

Written Questions answered between 18 and 25 May 2006

[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 Enterprise, Innovation and Networks

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Will the Minister make a statement on speed restrictions in Ammanford in relation to the many recent accidents which have taken place in the vicinity? (WAQ46603)

Substantive answer following holding reply issued on 13 April 2006.

The Minister for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks (Andrew Davies): I have now received the data in respect of accidents that have occurred over the three years between 1 March 2003 and 28 February 2006 between Pont-y-Clerc and Brynmarlais on the A483 (approximately 3 km). The data are derived from police statistics and show the following:

19 accidents in total, 18 slight injury and one serious injury accidents.

one accident involved a pedestrian on the footway being hit by a car reversing from an alley

two accidents involved pedestrians who were intoxicated

12 accidents occurred at junctions

two accidents involved drivers exceeding the 30 mph speed limit.

As you can see most of the accidents have occurred at junctions and the statistics show that the majority have occurred at low speeds. There is a 30 mph speed restriction on the A483 through Ammanford but it would appear that speed is not generally a factor in the accidents that occur.

Should you wish to have a copy of the plan showing the location of the accidents together with the supporting data I can arrange for those documents to be forwarded to you by my officials in Transport Wales.

Alun Ffred Jones: Will the Minister confirm that ‘Wales: A Vibrant Economy’ has been subject to strategic environmental assessment and will he make the report public? (WAQ46859)

Andrew Davies: Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment does not apply to a plan or programme that is not required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions. Neither do the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2004. The development of ‘Wales: A Vibrant Economy’ was not required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions, and did not require a strategic environmental assessment. The Department for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks does carry out environmental assessments on its programmes. The transport strategy, as it is required by statute, is subject to SEA.

Brynle Williams: What discussions has the Minister had on the introduction of energy performance certificates for commercial buildings in Wales? (WAQ46868)

Andrew Davies: I have not been involved in discussions on the introduction of energy performance certificates for commercial buildings to date. The directive on the energy performance of buildings which requires these certificates is not a devolved matter. The directive’s measures are being implemented in England and Wales through the building regulations, which are also not devolved, and come within the portfolio of Edwina Hart, the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration. Assembly officials attend the Building Regulations Advisory Committee, which considers the development of the building regulations, and have been involved in the Assembly Government steering group dealing with part L of the energy performance of buildings directive.

Carbon Trust Wales, which is sponsored by the Welsh Assembly Government, is assisting businesses to improve the energy performance of commercial buildings in Wales. It has arranged seminars on part L of the EU directive on the energy performance of buildings in north and south Wales which inform and assist building professionals to meet the requirements of the legislation. It has also been working as a consultant on the rebuilding of Swansea leisure centre and the north Wales police headquarters under the low-carbon building accelerator initiative, providing expertise in the energy-efficiency refurbishment of these buildings.

Questions to the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills

Jonathon Morgan: What discussions has the Minister had with officials in Cardiff County Council following the council’s decision not to adopt the twenty-first century schools document? (WAQ46895)

The Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Jane Davidson): I have had no such discussions.

Jonathon Morgan: Will the Minister make a statement on the recent decision by Cardiff County Council not to adopt the twenty-first century schools reorganisation document? (WAQ46896)

Jane Davidson: It is for the local authority to decide how to proceed. Cardiff local education authority has identified a need to address surplus capacity and achieve effective investment in school buildings and it is for it to make plans to do so.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister make a statement on levels of student debt in Wales (WAQ46897)

Jane Davidson: The 2004-05 student income and expenditure survey was boosted to allow analysis of the income and expenditure of Welsh-domiciled students for the first time. The survey estimated that for final year full-time students from Wales the predicted level of debt at the end of the academic year was around £7,650.

The size of the sample was still too small to provide a robust estimate for part-time students. However the figures suggest that they are better off than their full-time counterparts and in fact end the academic year in credit, with savings exceeding borrowings.

