

## **Answers to the Written Assembly Questions for answer on 3 February 2011**

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

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

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***To ask the First Minister***

**Nicholas Bourne (Mid and West Wales):** Will the First Minister list each recommendation of the Pennington inquiry into the 2005 E.coli outbreak and provide an update on Welsh Assembly Government progress in implementing each recommendation. (WAQ57028)

***Answer issued on 08 February 2011***

The recommendations of the Pennington Inquiry can be found at :

<http://wales.gov.uk/ecoliinquiry/?lang=en>

Only recommendations and 3, 16, 18 and 20 require action by the Welsh Assembly Government; progress is described below.

Recommendation 3 - Additional resources should be made available to ensure that all food businesses in Wales understand and use the HACCP (Hazard Analysis, Critical Control Point) approach and have in place an effective, documented, food safety management system which is embedded in working culture and practice.

I have asked the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to review food law enforcement procedures and structures in Wales. The findings of this review will enable me to consider future resourcing options.

Recommendation 16 - Businesses contracting for the supply of high-risk foods, such as raw and cooked meats, to public sector organisations must be subject to independent food hygiene audits.

From September 2009 there has been a public sector framework agreement with a private company for the provision of third party hygiene audits. The Welsh Assembly Government strongly encourages contracting authorities to follow this recommendation.

Value Wales has also produced a 'best practice' framework of food guidance for use by the public sector in Wales. This aims to provide a structured approach to food procurement and has been developed in conjunction with the Food Standards Agency, WLGA, Trading Standards, other WAG departments and the Value Wales Food Group.

The framework has been endorsed by the Chief Medical Officer, WLGA, FSA and Director General of Health & Social Services for Wales.

Recommendation 18 - Every local authority should have a programme of audits to ensure that all schools have adequate toilet and hand washing facilities.

Statutory responsibility for the provision of adequate school toilet facilities rests with local authorities. Notwithstanding this, WAG is to issue good practice guidance to assist School Governing Bodies, Head Teachers and Local Authorities.

A Stakeholder Steering Group has helped develop the guidance and the Consultation on the Best Practise Guidance on standards for school toilets was published in November 2010. The consultation period ended on 24 January 2011 and included consulting with children and young people through the Pupil Voice Wales website and networks. Officials are now collating the responses and developing an action plan prior to the publication of the final guidance.

Recommendation 20 - The National Assembly for Wales should consider my recommendations and monitor and report progress on implementation.

On 7 July 2009, in plenary session, the then First Minister committed to reporting to the Assembly in 1 year and regularly thereafter. The Chief Medical Officer has agreed to act as the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) 'point of contact' for the provision of updates to the First Minister and the Minister for Health and Social Services. I reported to the Assembly in October 2010.

The Welsh Assembly Government will continue to monitor progress through routine reporting channels and with specific discussions when appropriate.

I also refer you to the independent report published by Consumer Focus Wales in March 2010 at: <http://www.consumerfocus.org.uk/wales/publications/protecting-consumers-from-e-coli-o157>  
An updated report will be published by CFW in March 2011.

***To ask the Minister for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning***

**Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales):** Will the Minister explain why his policies are failing to improve standards in Welsh schools according to the latest figures from the OECD. (WAQ57031)

***Answer issued on 08 February 2011***

I have acknowledged that Wales' results in PISA 2009 are extremely disappointing. Whilst results within Wales have improved overall, there is clear evidence that, comparatively within the UK and internationally, the system is failing to consistently deliver good outcomes for our young people.

My written statement on 2 February outlined the next steps I intend to take to drive up improvements throughout the education system.

**Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales):** Will the Minister explain which aspects of his policies have led to the failing academic standards cited by Estyn in its report of Tuesday 25 January 2011. (WAQ57032)

***Answer issued on 08 February 2011***

My written statement on 2 February provided an outline of how we will tackle the challenges to drive up improvement across the education sector.

**Dai Lloyd (South Wales West):** Will the Minister make a statement on the deferment of Tranche 3 of the School Building Improvement Grants and Band A of 21st Century Schools funding for the next 12 months. (WAQ57039)

***Answer issued on 03 February 2011***

The Tranche 3 funding was announced in July 2010. The 13 projects 'approved in principle' indicated that spending would start in 2011-2012. Following the budget announcement in November 2010 and the significant impact on capital budgets there is a need to manage these within the funding envelope available. My officials are therefore working with Local Authorities (LAs) in order to ensure that the Assembly Government funding is made available at the right time, in line with the delivery of all projects. This may result in some projects starting at different times.

Local Authorities submitted their 21st Century Schools Strategic Outline Programmes on 10th December 2010. These will now be assessed through a robust evaluation process, with an announcement in Summer 2011.

***To ask the Minister for the Economy and Transport***

**Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire):** Who will form the specialist panel of industry experts appointed to give advice in relation to the Economic Renewal Programme. (WAQ57037)

***Answer issued on 08 February 2011***

The Creative Sector Panel has been in place since October 2010, and I announced details of the membership in a Written Cabinet Statement on 11 October 2010. Membership of the remaining five Sector Panels is subject to the formal Public Appointments process. Interviews have been carried out and recommendations for appointments made. Once the successful candidates have accepted their appointments I will be in a position to issue a Written Cabinet Statement with full details of the Panel members and their backgrounds.

