations she has had regarding student loan interest rates? (WAQ27709)

**Jane Davidson:** This issue is the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Education and Skills and has not been devolved to the Assembly.

I have been in detailed discussions with UK Government Ministers on proposals for the devolution of student support to Wales. There are currently no plans to alter the basis on which student loan interest rates are set.

### **Assembly Learning Grants**

**Laura Anne Jones:** Would the Minister confirm the percentage of students in full-time study at Welsh universities who benefit from Assembly learning grants? (WAQ27718)

**Jane Davidson:** Interim returns show that 8,740 full-time higher education students studying at Welsh universities are receiving an Assembly learning grant in 2002-03. This represents 13 per cent of the total number of full-time HE students in Welsh HE institutions as at academic year 2001-02 (latest available data), although this total includes students studying postgraduate courses and students not ordinarily resident in Wales who are not eligible for an ALG.

More specifically, the figure represents 30 per cent of the total number of full-time Welsh domiciled undergraduates at Welsh universities. An additional 5,010 full-time HE students are receiving an ALG and are studying either at further education institutions in Wales or at institutions elsewhere in the UK.

Source: Local education authority returns to the Welsh Assembly Government, Higher Education Statistics Agency, 'Students in Higher Education institutions, 2001-02'.

## **Questions to the Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside**

### **Taliadau Polisi Amaethyddol Cyffredin 2001 Hwyr**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog gadarnhau bod rhaglen gyfrifiadurol sy'n galluogi talu'r taliadau polisi amaethyddol cyffredin 2001 hwyr? (WAQ27634) [W]

**Y Gweinidog dros yr Amgylchedd, Cynllunio a Chefn Gwlad (Carwyn Jones):** Gallaf gadarnhau bod cyfleuster cyfrifiadurol ar gyfer gwneud taliadau gweddilliol PAC 2001. Rhaid profi proses daliadau pob cynllun yn fanwl ar y system hon cyn y gellir gwneud y taliadau.

### **Late 2001 CAP Payments**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Will the Minister confirm that there is a computer program that can process late 2001 CAP payments? (WAQ27634) [W]

**The Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside (Carwyn Jones):** I can confirm that there is a computerised facility for making residual 2001 CAP payments. Each scheme's payment process has to be thoroughly tested on this facility before payments can be released.

### **Ôl-groniad o Daliadau PAC 2001 Hwyr**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad ar sut y bydd yn delio gyda'r ôl-groniad o daliadau PAC 2001 hwyr? (WAQ27635) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** Cyn y gellid awdurdodi taliadau unrhyw un o gynlluniau 2001, rhaid i ni sicrhau bod y broses yn cydymffurfio'n llwyr â gofynion yr UE. Golyga hyn bod rhaid profi proses daliadau pob cynllun yn drwyadl ar ein system gyfrifiadurol newydd ar gyfer cyllid. Mae hyn yn weithgaredd sy'n

mynd rhagddi, a disgwylir iddi ddod i ben erbyn diwedd mis Awst. Cyn gynted ag y bydd y broses honno wedi dod i ben, byddwn yn gwneud taliadau ar gyfer ceisiadau unigol dilys.

### **Backlog of Late 2001 CAP Payments**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Will the Minister make a statement on how he will deal with the backlog of late 2001 CAP payments? (WAQ27635) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** Before payments can be authorised under any of the 2001 schemes, we have to ensure that the process is fully compliant with EU requirements. That means that each scheme's payment process has to be thoroughly tested on our new finance computerised system. That is an on-going activity, which we expect to complete by the end of August. Payment of valid individual claims will therefore follow as soon as that process has been undertaken.

### **Taliadau PAC 2001 Hwyr**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad ar daliadau PAC 2001 hwyr? (WAQ27636) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** Mae rhai taliadau gweddilliol ar gyfer cynllun 2001 sydd heb eu gwneud eto. Maent yn cynnwys taliadau mewn perthynas â'r cynllun premiwm blynyddol defaid, y cynllun premiwm eidion arbennig a'r cynllun premiwm buchod sugno

### **Late 2001 CAP Payments**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Will the Minister make a statement on late 2001 CAP payments? (WAQ27636) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** There are some residual 2001 scheme year payments that have yet to be made. They include payments of sheep annual premium, beef special premium and suckler cow premium.

### **Health Screening of Broods and Studs**

**Leanne Wood:** What steps is the Minister taking to ensure that adequate health screening of broods and studs takes place at dog breeding facilities throughout Wales? (WAQ27641)

**Carwyn Jones:** This issue is the responsibility of the Minister for Nature Conservation and Fisheries, the Right Honourable Ben Bradshaw MP, and has not been devolved to the Assembly.

