

Answers to the Written Assembly Questions for answer on 15 July 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

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): Further to her answer to WAQ56145, will the Minister advise how many officials travelled from Swindon to Heathrow, and what was the total cost of taxi fares incurred. (WAQ56221)

Answer issued on 03 August 2010

In addition to my Private Secretary I was accompanied by two Finance Department officials and a Specialist Policy Adviser. We all shared one taxi from Swindon to Heathrow at a cost of £200 i.e. £40 per person.

The major network failure at Didcot Parkway, resulted in the cancellation of train services at Swindon. We correctly calculated that the refund of the rail fare would cancel out the cost of one taxi fare for five people to the nearest reliable rail link - the Heathrow Express. Due to the time constraints, this was the most effective way of ensuring that we could still make the meeting with the Chief Secretary and his team. Following this important first meeting I was able to announce the £1.6m Olympic consequential adjustment to the Welsh Assembly Government budget and the agreement by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury to meet Professor Gerry Holtham.

To ask the Minister for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning

Mark Isherwood (North Wales): Will the Minister confirm the membership of the Task and Finish Group on the transition of young people with additional learning needs from pre-to post-16 education. (WAQ56216)

Mark Isherwood (North Wales): Will the Minister confirm the remit of the Task and Finish Group on the transition of young people with additional learning needs from pre-to post-16 education. (WAQ56217)

Mark Isherwood (North Wales): When does the Minister expect to receive the report of the Task and Finish Group on the transition of young people with additional learning needs from pre-to post-16 education. (WAQ56218)

Mark Isherwood (North Wales): Does the Minister intend to issue any further oral statements on the Task and Finish Group on the transition of young people with additional learning needs from pre-to post-16 education. (WAQ56219)

Answer issued on 03 August 2010

Membership of the Group is as follows:

David Evans - Colegau Cymru;
David Kendall - Derwen College
Jane Kelly - North Wales Association of Special School Headteachers;
Kevin Tansley - South Wales Association of Special School Headteachers;
Nigel Rees - Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL);
Mari Thomas - Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA);
Denise Inger - SNAP Cymru;
Jonathan Davies - Welsh NHS Confederation;
Steve Hole - Careers Wales;
Mike Farrell - Estyn

Mike Munting - Estyn

Representation is still being sought from the Association of Directors of Education Wales (ADEW) and the Association of Directors of Social Services Wales (ADSS Cymru).

The Group has a remit to consider and make recommendations on options in the following areas:

- establishing an improved and unified system of transition to educational provision in school or FE for young people with additional learning needs (ALN) above the age of 16;
- achieving better value for money in expenditure on post-16 education for young people with ALN, specifically against the context of financial challenge over next 3 years;
- sharing more widely expertise that is currently in special schools and FE colleges in providing for ALN post-16;
- use of out of county and out of country placements; and
- investment in post-16 school and FE provision for young people with ALN.

I expect the Task and Finish Group to report its findings to me in the autumn. I will not be making any statement before then.

To ask the Minister for the Economy and Transport

Nick Ramsay (Monmouthshire): Will the Minister confirm his intention to dual the A465 between Gilwern and Brynmawr, and provide details of when the work is anticipated to start. (WAQ56222)

Answer issued on 03 August 2010

We plan to start Section 2 of the A465 Dualling scheme between Gilwern and Brynmawr by 2014.

Nick Ramsay (Monmouthshire): What assessment has been made of the Gilwern footbridge as the sole crossing point for the elderly and the disabled in the south part of the A465 (Station Road area). (WAQ56223)

Nick Ramsay (Monmouthshire): What consideration did the Welsh Assembly Government give to its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act when deciding to not replace or adapt the Gilwern footbridge until the dualling is complete. (WAQ56224)

Answer issued on 03 August 2010

We have assessed the scope for improving the pedestrian crossing at Station Road, Gilwern. However as the new A465 Gilwern to Brynmawr scheme will provide a Disability Discrimination Act compliant crossing point, we want to limit investment in temporary measures.

To ensure we are complying with the Disability Discrimination Act, we are exploring other options which include the possibility of community transport to link both parts of the Community for those who are unable to use the footbridge.

To ask the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing

Kirsty Williams (Brecon and Radnorshire): Will the Minister provide the names and budgets, for the past three years, of organisations funded by her department to provide advice, information or research

into climate change and also those organisations funded to promote public awareness of climate change. (WAQ56220)

Answer issued on 03 August 2010

The Assembly Government enables all parts of society to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change by providing advice, information and research and by funding the promotion of public awareness of climate change.

Some organisations have been funded specifically to promote public awareness of climate change while for it is one small part of their work.

Research has included major studies either commissioned in partnership or as a stand alone. A great deal of the research work is also funded via UK level programmes.

Doc 1 outlines the funding provided.

The annual investment of almost £40million directly in flood and coastal erosion risk management, is split between capital and revenue projects and it encourages operating authorities to undertake awareness raising activities

While the flood and coastal risk management budgets are primarily used to build and maintain networks of flood defences the securing of significant additional funding from the European Structural Fund and its Strategic Capital Investment Fund has enabled some funding of awareness raising initiatives including the Environment Agency's Flood Awareness Campaign, the "Dangerpoint" service to school children and the raising awareness elements of capital projects being promoted by either Environment Agency or local authorities.

