

Answers issued to Members on 20 August 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

Sandy Mewies (Delyn): How much has the Welsh Assembly Government spent on transport matters in Flintshire in the last financial year? (WAQ52395)

The Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport (Ieuan Wyn Jones): I have identified that over £15.5 million of Welsh Assembly Government resource was allocated for spending on transport matters in Flintshire in the 2007-08 financial year.

Jenny Randerson (Cardiff Central): What projections for the price of oil are assumed by WAG when evaluating the economic worth of transport projects? (WAQ52409)

The Deputy First Minister: The price of oil that we use to evaluate transport projects is not today's price of petrol at the pump and the answer to your question is complex.

As an example, for road schemes, the evaluation is typically carried out over 60 years. The standard cost-benefit analysis software calculates the cost of fuel, fuel duty and VAT in pence per litre. The cost of fuel is incorporated in 'vehicle operating costs'. These include fuel, oil and tyres, and an element of vehicle maintenance.

Costs and benefits arising in different years are expressed in terms of their value from the standpoint of a given year, known as the 'present value year', which is also the 'price base year'. This is currently 2002.

Costs and benefits arising in different years are transformed to their present values by the process of discounting. In the UK, the present discount rate is 3.5 per cent for the first 30 years of evaluation and 3 per cent thereafter. Summing the present values of costs and subtracting these from the present value of benefits gives the 'net present value' of the scheme in 2002 prices discounted to 2002.

WebTAG (the Department of Transport's transport analysis guidance) tabulates fuel vehicle operating cost parameters for different vehicle categories. These parameters are converted into pence per kilometre by multiplying by the resource cost of fuel in 2002 prices. The resource cost is net of indirect taxation. These figures are actual figures published in 'Transport Statistics Great Britain' (DfT 2005). WelTAG is compatible with WebTAG and refers to the same forecast growth in the resource cost of fuel up to the year 2025.

Appraisal of transport infrastructure is carried out over a long period of time. The software that processes the fuel element of vehicle operating costs takes into account changes over time in vehicle categories, in the proportion of car fleet using petrol or diesel, improvements in vehicle efficiency and changes in the cost of fuel. The Department for Transport (DfT) is currently engaged in research to further improve the robustness of the methodology.

In 2007, the DfT launched consultation on the NATA (new approach to appraisal) Refresh. The NATA framework includes guidance, analytical tools, common assumptions about transport trends, data and associated support for those assessing transport interventions. NATA includes WebTAG, modelling forecasts, software packages such as COBA, TUBA and QUADRO and other technical advice. Consultation on NATA Refresh closed on 31 March 2008, and the DfT has published the summary of responses.

In July 2008, the DfT prepared draft guidance, which includes revised values of fuel costs. This guidance will not be finalised until April 2009. Future amendments to the cost of fuel that arise from this review will be reflected in WelTAG.

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

Andrew R.T. Davies (South Wales Central): How much money was allocated to each local education authority in Wales to provide support for pupils whose native language is not English? (WAQ52404)

The Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Jane Hutt): The Welsh Assembly Government's minority ethnic achievement grant (MEAG) provides significant support for pupils for whom English, or Welsh, is an additional language. The table below shows the funding allocated under MEAG in the financial years 2007-08 and 2008-09. The supplementary MEAG grants in 2007-08 were awarded in-year to recognise the additional pressure on schools from growing numbers of children of migrant workers from EU accession states. The supplementary grants were determined by reference to pupil numbers. That funding aside, and as the table shows, MEAG funding increased significantly by £1 million from 2007-08 to 2008-09 and is set to rise by a further £0.5 million in each of the next two financial years.