### **Y Cynllun Anifeiliaid Trig**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad ar y rheolau Ewropeaidd sy'n dynodi uchafswm y gefnogaeth ariannol y medr llywodraeth gyfrannu tuag at gynllun anifeiliaid trig yn ystod y blynyddoedd 2003, 2004, 2005 a 2006? (WAQ27645) [W]

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad ar amserlen sefydlu cynllun anifeiliaid trig? (WAQ27646) [W]

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog fanylu ar gyfraniadau'r Cynulliad, y gwahanol adrannau amaethyddol o fewn y Deyrnas Gyfunol, a'r diwydiant amaethyddol, tuag at yr elfennau casglu a difa, yn ystod y tair blynedd cyntaf o'r cynllun anifeiliaid trig? (WAQ27652) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** Ar 24 Rhagfyr 2002, cyhoeddwyd canllawiau'r gymuned ar gymhorthion gwladol (cyfeirnod 2002/C324/02), sy'n cynnwys cefnogaeth ar gyfer casglu a gwaredu anifeiliaid trig. Mae'r

canllawiau hyn yn galluogi llywodraethau i gyfrannu hyd at 100 y cant o'r gost o'u casglu a hyd at 75 y cant o'r gost o'u gwaredu.

Mae angen mireinio llawer o fanylion gweinyddol cyn y gellir lansio cynllun. Serch hynny, y gobaith yw y bydd cynllun y DU ar gyfer casglu a gwaredu anifeiliaid trig ar gael o ddechrau'r flwyddyn nesaf (Ionawr 2004).

Bydd y cynllun yn un gwirfoddol, a chaiff ei ariannu drwy danysgrifiadau ffermwyr a chan bedair adran amaethyddiaeth Prydain. Mae'r Cynulliad wedi ymrwymo i dalu cyfraniad cychwynnol i gael y cynllun ar ei draed yn ei flwyddyn gyntaf, a chyfraniadau llai dros y ddwy flynedd ddilynol. Bydd adrannau amaethyddiaeth eraill Prydain, a'r diwydiant ei hun, yn cyfrannu at y gost hefyd. Ar hyn o bryd, nid yw'n bosibl dweud beth fydd y cyfraniadau hyn.

### **The Fallen Stock Scheme**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Will the Minister make a statement on the European regulations that denote the maximum financial support that a government can contribute towards the fallen stock scheme in 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006? (WAQ27645) [W]

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Will the Minister make a statement on the timescale for setting up the fallen stock scheme? (WAQ27646) [W]

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Will the Minister detail the contributions made by the Assembly, the various UK agricultural departments, and the farming industry, towards the elements of collection and culling, during the first three years of the fallen stock scheme? (WAQ27652) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** Community guidelines on state aids (reference 2002/C324/02), which cover support for collection and disposal of fallen stock, were produced on 24 December 2002. Under these guidelines, Governments are able to contribute up to 100 per cent of the cost of collection and up to 75 per cent of the costs of disposal services.

There is still a lot of administrative detail to be worked out before a scheme can be launched. However, it is hoped that the UK-wide fallen stock collection and disposal scheme will be available from the beginning of next year (January 2004).

The scheme will be voluntary, and will be jointly financed by subscriptions from farmers and the four UK agriculture departments. The Assembly has made a commitment to make an initial contribution to get the scheme up and running in the first year and to make further contributions, at a reducing scale, over the next two years. This will be matched by contributions from the other UK agriculture departments, and the industry. It is not possible to say at this stage what these contributions will be.

### **Welsh Organic Produce**

**Jocelyn Davies:** What new measures will the Minister introduce to protect Welsh organic produce? (WAQ27647)

**Carwyn Jones:** There are no genetically modified crops grown in Wales so protection of organic produce is not currently an issue.

However, I am engaged with UK and EU colleagues on issues such as liability, traceability and labelling, and co-existence, and I take the view that commercialisation of GMO crops should not occur until such time as procedures and processes exist to protect Welsh organic farmers.

## Commercialisation of GM Crops

**Jocelyn Davies:** What measures will the Minister take to prevent the commercialisation of GM crops until such time as procedures and processes exist to protect Welsh organic farmers? (WAQ27648)

**Carwyn Jones:** The Assembly takes the most restrictive approach to the commercialisation of GM crops and is the only competent authority in the UK to set legally enforceable separation distances between GM and non-GM crops.

I am engaged with UK and EU colleagues on issues such as liability, traceability and labelling, and co-existence, and I take the view that commercialisation of GMO crops should not occur until such time as procedures and processes exist to protect Welsh organic farmers.