Eleanor Burnham: Will the Minister make a statement on the provision of Welsh-medium education (WAQ46898)

Jane Davidson: It is for each local education authority to plan provision for Welsh-medium education, and ensure that there are sufficient Welsh-medium schools to cater for local demand. Where there is an increase in demand, schools can sometimes be enlarged to accommodate additional pupils, and this may necessitate statutory proposals. If the need for a new school is identified, statutory proposals are needed. Full consultation is needed on all statutory proposals.

Michael German: Will the Minister make a statement on vocational education in South Wales East? (WAQ46899)

Jane Davidson: The Welsh Assembly Government is strongly supportive of vocational education in Wales and I appointed a vocational skills champion in 2005. Through a range of initiatives I have been seeking to encourage and develop vocational provision. In November 2005 my Deputy Minister, Christine Chapman AM, produced a report setting out her recommendations for taking forward the 14-19 Learning Pathways programme. Following that an action plan was produced in March 2006.

The action plan aims to engage and motivate all young people in their education and training, encourage our

young people to become involved in lifelong learning and provide the modern curriculum with the rich range of opportunities that all our young people need. This means that in addition to existing qualifications, such as GCSE, AS and A-level, a much wider range of vocational courses and qualifications needs to be made available.

The action plan states that in order for there to be clear progression routes through 14-19 education and training into employment, apprenticeships, further and higher education, the Assembly Government working with the awarding bodies and sector skills councils, should consider how existing vocational qualifications for 14 to 16 and 16 to 19-year-olds can be developed and supplemented to provide a strong vocational qualifications element within Learning Pathways.

The options menu will mean that, over time, 14 to 19 networks will develop a choice of vocational options from entry level to level 4. These will be in the domains of mathematics, science and technology, business management and administration, services to people, creative arts and culture and humanities and languages.

The Welsh baccalaureate programme has been specifically designed to allow vocational qualifications to be included.

My department is an active member of both the Heads of the Valleys programme team and the Heads of the Valleys programme steering group and has contributed to the development of the strategy for the sub region. It is a key goal of the programme

‘to make the full range of vocational and academic opportunities available to young people, from the roll out of the Welsh Baccalaureate to developing (in partnership with sector skills councils and other organisations) innovative and engaging ways to better link businesses with education.’

Every 14-19 local area network has included vocational education in its annual network development plan (ANDP) for 2006-07. In many cases this has meant new vocational pathways with partnerships formed between schools, FE Institutions and/or work-based learning providers. Some local area networks plan to use their capital allocation for the refurbishment or new build of vocational skills centres for this age group. Since skills for the built environment is a priority in south-east Wales, the majority of ANDPs address this issue. All local area networks are required to include work related education within their ANDPs.

The geographic pathfinders in Merthyr Tydfil, Blaenau Gwent and Rhondda Cynon Taf have highlighted the necessity for increasing the vocational offer to the 16 to 19 age group. Key stakeholders have recognised this and are working towards a solution that will meet the challenge.

The south-east Wales group of college principals has been tasked with identifying ways of meeting the annual requirement, identified by CITB-Construction Skills, for 2,220 skilled new entrants to the industry in south-east Wales. The further education institutions have agreed to provide specific, detailed information relating to the provision of construction skills in order to improve planning for this sector, to draft a joint regional response to the stated demand and to increase their own provision for construction skills. Similar work is underway with work-based learning providers. The initiative is being driven by the south-east region’s LND division of the Department for Education, Learning and Skills in consultation with CITB-Construction Skills and other appropriate sector skills councils. A model for matching supply with demand for skills is being developed that

can be rolled out to other priority sectors in the future.

Following the announcement of the withdrawal of the foundation and intermediate GNVQ a range of suitable alternative provision has been identified and is available for teaching in schools in Wales. They are grouped in 14 subject areas and are available at level 1 and level 2. Many have been approved under sections 96 and 97 for use pre and post 16.

In the development of the credit and qualifications framework for Wales a south-east Wales secondary school has been involved in an imaginative pilot project to develop a broad based vocational learning programme for its pupils, using the credit and qualifications framework for Wales to recognise that achievement.

