

Answers to the Written Assembly Questions for answer on 16 March 2010

[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 Minister for Business and Budget

Kirsty Williams (Brecon and Radnorshire): Will the Minister detail, giving figures for each department, how much the Welsh Assembly Government has spent on (a) advertising and (b) consultants in each year since 1999. (WAQ55857)

Answer issued on 26 May 2010

I will write a further letter to you as soon as possible on the subject of advertising costs and a copy of my letter will be published on the internet.

With regard to the amount spent on consultancy, I am able to inform you that the Assembly Government spent a total of £11.2m in the financial year 2008-09 on external consultants. I am unable to provide consistent figures for previous years for the reasons stated below:

- There have been significant restructuring of Departments within the Assembly Government as a result of mergers, the Government of Wales Act and Ministerial changes;
- There have been significant changes in the way consultancy expenditure has been classified. The Assembly Government now defines consultancy costs in a form comparable to other Government Departments, using the definition developed by HM Treasury which more closely reflects the nature of consultancy-type contracts;
- and the way in which information was captured and recorded was different in previous years. Our systems are now geared towards capturing data that accords with our revised definition and it would be too costly to re-classify expenditure incurred prior to 2008-09.

The information relating to specific occasions over the past 10 years where management consultancy firms were engaged is held by the Assembly Government but not in one central location. Gathering this information would necessitate work to extract information from primary documents including e.g. invoices involving numerous transactions across all Departments and would exceed the appropriate time limit specified to undertake this work.

To ask the Minister for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning

Jenny Randerson (Cardiff Central): For all school reorganisation proposals dealt with by the Welsh Assembly Government in the last 12 months, will the Minister provide a breakdown showing for each one how long determination took and which local authority they come from. (WAQ55851)

Answer issued on 17 March 2010

The information you requested is as follows, by local authority.

Denbighshire – a decision was issued in respect of discontinuing Blessed Edward Jones and Rhyl High sixth forms, 31 weeks following publication. This was a decision which required the local authority to take additional actions subject to further determination. Further decisions were issued as a result of the subsequent actions, at 36 and 41 weeks following the original publication.

Bridgend – 2 proposals were published in respect of Tremains Infant and Junior schools. The first proposal was for the discontinuance of the Infant school. The second was to add a special needs unit to the junior school. The first proposal could not be determined until the second had been published and

opportunity given for objection. The decision letter issued 11 weeks after the publication of the second proposal.

Wrexham - Acton Infant and Junior schools, close both and establish a new primary. A decision issued 26 weeks after publication.

Cardiff – Cwrt Yr Ala Junior, Caerau Infant and Caerau nursery schools- close all 3, establish a new primary and transfer of new Welsh medium school to vacated premises. A decision letter issued 47 weeks after the publication of the proposal.

Trowbridge Infant and Junior Schools – closure of both and establishment of new primary, with transfer of new Welsh medium school to vacated premises. A decision letter issued 28 weeks after publication

Closure of Cefn Onn Primary and the establishment of nursery provision in Llysfaen and Thornhill Primary schools – a decision issued 37 weeks after publication.

Establishment of a new Welsh medium school in part of Gabalfa Primary – decision issued 29 weeks after publication.

Swansea

Ysgol Gyfun Gwyr – establishment of a Specialist Teaching Facility – decision issued 26 weeks after publication.

Tregwyr Infant and Junior schools – closure of both and establishment of new primary. A decision issued 39 weeks after publication.

Cwm Primary School – closure- decision issued 38 weeks after publication.

Llanmorlais Primary School – closure – decision issued 39 weeks after publication.

Blaenau Gwent

Garnlydan Primary – closure – decision issued 37 weeks after publication.

Rhondda Cynon Taff

Maerdy Junior and Infant schools – close both and establish new primary – decision issued 28 weeks after publication.

Penrhiwfer Infant – closure – decision issued 25 weeks after publication

Pembrokeshire

Hayscastle Primary – closure – decision issued 22 weeks after publication

Torfaen

Hillside Nursery and Primary schools and St Peters C in W VC school – close all 3 and establish new primary – decision issued 28 weeks after publication.

Matters raised by statutory proposals are often complex and decisions take longer when complex issues arise.

Jenny Randerson (Cardiff Central): For the school reorganisation proposals currently awaiting ministerial approval, will the Minister provide a breakdown showing for each one how long they have been awaiting approval and which local authority they come from. (WAQ55852)

Answer issued on 17 March 2010

The information you seek follows. It should be noted that for the first 13 weeks of the period following publication, proposals are not in effect **awaiting** approval, as papers are not submitted to the Welsh Ministers until 13 weeks have elapsed following publication. The total weeks that have elapsed since publication in each case is shown below, but in order to give a more accurate measure, around 13 weeks should be deducted in each case.