## Subsidies Due to Farmers in 2002

**Laura Anne Jones:** When will all Welsh farmers have received the subsidies due to them in 2002? (WAQ27649)

**Carwyn Jones:** The vast majority of payments due for the 2002 scheme year have now been released. Almost 80 per cent of the estimated total amount of CAP subsidies due for that year have been paid. We expect virtually all the remaining CAP payments to be made by the end of September, apart from individual cases that contain inconsistent or invalid data and which claimants need to resolve.

## Monitro'r Llif Genynnau Rêp a Addaswyd yn Enetig

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Yn ychwanegol i ateb y Gweinidog parthed WAQ26275, WAQ26276 a WAQ26277, beth oedd canlyniadau yr astudiaethau a ariannwyd gan Adran yr Amgylchedd ar y pryd (Adran yr Amgylchedd, Trafnidiaeth a'r Rhanbarthau yn ddiweddarach) i fonitro'r llif genynnau rêp a addaswyd yn enetig? (WAQ27653) [W]

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Yn ychwanegol i ateb y Gweinidog parthed WAQ26275, WAQ26276 a WAQ26277, pa astudiaethau, a ariannwyd gan Adran yr Amgylchedd ar y pryd (Adran yr Amgylchedd, Trafnidiaeth a'r Rhanbarthau yn ddiweddarach) i fonitro'r llif genynnau rêp a addaswyd yn enetig, gafodd eu cynnal yng Nghymru? (WAQ27654) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** Rhwng 1994 a 2000, ariannodd Adran yr Amgylchedd waith ymchwil i fonitro llif genynnau rêp hadau olew. Cynhaliwyd proses fonitro ddewisol, yn unol â'r amodau sy'n ymwneud â'r caniatâd a gymeradwywyd gan y Pwyllgor Ymgynghorol ar Ollyngiadau i'r Amgylchedd, ac nid oedd yn cynnwys safle Fferm Whitehouse. Cyhoeddwyd canlyniadau'r gwaith monitro yn 2002 ac maent i'w gweld ar <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/gm/research/epg-1-5-84.htm>.

## Monitoring the Gene Flow from Genetically Modified Rape

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Further to the Minister's response to WAQ26275, WAQ26276 and WAQ26277, what were the results of the studies funded by the then Department of the Environment (later the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions) to monitor gene flow from genetically modified rape? (WAQ27653) [W]

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Further to the Minister's response to WAQ26275, WAQ26276 and WAQ26277, what studies funded by the then Department of the Environment (later the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions) to monitor gene flow from genetically modified rape, were carried out in Wales? (WAQ27654) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** Between 1994 and 2000, the Department of the Environment funded research to monitor gene flow from oilseed rape. There was selective monitoring, in accordance with conditions attaching to



the consent agreed by the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment, which did not include the Whitehouse Farm site. The results of the programme of monitoring work were published in 2002 and are available at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/gm/research/epg-1-5-84.htm>.

### Delay in Processing Payments

**Glyn Davies:** Further to WAQ27604, will the Minister make a statement on (i) when the participants can expect their payments, and (ii) the reasons for the delay in processing payments to the six claimants in the scheme? (WAQ27666)

**Carwyn Jones:** Applications under the moorland scheme have all now been processed for payment, and participants can expect to receive the amount due to them in the next few days. The delay has been due to the introduction of a new finance system, which has required new processes to be developed for a number of agri-environment schemes, which includes the moorland scheme.

### Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance Fund

**Brynle Williams:** Would the Minister list the recipients of the financial instrument for fisheries guidance fund for 2001-02 and 2002-03 and outline the purpose of the financial awards provided? (WAQ27669)

**Carwyn Jones:** The financial instrument for fisheries guidance finances measures for the restructuring of the fishing and aquaculture industries and the processing and marketing of their products. Project data is not collected on an April to March financial year basis. However, projects awarded the FIGG grant from January 2001 to date are noted in the following table:

#### FIGG grant awarded to projects to date

Project Sponsor	Purpose of FIGG Grant Award
Pembrokeshire County Council	Support of Pembrokeshire fish week
Deepdock Ltd	Provision of a new mussel dredger for mussel harvesting operations in north Wales
Selwyns Penclawdd Seafoods Ltd	Establishment of a cockle processing/canning plant at Llanmorlais to process cockles locally
J W Aquaculture (Research) Ltd	Establishment of a crab farming pilot project
Rawlings Trawling Ltd	Development of an added-value shellfish processing and marketing facility at Milford docks
Selonda UK Ltd	Establishment of a halibut fish farm and hatchery on Anglesey
Welsh Assembly Government	Compensation scheme for Burry inlet cockle gatherers
Cardigan Bay Fisherman's Association	Development officer for the association
Llŷn Inshore Fisherman's Association	Development officer for the association
Sea Fish Industry Authority	Fishermen's safety training
Myti Mussels Ltd	Dock improvements at Port Penrhyn
North Western and North Wales Sea Fisheries Committee	North and west Wales lobster V notching programme
Llŷn Inshore Fishermen's Association	Safety equipment upgrade for the association