Minority Ethnic Achievement Grant (MEAG)

	2007 - 08	2007 - 08	2007 - 08	2008 - 09
	Main	Supplementary	Total	Main
Local Education Authority	£s	£s	£s	£s
Anglesey	37,000	9,650	46,650	37,000
Blaenau Gwent ¹	18,000	-	18,000	18,000
Bridgend	72,000	10,615	82,615	90,000
Caerphilly	23,000	4,825	27,825	47,000
Cardiff	4,000,000	61,760	4,061,760	4,093,000
Carmarthenshire	106,000	53,075	159,075	205,000
Ceredigion	61,000	19,300	80,300	100,000
Conwy	60,000	19,300	79,300	74,000
Denbighshire	70,000	18,335	88,335	100,000
Flintshire	70,000	40,530	110,530	87,000
Gwynedd	44,000	10,615	54,615	61,000
Merthyr Tydfil	51,000	10,615	61,615	59,000
Monmouthshire	33,000	4,825	37,825	53,000
Neath Port Talbot	73,000	13,510	86,510	134,000
Newport	1,250,000	69,480	1,319,480	1,612,000
Pembrokeshire	48,000	19,300	67,300	74,000
Powys	112,000	31,845	143,845	197,000
Rhondda Cynon Taf	86,000	22,195	108,195	124,000
Swansea	1,512,000	26,055	1,538,055	1,450,000
Torfaen	29,000	-	29,000	64,000
Vale of Glamorgan	172,000	10,615	182,615	159,000
Wrexham	173,000	40,530	213,530	262,000
Total	8,100,000	496,975	8,596,975	9,100,000

Blaenau Gwent, Newport and Torfaen were awarded a joint grant in regard to the supplementary award.

Andrew R.T. Davies (South Wales Central): What guidelines does the Welsh Assembly Government give to local education authorities or schools to provide support for pupils whose native language is not English? (WAQ52405)

Jane Hutt: There is a range of Welsh Assembly Government guidance for local education authorities and schools that cater for children for whom English, or Welsh, is an additional language (EWAL).

Overarching guidance on inclusive education, including learning English as an additional language, is provided in the National Assembly for Wales circular 47/2006 'Inclusion and Pupil Support'. Whilst the guidance itself is not statutory, it sets out the specific legislation that local authorities, schools and their partners are required to adhere to and lists other relevant guidance documents. Additionally, the Welsh Assembly Government is in the process of drafting specific guidance on the principles of raising minority ethnic achievement in education. The guidance will be issued by spring 2009. To supplement this guidance, a new DVD is also under production, which will feature best practice from across Wales on EWAL in schools. New guidance, 'Promoting Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in the Revised National Curriculum', is also in preparation, which will offer advice to schools on the opportunities presented by the new curriculum to actively promote racial and cultural diversity.

You will also wish to be aware that Estyn have published a number of advisory reports, commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government as part of the inspectorate's annual remit, which highlight good practice both in providing EWAL and in valuing diversity more generally for schools. These can be accessed at <http://www.estyn.gov.uk/home.asp>.

Questions to the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing

Janet Ryder (North Wales): Will the Minister make a statement on progress in drafting legislation on statutory health impact assessments? (WAQ51803)

The Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing (Jane Davidson): Thank you for your recent written Assembly question in which you asked for a statement on progress in drafting legislation on statutory health impact assessments.

Considerable progress has been made on incorporating health impact assessments into the planning policy framework. In 2006, the Welsh Assembly Government published a consultation draft ministerial interim planning policy statement (MIPPS) on planning, health and wellbeing, which drew attention to the importance of health impact assessments in preparing local development plans and, where appropriate, in deciding planning applications. The final version will be published later this year as part of the consolidated 'Planning Policy Wales'.

This is supplemented by proposals in the draft coal technical advice note requiring HIAs to be submitted with opencast coal applications. Responses raised on this and other issues will be taken into account in finalising the TAN for publication later this year. This will fulfil the Welsh Assembly Government's 'One Wales' commitment to introduce compulsory health impact assessments for opencast coal applications.

Sandy Mewies (Delyn): How much has the Welsh Assembly Government spent on environmental projects in Flintshire in the last financial year? (WAQ52396)

Jane Davidson: I am responsible for environmental expenditure within my department. In 2007-08 over £1.6 million was spent on environmental projects in Flintshire either directly by the department or by the Environment Agency and the Countryside Council for Wales.