Doc 1

Organisations funded for raising awareness on climate change

	2008-9	2009-10	2010 -11
Organisations			
Business in Communities - for climate change engagement with business		£9,400	(£43,000 Budget)
Media Wales - for their Go Green supplement		£10,000	£10,000
Working Word - for support and work with Young Champions Campaign	37,092	42,947	40,992
Undercurrents - for filming sustainable communities			£1,760 paid (£29,000 Budget)
West Wales Eco Centre - for the development of the Schools Eco pack		£4,946.50	
WCVA - for grants to communities hosting the film "Age of Stupid"		£10,727	
WCVA - for distributing via Environment Wales grants for small scale community awareness raising and action (Next Steps grant)		£94,564.67	
Keep Wales Tidy - to develop the Eco schools pack	£81,625.00		
WCVA - to provide local CVCs with Owl Meters and tracking devices		£4,149.40	

PLANED, Sustainable Wales and Groundwork Wrexham - for delivering Community Action for Climate Change events	£16,127.00		
WWF - to support Earth Hour		£10,000	

Organisations funded to undertake research

UK Climate Change Contributions	£185,01.53	£300,000	£300,000
EST, Brook Lyndhurst and Sustans for identifying key behaviours for climate change action			£42,455
Low Carbon Communities for desk research and information on resources for community led climate action		£5,000	
AEA Energy & Environment -contract for Policy Options Development and Appraisal for Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Wales	£25,000		
AEA Energy & Environment -for Greenhouse Gas Inventory for Wales Improvement Programme 2008/9: Review of the Devolved Administration GHGI; development of the End-User Inventory and, trend uncertainty analysis (note - all these tasks were co-funded with DECC, Scottish Government and DoENI).		£35,417	
AEA Group - for Greenhouse Gas Inventory for Wales Improvement Programme 2009/10. (note - all these tasks were co-funded with DECC, Scottish Government and DoENI)		£20,250	
Marine Climate Change Impact Partnership - for co-funders and alongside all the governments (inc ROI), government agencies and non-governmental organisations	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500
Tyndall Centre- for report for the Climate Change Commission		£41,125	
Keep Wales Tidy Eco Schools programme			£326,500

Other organisations funded but for whom awareness raising is a small part of their work or focus

Energy Savings Trust	£93,350	£364,076	£462,164
Carbon Trust	£4.515million	£11million	£4million
Cynnal Cymru	£250,944	£252,790	£252,790
Keep Wales Tidy	£364,873	£364,873	£414,873 (including £50,000 for Tidy Wales week)
Sustainable Development	£118,000	£268,680	£320,949

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To ask the Minister for Health and Social Services

Dai Lloyd (South Wales West): Will the Minister detail her responsibilities for environmental health matters in Wales. (WAQ56225)

Answer issued on 03 August 2010

Environmental health is a broad branch of public health that is concerned with all aspects of the natural and built environment that may affect human health. My portfolio covers all aspects of public health and health protection in Wales. Other Welsh Ministers have responsibility for ensuring public safety from the effects of environmental pollution.

Dai Lloyd (South Wales West): Can the Minister confirm the Welsh Assembly Government's role in scrutinising the Foods Standards Agency in Wales. (WAQ56226) *Transferred for answer by the Deputy Minister for Social Services*

Answer issued on 03 August 2010

The Deputy Minister for Social Services (Gwenda Thomas): The Food Standards Agency is an independent UK non-Ministerial Government Department whose functions include advising Ministers and other public bodies in each of the UK administrations on food matters. The FSA is accountable for its activities in Wales through the Deputy Minister for Social Services to the National Assembly for Wales and can be called to provide evidence before National Assembly for Wales Committees. Welsh Assembly Government officials have no remit to scrutinise or monitor the performance of the FSA in Wales.

Dai Lloyd (South Wales West): Will the Minister make a statement on the 'Scores on the Doors' campaign. (WAQ56227) *Transferred for answer by the Deputy Minister for Social Services*

Answer issued on 03 August 2010

Gwenda Thomas: The national "Scores on the Doors" or Food Hygiene Rating Scheme as it is likely to become known has been developed by the Food Standards Agency in collaboration with consumer, industry and enforcement stakeholders. It was developed in response to the proliferation of a variety of different "Scores on the Doors" schemes, primarily in other parts of the UK, resulting in inconsistency and potential confusion for consumers and businesses alike.

Welsh local authorities have been implementing a national food hygiene award scheme since 2002. The essential difference between this and the upcoming National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme is that the former highlights businesses which are performing well, whereas the latter will provide information for the consumer on food hygiene standards at all food retail and catering food businesses.

The issue of mandating display of ratings at each food premises has been raised in several quarters. The First Minister will be discussing this issue further with the Food Standards Agency this afternoon.

Welsh local authorities have indicated their intention to begin implementing the scheme from 1st October 2010 and the Food Standards Agency has established a Wales Implementation Group with local authority representatives to facilitate the consistent and co-ordinated implementation of the scheme.