## **Livestock Affected By Bovine Tuberculosis**

**Lisa Francis:** Will the Minister ensure that compensation payments to farmers whose livestock is affected by bovine tuberculosis will not be reduced until the Government takes decisive action to wipe out the disease in Wales? (WAQ27682)

**Carwyn Jones:** Compensation for any cattle slaughtered under official tuberculosis control policies is paid to farmers in Wales at 100 per cent of the market value as specified by the Brucellosis and Tuberculosis (England and Wales) Compensation (Amendment) Order 1996. There are no plans to change this policy.

## **Abandoned Cars**

**Laura Anne Jones:** Would the Minister make a statement on the effect of abandoned cars on the environment in south-east Wales? (WAQ27707)

**Carwyn Jones:** The environmental effects include smoke pollution from burnt vehicles, pollution of water courses, plus visual unsightliness. A total of 7,550 abandoned vehicles were removed by local authorities in Wales in 2001-02.

Removing abandoned vehicles more quickly will help to reduce the impact of this problem and I have written to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to request devolution of appropriate legislation that would give the Assembly powers to remove abandoned vehicles more quickly in Wales.

## **Questions to the Finance Minister**

### **General Agreement on Trade in Services**

**Leanne Wood:** What plans does the Minister have to fund a detailed study to look at the potential impact of the general agreement on trade in services on public services in Wales? (WAQ27347)

*Substantive reply further to holding reply issued on 23 July 2003.*

**The Finance Minister (Sue Essex):** None. These issues have already been considered as part of the Welsh Assembly Government's response to the UK Government's consultation. A copy of the response was placed in the Members' Library.

### **Local Government Elections**

**Laura Anne Jones:** When will the Minister be able to confirm the date of local government elections in Wales for 2004? (WAQ27644)

**Sue Essex:** At present local government elections in Wales are scheduled to be held on 6 May 2004. However, I am considering using the power in the Local Government Bill to combine the 2004 local and European elections in Wales and will announce my decision soon.

### **Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies**

**Elin Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on any discussions with Assembly sponsored public bodies on savings within budget in this and the next financial year? (WAQ27728)

**Sue Essex:** I have had no specific discussions with ASPBs on savings within agreed budgets. ASPBs are required at all times to seek out and make efficiency savings wherever possible in order to obtain the best value for money from the resources allocated to them.

## Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

### Cyrsiau Dysgu Cymraeg

**David Lloyd:** Pa gamau y mae'r ymddiriedolaethau iechyd neu'r gwasanaethau cymdeithasol yn eu cymryd i sicrhau bod staff yn cael eu rhyddhau i fynychu cyrsiau dysgu Cymraeg? (WAQ27626) [W] [R]

**Y Gweinidog dros Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol (Jane Hutt):** Mae hwn yn fater i bob ymddiriedolaeth ac awdurdod lleol unigol o dan eu cynllun iaith Gymraeg, a gytunwyd gan Fwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg.

### Welsh Learners' Courses

**David Lloyd:** What action do the health trusts and social services departments take to ensure that staff are released to attend Welsh learners' courses? (WAQ27626) [W] [R]

**The Minister for Health and Social Services (Jane Hutt):** This is a matter for each individual trust and local authority under their Welsh language scheme, agreed with the Welsh Language Board.

### Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg a Chyngor Defnyddwyr Cymru

**David Lloyd:** Pa gamau a gymerwyd yn dilyn cyhoeddi adroddiad gan Fwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg a Chyngor Defnyddwyr Cymru yn ystod haf 2000, a oedd yn tanlinellu lle ymylog yr iaith Gymraeg ym maes iechyd a gofal? (WAQ27627) [W] [R]

**Jane Hutt:** Mewn ymateb i'r argymhellion yn yr adroddiad 'Y Gymraeg yn y Gwasanaeth Iechyd', ffurfiais dasglu ar gyfer gwasanaethau cyfrwng Cymraeg, sy'n cynnig cyngor ar wella a hwyluso darparu gwasanaethau cyfrwng Cymraeg mewn gofal iechyd ac yn ceisio codi ymwybyddiaeth, statws a phwysigrwydd yr iaith fel mater yn ymwneud â gofal. O ganlyniad i'r tasglu hwn, mae'r Cynulliad, er enghraifft, wedi comisiynu fideo a phecyn hyfforddi i godi ymwybyddiaeth o'r iaith Gymraeg, sydd ar hyn o bryd yn cael ei dreialu. Mae hefyd wedi comisiynu prosiect ymchwil pwysig i ymwybyddiaeth iaith ymysg staff y GIG.