Sandy Mewies (Delyn): How much has the Welsh Assembly Government spent on housing in Flintshire in the last financial year? (WAQ52394)

The Deputy Minister for Housing (Jocelyn Davies): The Welsh Assembly Government has provided grants under the following programmes to housing in Flintshire in 2007-08.

Social Housing Grant	£ 8.285 million
Supporting People Revenue Grant	£ 1.725 million
Supporting People Grant	£ 5.440 million
Homelessness and Social Housing Management Grant	£ 0.180 million
Flintshire Care and Repair Services	£ 0.131 million
Rapid Response Adaptations Programme	£ 0.086 million
Major Repairs Allowance	£ 5.2 million

Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

Nick Ramsay (Monmouth): How are patients prioritised following ‘femoral fracture’ for hip replacement operations in Welsh hospitals? (WAQ52398)

Nick Ramsay (Monmouth): What is the target operating time from admission following ‘femoral fracture’ for a hip replacement in Wales? (WAQ52399)

The Minister for Health and Social Services (Edwina Hart): I refer you to the answers to WAQ52349 and WAQ52350.

Mike German (South Wales East): What progress has the Minister made on implementing ‘regular targeted screening’ for diabetes following the National Assembly’s unanimous vote endorsing the principle on 24 February 2004? (WAQ52400)

Edwina Hart: The ‘Designed for the Management of Diabetes in Wales: Diabetes Consensus Guidelines’ have been developed and will be published and launched later this year. They contain detailed guidance for the NHS to support them in managing the care of people with diabetes across Wales, including recommendations about regular targeted screening.

Angela Burns (Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire): How many people are affected by stroke-related communication disability in Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire and in Wales as a whole? (WAQ52401)

Edwina Hart: These statistics are not held centrally.

Angela Burns (Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire): What is the Minister doing to increase support for stroke survivors and their carers? (WAQ52402)

Edwina Hart: In December 2007, I published a formal programme of work for 2008-11 setting out clear actions and milestones to be implemented by the NHS and social services to improve stroke services. This work programme covers prevention through to rehabilitation, clearly specifying action required to improve service provision and provide better outcomes for stroke sufferers.

A key action within this programme requires the development and implementation of a long-term care plan for stroke patients. This plan must include referral to a range of services including community-based specialist rehabilitation services, such as speech and language therapy and communication support; day hospital or out-patient therapy; family and carer support within the community; social services for community support, including home adaptations; as well as education and support for self help including return-to-work, secondary prevention and medicines management. This work to improve services will take time to achieve.

In support of this work, I am making £2.5 million available recurrently from 2008-09, for long-term conditions such as stroke, as part of the 'One Wales' commitment.

Lesley Griffiths (Wrexham): What progress has been made on establishing a joint emergency services facility in Wrexham? (WAQ52403)

Edwina Hart: To date, the medical admission and acute coronary units have been co-located, and a new out-of-hours primary care service has been established.

Work to redesign the accident and emergency department in Wrexham to include social services and mental health is due to complete in December 2009. I have made available £4.998 million in capital to support the plan.

Andrew R.T. Davies (South Wales Central): Would the Minister make a statement on LHB strategies to implement the national cancer standards? (WAQ52406)

Andrew R.T. Davies (South Wales Central): What measures are in place to ensure that LHBs adhere to the national cancer standards? (WAQ52407)

Edwina Hart: Local health boards are expected to work together through the three regional cancer networks to achieve the national cancer standards by March 2009. At the time the standards were published in 2005, the networks were required to map and assess current services against the standards and develop formal action plans to map the journey to full compliance. These action plans are monitored carefully by the regional offices. The Welsh Assembly Government announced an additional £4.5 million recurrently from 2007 to support the implementation process. I wrote to NHS chairs in July setting out formal key actions for the remainder of 2008-09 in the run up to the March 2009 deadline, together with key actions for 2009-10 and 2010-11 to ensure that the standards are maintained and built upon.