***To ask the Minister for Health and Social Services***

**Dai Lloyd (South Wales West):** Will the Minister make a statement on the possible continuation of an independent system of dealing with complaints to the NHS once local resolution has failed. (WAQ57038)

***Answer issued on 08 February 2011***

I have taken the view that patients and staff will be better served by a more thorough and responsive process which seeks to resolve concerns as quickly as possible locally and which builds in elements of independence, for example, securing expert clinical advice, at those earlier stages. Under the arrangements I propose to bring into effect from 1 April, investment is being made in building skills and capacity locally to enable better handling of concerns.

***To ask the Minister for Rural Affairs***

**Brynle Williams (North Wales):** Will the Minister provide details of the costs, to date, of the work to control *Phytophthora Ramorum* in Wales. (WAQ57033)

***Answer issued on 08 February 2011***

Costs to date in respect of *Phytophthora ramorum* clearance are:

£61,686 clearance of young crops  
£78,049 ground surveying and sampling  
£34,725 aerial surveying  
£1,000 to the private sector for assistance with agent's fees.  
£586,080 over a period of 12 weeks on plant hire  
£76,000 civil engineering costs

In addition, associated staff costs to date are £19,166.

**Brynle Williams (North Wales):** To date, what have been a) the operational costs of the ongoing review of on-farm red tape, and b) the financial savings achieved by the review. (WAQ57034)

***Answer issued on 03 February 2011***

I refer you to the response I provided to WAQ 56082 (June 2010) which detailed costs totaling £2,626. In January of this year, two of my officials and Peredur Hughes, external advisor to the review, met with Richard Macdonald in London to discuss the DEFRA Farm Regulation Review and its linkages with our own review. The total operational costs of the ongoing review of on-farm red tape now stand at £2,762.50.

The objectives of the Red Tape Review is to rationalize and reduce where possible bureaucracy for farmers and to improve communications with the industry. I do not have, and will not be able to obtain without a significant administrative overhead and financial cost, a figure for the financial savings that have been achieved on behalf of the industry and/or individual farmers in Wales.

**Brynle Williams (North Wales):** What discussions has the Minister or her officials had with representatives of local authorities concerning the disposal of council agricultural holdings. (WAQ57035)

*Answer issued on 02 February 2011*

My officials have been in contact with local authorities to re-establish the Annual Report on Local Authority Smallholdings in Wales, which provides data on the disposal of local authority agricultural holdings. The 09/10 report, to which all local authorities contributed, was laid before the Assembly on 23 December 2010. While caution must be exercised when measuring minor differences and establishing trends within such a small demographic, the continuation of the report will allow more accurate statistics to be collated and so present future trends to a higher degree of certainty.

I will be providing a response to the recommendations of the Rural Development Sub-committee Inquiry into Local Authority Farms on the 7th February, which will include consideration of the the disposal of estate assets by local authorities.

**Brynle Williams (North Wales):** Will the Minister provide a breakdown of projected receipts from windfarms on the forestry commission estate in each year of their operational life. (WAQ57036)

*Answer issued on 03 February 2011*

The information is set out below:

	Net Income	£000's
FY07/08		885
FY08/09		3,041
FY09/10		1,487
FY10/11	Forecast	921
FY11/12	Forecast	200
FY12/13	Forecast	1,300
FY13/14	Forecast	3,400
FY14/15	Forecast	7,400
FY15/16	Forecast	8,000
FY16/17	Forecast	9,300
FY17/18	Forecast	9,700
Each of the next 19 years	Forecast	10,000

Forecast income is subject to projects securing planning permission and proceeding.

**Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire):** Will the Minister give an update on recent correspondence and discussions with Defra, regarding the impact of the Defra funding settlement on Welsh local authorities in respect of their animal health and welfare enforcement activities. (WAQ57040)

*Answer issued on 08 February 2011*

The budget for enforcement activity in Wales, as determined by DEFRA, has been set at £1.2 million for 2011/12 and is additional to existing funding available to all Welsh local authorities via the Revenue Support Grant. This figure has been communicated to the Welsh Local Government Association which has been informed that this figure should be used for the purposes of planning enforcement activity. The exact mechanism for determining how the funding will be used and distributed is the subject of discussions between my officials and the WLGA. This allocation is as a result of the recent UK Government Comprehensive Spending Review and is separate to the ongoing discussions regarding the devolution of animal health and welfare budgets to Wales.

**Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire):** What plans does the Minister have to ensure that the Animal Health section of Powys County Council's Trading Standards Service can continue to provide an effective system for animal health and welfare enforcement. (WAQ57041)

*Answer issued on 08 February 2011*

The exact mechanism for determining how the funding will be used to provide effective animal health and welfare enforcement by each of the 22 local authorities in Wales is the subject of discussions between my officials and the WLGA.

**Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire):** What assessment has the Minister made of the impact of the Defra funding settlement on the Animal Health section of Powys County Council's Trading Standards Service. (WAQ57042)

*Answer issued on 08 February 2011*

The impact of the reduced funding settlement for Animal Health enforcement on all local authorities across Wales is, as yet, to be determined and will only become clear once decisions are taken in conjunction with the WLGA over the mechanism for distributing the allocation.

**Brynle Williams (North Wales):** Will the Minister provide details on each sale and acquisition of Forestry Commission land during the Third Assembly, identifying a) their size, b) the value of each sale or purchase and c) their location. (WAQ57043)

*Answer issued on 08 February 2011*

**Land sold since April 2007**

Business Year	Area (hectares)	Value (£)	Location		
			Name	County	Grid Ref
2007/08	64.00	148,500	Tros y Gol Woodland	Gwynedd	SH 541 562
	0.10	1,000	Land at Cwm Ricket	Powys	SN 859 865
	13.50	70,000	Gallt y Rhyg	Gwynedd	SH 809 565
	0.10	10,585	Cwm to	Blaenau Gwent	SO 203 022

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			Aberbeeg Road		
	0.16	4,000	Land at Preserve Cottage		
	77.86	234,085			
<b>2008/09</b>			Land at Forest Lodge		
	0.02	0	Abbeycwmhir	Powys	SO 052 712
			Hafod Gwenllian Road		
	0.50	7,500	Improvement	Gwynedd	SH 706 499
	5.30	10,400	Allt Brynarth – Ystwyth Cycle Trail	Ceredigion	SN 678 710
			Prysgau Bach Pumping Station		
	0.00	750	Land	Powys	ST 494 942
				Neath Port Talbot	
	0.10	10,000	Land at Pontrhydfen	Neath Port Talbot	SS 801 940
	5.92	28,650			
<b>2009/10</b>	0.14	7,500	Min y Nant Garden Land	Monmouthshire	SO 529 069
	0.12	15,000	Land at Dinas Mawddwy (affordable housing site)	Gwynedd	SH 858 140
	0.04	5,000	Blaenbychlyd	Powys	SO 151 220
	2.59	18,250	Pant-y-fedwen	Ceredigion	SN 754 647
	0.83	1,500	Eagle Lodge-Road Improvement	Pembrokeshire	SN 074 140
	0.83	2,579	Pant-y-fedwen – Crofftau	Ceredigion	SN 754 647
	0.95	11,000	Hendredu Land	Gwynedd	SH 805 126
	1.29	4,250	Pant-y-fedwen-Pengelli	Ceredigion	SN 754 647
	0.20	11,100	Pandy Mill Plots 1&2	Conwy	SH 808 533
	0.13	2,100	Pandy Mill Plots 3	Conwy	SH 808 533
	0.30	40,000	Penrhyncoch Office	Ceredigion	SN 633 837
	7.40	118,279			
<b>2010/11</b>	14.50	25,000	Pont ar Daf Woodland	Powys	SN 986 202
	0.60	20,000	Dolwyddelan	Conwy	SH 738 520

			(Affordable Housing Site)		
	3.00	249,999	Tynybenrhos Small Holding	Gwynedd	SH 735 226
	0.10	441,750	Victoria House (Office)	Ceredigion	SN 579 814
	0.60	112,000	Chirk Workshop	Wrexham	SJ 298 397
	2.10	122,500	Tair Onen (Office)	Vale of Glamorgan	ST 033 741
	0.10	1,200	Land at Glyncastle	Neath Port Talbot	SN 834 028
	0.40	40,000	Building Plot at Glyncastle	Neath Port Talbot	SN 856 023
	0.30	10,000	Land at Cefn Cendu	Powys	SN 883 532
	0.10	2,000	Land at Brynglas	Ceredigion	SN 641 500
	21.8	1,024,449			

Business Year	Area (hectares)	Value (£)	Location		
			Name	County	Grid Ref
2007/08	0.009	5,000	Land at Beudy Hir (Access) Coed y Garth Freehold Reversion	Powys	SH 044 020
2008/09	0	40,000	(43ha)	Gwynedd	SH 659 166
2009/10	0	0	No Acquisitions		
2010/11	0	0	No Acquisitions		
	0	45,000			

***To ask the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government***

**Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales):** What plans does the Minister have to implement a ‘Big Society’ initiative in Wales. (WAQ57029)

***Answers issued on 08 February 2011***

None. Putting people and communities is at the heart of our public services is at the core of our programme for public service improvement, and it always has been. This includes opportunities for volunteering and community involvement to develop skills and gain experience such as Gwirvol and Communities First; involving young people directly in the democratic process through Funky Dragon; and engaging citizens in Local Service Boards to design joined up services.

Community engagement and involvement has, and will continue to be, a priority in Wales, we do not need to reinvent it as the ‘Big Society’ or ‘localism’.



**Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales):** What discussions has the Minister had with Ministerial colleagues and UK Government Ministers about the 'Big Society' and its implications for Wales. (WAQ57030)

*Answers issued on 08 February 2011*

None, however I am due to meet with Wales Office Minister, David Jones MP, on 7th February. One of the issues we will be discussing will be the UK Government's Big Society initiative.