Hefyd, mae rhwydweithiau o gynrychiolwyr o holl ymddiriedolaethau'r GIG wedi eu sefydlu i helpu ymddiriedolaethau i fwrw ymlaen â'u cynlluniau iaith Gymraeg ac i fynd i'r afael â'r materion ehangach yn ymwneud â darparu gofal iechyd drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg, ac mae tîm o swyddogion ar gael i'w cynorthwyo.

Yn ogystal, trefnodd y Cynulliad gynhadledd ar y Gymraeg mewn gofal iechyd, y cyntaf o'i fath, yn gynharach eleni. Yn y gynhadledd honno, cefais gyfle i lansio gwobrau'r iaith Gymraeg mewn gofal iechyd i wella ymwybyddiaeth staff ac i wobrwyo'r rhai oedd yn dangos yr ymroddiad mwyaf i wella gofal cyfrwng Cymraeg.

Mae cylchlythyr rhaglen datblygu'r gweithlu gofal cymdeithasol 2003-04 yn ei gwneud yn ofynnol i awdurdodau lleol bennu targedau a blaenoriaethau ar gyfer yr iaith Gymraeg a hyfforddiant mewn arferion ieithyddol addas. Er mwyn cynorthwyo yn y maes hwn, mae'r Cyngor Canolog Addysg a Hyfforddiant mewn Gwaith Cymdeithasol (sydd erbyn hyn wedi'i ddisodli gan Gyngor Gofal Cymru) wedi datblygu pecyn hyfforddi o'r enw 'They all Speak English Anyway'. Mae'r pecyn hwn, a ddefnyddir yn helaeth, yn ceisio hyrwyddo ymwybyddiaeth iaith, arferion da a ffyrdd o weithio gyda defnyddwyr gwasanaethau sy'n siarad Cymraeg, heb eu llethu. Mae Arolygiaeth Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Cymru yn edrych yn rheolaidd ar y gwasanaethau a'r wybodaeth a ddarperir gan awdurdodau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg unwaith eto yng nghyd-destun cynllun iaith Gymraeg yr awdurdod dan sylw.

## **The Welsh Language Board and the Welsh Consumer Council**

**David Lloyd:** What action has been taken further to the report published in summer 2000 by the Welsh Language Board and the Welsh Consumer Council, underlining the marginal position of the Welsh language in health and social care? (WAQ27627) [W] [R]

**Jane Hutt:** In response to the recommendations contained in the report 'Welsh in the Health Service', I formed the task group for Welsh language services, which advises on improving and facilitating the provision of Welsh language services in healthcare and aims to raise the awareness, status and importance of language as a care issue. As a result of this task group, the Assembly has, for example, commissioned a video and training pack to raise Welsh language awareness, which is currently being piloted, and a major research project into language awareness amongst NHS staff.

In addition, networks of representatives from all NHS trusts have been established, supported by a team of officials, to help trusts to take forward their Welsh language schemes and address wider issues around healthcare provision in Welsh.

The Assembly has also organised the first Welsh language in healthcare conference earlier this year, at which I launched the Welsh language in healthcare awards to improve staff awareness and reward those showing the most commitment to improving Welsh language care.

The social care workforce development programme circular 2003-04 requires local authorities to set local targets and priorities for Welsh language and language appropriate practice training. To assist in this area, the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (now replaced by the Care Council for Wales) developed a training pack entitled 'They all Speak English Anyway'. This widely-used pack aims to promote language awareness, good practice and anti-oppressive ways of working with Welsh speaking service users. The Social Services Inspectorate for Wales routinely considers the provision of information and services in Welsh, again with reference to an authority's own Welsh language scheme.

## **Lefelau o Ddarpariaeth Cyfrwng Cymraeg yn y Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol**

**David Lloyd:** A yw'r Gweinidog yn cefnogi'r syniad o gynnal ymchwiliad i ddarganfod beth yw lefel y ddarpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg yn y gwasanaethau cymdeithasol drwy Gymru? (WAQ27628) [W] [R]

**Jane Hutt:** Mae cydymffurfio gyda gofynion Deddf yr Iaith Gymraeg 1993 o ran gwasanaethau cymdeithasol yn fater, yn y lle cyntaf, i lywodraeth leol. Mae Arolygiaeth Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Cymru yn edrych yn rheolaidd ar y gwasanaethau a'r wybodaeth a ddarperir gan awdurdodau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg yng nghyd-destun cynllun iaith Gymraeg yr awdurdod dan sylw.