Cardiff

Closure of Rumney and Llanrumney Comprehensive schools and establishment of new secondary school - 51 weeks

Closure of Lansdowne Primary School and Ysgol Tan yr Eos, transfer and expansion and extension of age range Ysgol Gymraeg Treganna, expansion and extension of age range of Radnor Primary School - 42 weeks

Closure of Llanedeyrn High School and establishment of new Welsh medium secondary school and the following associated proposal;
Transfer of St Teilo's Church in Wales High School. - 24 weeks

Bishop of Llandaff High School, establishment of new SEN facility – 15 weeks

Swansea

Closure of Arfryn Primary School - 39 weeks

Ceredigion

Closure of Capel Dewi Primary School - 39 weeks

Closure of Penmorfa Primary School - 39 weeks

Blaenau Gwent

Closure of Nantyglo Comprehensive School - 35 weeks

Pembrokeshire

Closure of Mathry Primary School expansion of Ysgol Ger y Llan- 24 weeks

Monmouthshire

Closure of Govilon Primary School - 14 weeks

Closure of Llanover Primary School - 14 weeks

Carmarthenshire

Closure of Cefnbrynbrain Primary School - 12 weeks

Closure of Ystradowen Primary School - 12 weeks

Although local authorities are obliged to submit objections, their comments and the items required by the School Organisation Proposals (Wales) Regulations within 1 month following the end of the objection period, officials normally have to request further information from local authorities in order to gather sufficient facts to enable a decision to be made.

Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire): Will the Minister outline the difference between the International Baccalaureate and Welsh Baccalaureate. (WAQ55854)

Answer issued on 17 March 2010

The Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification is designed specifically for the purposes of Wales. It is available at 3 levels (Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced). At each level, it comprises a compulsory Core and options. Options are chosen from existing qualifications such as GCSEs, GCE A levels and NVQs. The Core, which all learners must complete, comprises the following components:

- 'Wales, Europe and the World' including a language module;
- An Individual Investigation;
- Key Skills Qualifications;
- Personal and Social Education, including a period of community participation; and
- Work-Related Education and work experience.

The Core ensures breadth in all learners programmes, whilst the options allow learners to develop a specialism, and follow academic or vocational routes. As it is based on free standing qualifications, learners can gain recognised qualifications even if they do not successfully complete the full programme.

From September 2010 the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification will be available in 217 centres in Wales with some 53,000 learners following Welsh Baccalaureate programmes.

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme students study six bespoke courses at higher level or standard level. Students choose one subject from each of groups 1 to 5 (Language; Second Language; Individuals and Societies; Experimental Sciences; and Mathematics and Computer Science). The sixth subject may be chosen from group 6 (The Arts), or another subject from groups 1 to 5.

The programme also has three core requirements - an extended essay, theory of knowledge and creativity, action, service.

The programme leads to a single qualification. However if learners do not achieve the full diploma, they are awarded a certificate for each subject taken.

The IB Diploma is available in more than 100 schools and colleges in the UK.

Jenny Randerson (Cardiff Central): Further to the Minister's answers to WAQ55697, WAQ55718 and WAQ55719, will the Minister detail whether the term 'publication' used in these answers refers to the time of the publication of the statutory notice of the proposal, or to the end of the two month consultation period. (WAQ55858)

Answer issued on 17 March 2010

I refer you to my answer to question number 55852. The point of reference is the date that the proposal is first published in a statutory notice.

To ask the Minister for Health and Social Services

Jenny Randerson (Cardiff Central): What progress has been made to ensure that all healthcare settings involved in the assessment and diagnosis of arthritis and chronic musculoskeletal conditions have signposting information available regarding support services and other information. (WAQ55855)

Answer issued on 30 March 2010

Ensuring adequate signposting to services for people with arthritis and chronic musculoskeletal conditions is one of the key objectives set out in the Service Development and Commissioning Directives. In September, NLIAH undertook an audit of progress against each of the key actions in the Directives which revealed that 43% of LHBs have fully fulfilled this action while the other 57% have partially fulfilled it. Further work is planned to ensure this action is fully achieved by the end of this year.

Jenny Randerson (Cardiff Central): What assessment has been made of the implementation of self-management programmes for people living arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions. (WAQ55856)

Answer issued on 30 March 2010

The implementation of self-management programmes for people with arthritis and chronic musculoskeletal conditions is one of the key objectives set out in the Service Development and Commissioning Directives. In September, NLIAH undertook an assessment of progress against each of the key actions in the Directives which revealed that 86% of LHBs indicated they have fully achieved this action while the other 14% have partially achieved it. Further work is planned to ensure this action is fully achieved by the end of this year.

Michael German (South Wales East): What discussions has the Minister had with Welsh Assembly Government officials, the UK Government and the Department of Health and Isle of Man Government officials regarding the continuation of the NHS reciprocal agreement between Wales and the Isle of Man. (WAQ55859)

Michael German (South Wales East): Will the Minister confirm that legislation to give effect to ending the NHS reciprocal agreement with the Channel Islands has already been passed by the National Assembly for Wales but that legislation in respect to the Isle of Man has yet to be introduced. (WAQ55860)

Answer issued on 16 March 2010

I refer you to my letter of 11 March 2010, issued to all Assembly Members, reference number SF/EH/0116/10.

To ask the Minister for Rural Affairs

Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire): Will the Minister detail any discussions she had had regarding the introduction of a 'horse tax' in Wales. (WAQ55853)

Answer issued on 30 March 2010

I have had no discussions regarding the introduction of a specific horse tax in Wales.