

## **Written Questions answered between 11 and 18 April 2002**

[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 Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language

### Commonwealth Games

**Glyn Davies:** How many of the events in this year's Commonwealth Games are to be held in Wales? (WAQ17042)

**The Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language (Jenny Randerson):** In this year's Commonwealth Games there are no events to be held in Wales.

### Staging the Football Association Cup Final

**Owen John Thomas:** Does the Minister have any plans to repeat last year's financial aid towards the costs of staging the FA Cup Final in Cardiff? (WAQ17089)

**Jenny Randerson:** I have met with representatives of Millennium Stadium plc to discuss the costs associated with staging the FA Cup Final and have invited them to submit detailed proposals for our consideration.

## Questions to the Minister for Environment

### Free Bus Travel

**Ann Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on the take-up of free bus travel for pensioners and people with disabilities in Denbighshire? (WAQ17035)

**The Minister for Environment (Sue Essex):** I am delighted that the Welsh Assembly Government's new free concessionary travel scheme for pensioners and disabled people on local buses is proving immensely popular throughout Wales. In Denbighshire, I understand that the authority expects to issue at least 12,000 passes this year, and interest in travelling by bus is far greater than was the case previously.

### Renewable Energy

**Janice Gregory:** What plans does the Minister have for further developments in the field of renewable energy in Wales? (WAQ17036) *Transferred for answer by the Minister for Economic Development.*

**The Minister for Economic Development (Andrew Davies):** 'A Winning Wales' reaffirms our commitment to establishing Wales as a global showcase for clean energy development and energy conservation. The potential in Wales for renewable energy is substantial and we will seek to develop renewable energy where it is economically attractive and environmentally acceptable.

The performance and innovation unit's report entitled 'The Energy Review' provides a strong message on the need to develop low carbon technologies and we will be participating fully in the response to that. The Economic Development Committee is currently reviewing energy in Wales and will shortly be consulting with stakeholders on their draft renewables report. That report will also contribute to the future development of Assembly Government initiatives and the development of a strategic energy framework for Wales.

## Urban Light Transport System

**Owen John Thomas:** How does the decision to spend almost £20 million on the ULTra transport system in Cardiff Bay fit in with the Assembly Government's overall transport strategy for Wales? (WAQ17040)

**Sue Essex:** The ULTra transport system is an innovative project aimed at urban environments to address a need for alternative transport solutions to established public transport hubs. The need for innovative solutions is set out in the transport framework published in November 2001 and ULTra was in the Environment, Planning and Transport Committee review of public transport published in July 2001. The financial commitment is part of the £430 million rolling programme of capital investment I have announced for projects across Wales.

## Questions to the Minister for Finance, Local Government and Communities

### Budget Procedures

**Janice Gregory:** What guidance is available to local authorities in Wales to help promote transparency and public accountability in their budgetary procedures? (WAQ17030)

**The Minister for Finance, Local Government and Communities (Edwina Hart):** None. However, local authorities have to comply with various statutory provisions when setting their budget requirements and the basic level of council tax. These provisions include the requirement for certain information to be provided with council tax bills. We recently consulted on the publication of explanatory information with council tax bills and I will report back to the Local Government and Housing Committee on the outcome in due course.

## Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs and Assembly Business

### Departmental Correspondence

**Peter Rogers:** Will the Minister please publish figures showing the volume of correspondence received by his department throughout the past 13 months, indicating the target times set for replies and the number of replies sent within those target times? (WAQ16796)

**Peter Rogers:** Between February 28 2001 and 1 March 2002, what percentage of letters from me to your department were answered within 19 days? (WAQ16797)

**The Minister for Rural Affairs and Assembly Business (Carwyn Jones):** I will write to you shortly and place a copy of the letter in the Library.