## **The Levels of Welsh-medium Provision in Social Services**

**David Lloyd:** Does the Minister support the idea of holding an investigation to determine the levels of Welsh-medium provision in social services throughout Wales? (WAQ27628) [W] [R]

**Jane Hutt:** Compliance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Act 1993 is, in the first instance, a matter for local government with regards to social services. The Social Services Inspectorate for Wales routinely considers the provision of information and services in Welsh with reference to an authority's own Welsh language scheme.

## **Recriwtio Myfyrwyr sy'n Siarad Cymraeg**

**David Lloyd:** Pa arweiniad a roddir i golegau iechyd parthed recriwtio myfyrwyr sy'n siarad Cymraeg? (WAQ27629) [W] [R]

**Jane Hutt:** Mae gan yr holl sefydliadau addysg uwch sy'n darparu addysg gofal iechyd bolisiâu mynediad sy'n cynnwys polisi mynediad cyfartal i bob myfyriwr. Wrth ddatblygu'r cytundebau gyda'r sefydliadau unigol, trafodir agweddau ar eu polisiâu recriwtio, sy'n cynnwys annog ceisiadau gan fyfyrwyr o Gymru a myfyrwyr sy'n siarad Cymraeg.

Dylai'r cynlluniau arfaethedig i ddatblygu rhaglenni addysg mewn ardaloedd y tu allan i dde-ddwyrain Cymru roi cyfleoedd ychwanegol i recriwtio myfyrwyr sy'n siarad Cymraeg i swyddi gofal iechyd.

### **Recruiting Welsh-speaking Students**

**David Lloyd:** What guidance is given to health colleges on recruiting Welsh-speaking students? (WAQ27629) [W] [R]

**Jane Hutt:** All higher education institutions that provide healthcare education have admission policies, which include equity of access to all students. In developing the contracts with each HEI, recruitment policies are discussed, which include the issue of encouraging applications from students in Wales and Welsh-speaking students.

The planned development of education programmes in areas outside south-east Wales should provide additional opportunities for the recruitment of Welsh-speaking students to healthcare professions.

### **Hyfforddiant i Godi Ymwybyddiaeth o'r Gymraeg**

**David Lloyd:** Pa gamau mae'r ymddiriedolaethau iechyd neu'r adrannau gwasanaethau cymdeithasol yn eu cymryd er mwyn cynnig hyfforddiant 'ymwybyddiaeth iaith Gymraeg' i aelodau staff? (WAQ27630) [W] [R]

**Jane Hutt:** Mae'r Cynulliad wedi datblygu fideo byr ynghyd â phe cyn hyfforddi i godi ymwybyddiaeth o'r iaith Gymraeg ymysg gweithwyr gofal iechyd. Mae'r pecyn hyfforddi'n cael ei dreialu gan bedwar ymddiriedolaeth GIG a thri choleg, a chaiff ei lansio'n swyddogol ym mis Ebrill 2004. Ar hyn o bryd, mae swyddogion yn datblygu strategaethau gyda'r ymddiriedolaethau a'r byrddau iechyd lleol er mwyn gweithredu'r hyfforddiant ymwybyddiaeth iaith.

Mae rhaglen datblygu'r gweithlu gofal cymdeithasol yn ei gwneud yn ofynnol i awdurdodau bennu targedau a blaenoriaethau lleol ar gyfer hyfforddiant iaith Gymraeg, ynghyd â hyfforddiant mewn arferion ieithyddol addas. Mae Arolygiaeth Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Cymru yn edrych yn rheolaidd ar y gwasanaethau a'r wybodaeth a ddarperir gan awdurdodau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg yng nghyd-destun cynllun iaith Gymraeg yr awdurdod dan sylw.

### **Welsh Language Awareness Training**

**David Lloyd:** What actions do health trusts or social services' departments take to offer 'Welsh language awareness' training to staff? (WAQ27630) [W] [R]

**Jane Hutt:** The Assembly has developed a short video and training pack to raise Welsh language awareness amongst healthcare workers. This training pack is being piloted in four NHS trusts and three colleges and will be officially launched in April 2004. Officials are developing implementation strategies with the trusts and LHBs to implement the language awareness training.

The social care workforce development programme requires authorities to set local targets and priorities for Welsh language and language-appropriate practice training. The Social Services Inspectorate for Wales routinely considers the provision of information and services in Welsh with reference to an authority's own Welsh language scheme.

## Cyrsiau Hyfforddi ym Maes Iechyd a Gofal

**David Lloyd:** Pa gamau a gymerir i sicrhau bod y sawl sy'n gwneud cyrsiau hyfforddi ym maes iechyd a gofal yn derbyn gwybodaeth ynglŷn â chyrsiau ymwybyddiaeth iaith? (WAQ27633) [W] [R]

**Jane Hutt:** Mae ymwybyddiaeth ddiwylliannol yn rhan o'r rhaglenni addysg gofal iechyd cyn cofrestru, ac mae hyn yn cynnwys ymwybyddiaeth iaith. Mae'n ofynnol o fewn Cymru, ond caiff ei gydnabod hefyd gan gyrff rheoleiddio fel rhywbeth sy'n angenrheidiol ledled y DU, ac felly caiff ei adlewyrchu yn eu safonau dilysu.

Bydd rhai rhaglenni yn cynnig cymorth i fyfyrwyr sy'n dymuno dysgu neu gynnal iaith. Ar y cyd ag Uned Datblygu Cyfrwng Cymraeg Prifysgol Cymru, mae'r Cynulliad wedi cyllido tri phecyn hyfforddi newydd i'w defnyddio mewn colegau sy'n darparu hyfforddiant gofal iechyd. Bydd y pecynnau hyn, a ddatblygwyd gan Brifysgol Cymru, Bangor, ac a lansiwyd yn yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol eleni, yn chwarae rôl allweddol o ran codi ymwybyddiaeth o bwysigrwydd y Gymraeg mewn gofal iechyd, a gwella hyder staff i ddefnyddio eu sgiliau iaith Gymraeg yn y gwaith.

Hefyd mae tri choleg yn treialu pecyn hyfforddiant ymwybyddiaeth iaith eleni, a ddatblygwyd gan y Cynulliad, a fydd yn cael ei ddsbarthu fis Ebrill 2004 i golegau sy'n cynnig cyrsiau hyfforddiant iechyd. Mae'r rhain yn ofynnol o fewn y diploma mewn gwaith cymdeithasol ac, yn y radd newydd arfaethedig mewn gwaith cymdeithasol, byddai'n ofynnol i fyfyrwyr ddangos dealltwriaeth o'r darpariaethau deddfwriaethol i wasanaethau gael eu darparu drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg. Mae'n rhaid iddynt hyrwyddo hawliau defnyddwyr gwasanaethau i gael asesiad a gwasanaethau yn eu dewis iaith. Byddai'r cyflogwyr a'r darparwyr hyfforddiant unigol yn gyfrifol am dynnu sylw hyfforddwyr at gyrsiau ymwybyddiaeth iaith penodol.

## Training Courses in Health and Social Care

**David Lloyd:** What action is taken to ensure that those undertaking training courses in health and social care receive information about language awareness courses? (WAQ27633) [W] [R]

**Jane Hutt:** Cultural awareness is included in pre-registration healthcare education programmes, and this encompasses language awareness. This is a requirement within Wales, but is also recognised by regulatory bodies as necessary across the UK and therefore reflected in their standards for validation.

Some programmes will offer support to students who wish to learn or maintain a language. The Assembly has jointly funded, with the Welsh Medium Development Unit, University of Wales, three new training packs for use in colleges providing training in healthcare. These packs, which were developed by the University of Wales, Bangor, and launched at this year's National Eisteddfod, will be instrumental in raising the awareness of the place of the Welsh language in healthcare, and improving staff confidence in using their Welsh language skills at work.

In addition, three colleges are this year piloting language awareness training developed by the Assembly, which will be rolled out in April 2004 to colleges offering training courses in health. There are requirements within the diploma in social work, and in the proposals for the new degree in social work, for students to demonstrate understanding of the legislative provisions for services to be delivered in the Welsh language. They must promote the right of service users to access assessment and services in their preferred language. Individual employers and training providers would be responsible for drawing specific language awareness courses to the attention of trainers.

## Cyngor Gofal Cymru

**David Lloyd:** Pa strategaethau sydd gan gyrff allweddol ym maes gwaith cymdeithasol, megis Cyngor Gofal Cymru, i sicrhau bod gan y gweithlu gofal sgiliau digonol i ddarparu gwasanaethau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg? (WAQ27637) [W]

**Jane Hutt:** Mae cydymffurfio gyda gofynion Deddf yr Iaith Gymraeg 1993 o ran gwasanaethau cymdeithasol yn fater, yn y lle cyntaf, i lywodraeth leol. Mae Arolygiaeth Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Cymru yn edrych yn rheolaidd ar y gwasanaethau a'r wybodaeth a ddarperir gan awdurdodau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg yng nghyd-destun cynllun iaith Gymraeg yr awdurdod dan sylw.

Mae Cyngor Gofal Cymru yn ystyried materion yn ymwneud â'r Gymraeg yn ei holl waith, gan gynnwys cyhoeddi pecyn hyfforddi ar gyfer ymwybyddiaeth o'r iaith Gymraeg.

## Care Council for Wales

**David Lloyd:** What strategies do key bodies in the social work sector, such as the Care Council for Wales, have to ensure that the care workforce has sufficient skills to provide services through the medium of Welsh? (WAQ27637) [W] [R]

**Jane Hutt:** Compliance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Act 1993 is, in the first instance, a matter for local government with regards to social services. The Social Services Inspectorate for Wales routinely considers the provision of information and services in Welsh with reference to an authority's own Welsh language scheme.

The Care Council for Wales takes account of Welsh language issues in all its work, including publishing a Welsh language awareness training pack.

## Social Workers in Black and Minority Ethnic Communities

**Lorraine Barrett:** Does the Welsh Assembly Government have any plans to appoint social workers to support black and minority ethnic communities? (WAQ27657)

**Jane Hutt:** It is not the function of the Welsh Assembly Government to employ social workers. The human resource planning guidance, 'Planning for Caring', issued in March 2003, provides a framework for local authorities to use to secure a balance of staff to meet the needs of service users in their areas.

## Access to a NHS Dentist

**Alun Cairns:** What action is being taken to ensure that everyone in Wales has access to a NHS dentist? (WAQ27676)

**Jane Hutt:** The Welsh Assembly Government is fully committed to supporting NHS dental services. General dental practitioners are independent contractors and are free to decide whether to provide NHS services or not. We have no powers of direction over dentists to make them set up in a particular area. Our approach is based on the provision of incentives that makes NHS provision an attractive option for dentists. Those incentives are funded to the tune of £3.5 million in the Welsh dental initiative to attract more dentists into Wales and expand access to NHS dental services.

Incentives include:

- an increase in the basic grant from £25,000 to £40,000 in designated areas;
- grants of £20,000 to establish new vocational training practices;
- incentives to encourage dental graduates to train in Wales; and
- payments to dentists returning to the NHS.

## **NHS Dentists in South-east Wales**

**Laura Anne Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on the provision of NHS dentists in south-east Wales? (WAQ27693)

**Laura Anne Jones:** Would the Minister make a statement on the provision of NHS dentists in south-east Wales? (WAQ27720)

**Jane Hutt:** I am aware of the shortage in some parts of Wales of dentists willing to provide NHS treatment. The Welsh Assembly Government is fully committed to working with the profession to make the NHS an attractive option for dentists. We have no powers to direct independent general dental practitioners to set up in a particular area, but incentives are provided to make NHS dentistry an attractive option for them. The proposed new dental contract should help us create a better environment for NHS dentistry.

In south-east Wales, six new or expanded practices have opened, and an approval to enter into an agreement in principle has been given as a direct result of incentives offered through the Welsh dental initiative. In addition, an extra £76,000 is available for local health boards to purchase additional access sessions from participating practitioners.

## **Nannies and Childminders**

**Mark Isherwood:** What provision is there for families who employ non-residential nannies to care for their pre-school age children to claim help with childcare fees and, if there is such provision, what percentage of the fees can be claimed and is it dependent upon the nanny being registered? (WAQ27698)

**Mark Isherwood:** Are there any plans to implement a scheme in Wales, such as the one operating in England, whereby registered childminders can apply to be registered approved home carers, thus enabling them to care for children in the family home? (WAQ27699)

**Jane Hutt:** The home childcarer scheme was launched in England in April 2003 and provides for the approval of certain childcare providers for the purposes of the Working Tax Credit (Entitlement and Maximum Rate) Regulations 2002. These regulations apply in England and Wales and specify who may be considered to be a provider of childcare for the purposes of the Tax Credits Act 2002. In order to be approved under the English scheme, the provider must not be a relative of the child and must be registered as a childminder. While no similar scheme has been made in Wales, persons registered as childminders in Wales are already considered to fall within the provisions of the regulations and therefore the Act.

If a person is registered as a childminder under the Children Act 1989, albeit to provide childcare in their own home, and in addition works as a childminder or nanny elsewhere, the costs of their services provided in the family home will count for working tax credit purposes.

With regards to the childcare element of the working tax credit, this is worth up to 70p in tax credit for every £1 a week spent on approved registered childcare, up to a limit of £135 a week for one child and up to £200 a week for two or more children. The amount claimed will depend on income.