William Graham: Will the Minister outline how education policies in Wales reflect the decline in school pupil numbers? (WAQ46900)

Jane Davidson: The decline in the school population will lead to falling pupil numbers at some schools. If pupil numbers fall substantially and no action is taken to reorganise provision, educational outcomes may be adversely affected because schools will become less cost effective to run. Local authorities need to keep their supply and distribution of school places under review and make the most efficient and effective use of the funding which is available for education. LEAs are reminded of this in circular 23/02 —school organisation proposals.

Carl Sargeant: What is the Minister doing to make sure that the opinions of children and young people are listened to when formulating education policy? (WAQ46902)

Jane Davidson: We have made a commitment to schools councils being established in every junior, secondary and special school by November 2006. Schools councils enable pupils to discuss school or local community issues which interest or concern them but also provide a forum through which pupils can voice their opinions on wider education policy. Our school councils support project is providing training and guidance materials to all school staff and pupils to make sure that councils are equipped to address important national issues. The project will also provide a network of young people who can contribute to development of education policy.

The Welsh Assembly Government is also working with youth fora, voluntary sector youth organisations and other young people's groups, including those that represent young people from 'hard to reach' groups to provide opportunities for children and young people to participate in policy making within the Assembly Government. Our 'Your Voice, Your Choice' project is providing training to young people throughout Wales on subjects such as consultation and policy development so that children and young people are able to participate in an informed and meaningful way.

Funky Dragon, the children and young people's assembly for Wales, also provides opportunities for children and young people to contribute to education policy. There are specific seats available on the grand council for young people from schools to contribute their views on a national level.

To bring all this together the Welsh Assembly Government participation project is raising awareness and providing support to departments and officials within the Assembly Government, including education on the importance of involving children and young people in policy development as well as the benefits of doing so. The youth and adult learning opportunities team provide advice on how to involve children and young people in appropriate ways and also advise on how to produce documents that are accessible and interesting to young people.

Peter Black: Will the Minister make a statement on the amount of money spent by local councils in Wales on improving school buildings? (WAQ46903)

Jane Davidson: Published outturn figure for local authorities overall capital spend on education in 2004-05 was £143.758 million and the forecast for 2005-06 is £169.248 million.

Michael German: Will the Minister make a statement on progress towards achieving the Welsh Assembly Government's stated objective of making all schools fit for purpose by 2010? (WAQ46905)

Jane Davidson: Good progress is being made in improving school buildings. Since 2002, 1,400 projects have received Assembly Government school buildings improvement grant, including 66 costing over £0.5 million. Eighty-nine major projects costing £190 million have recently been approved using authorities' £9 million lump sum shares. Overall funding for capital investment in schools has increased to £143 million in 2005-06 and a commitment has been given that it will continue at least at this annual level to 2010.

We are meeting our 'Wales: A Better Country' commitment of investing £560 million in the lifetime of this Assembly to improve school buildings so they are in good physical shape and equipped for the modern curriculum. The total of investment to be supported by the Assembly in the period 2004-05 to 2007-08 is £629.372 million

I will be reporting fully to the Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee on the position in early July.

Questions to the Finance Minister

David Lloyd: Will the Minister provide figures for any additional sums in the Welsh budget aside from EU funding and the block grant for the years: 1999-2000; 2000-01; 2001-02; 2002-03; 2003-04 and 2004-05? (WAQ45256)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Finance Minister (Sue Essex): In addition to EU funding and the block grant, the Assembly's total managed expenditure includes receipts and annually managed expenditure as follows:

	Receipts	Annually Managed Expenditure
1999-2000	£74 million	£185 million
2000-01	77 million	£188 million
2001-02	£99 million	£601 million
2002-03	£221 million	£606 million
2003-04	£177 million	£621 million
2004-05	£176 million	£371 million *

*The AME provision for 2004-05 has reduced due to the transfer of the rent rebate element of the housing revenue account subsidy to the Department of Works and Pensions, which now has responsibility for payment of the subsidy due in respect of council housing rent rebates.

David Lloyd: Further to WAQ40704, will the Minister list those authorities that have yet to achieve political balance within scrutiny chairs, and scrutiny committees? (WAQ46878)

Sue Essex: It is not the statutory function of the Welsh Assembly Government to maintain a list of the political balance of scrutiny chairs and scrutiny committees within local authorities.

Local authorities are aware of my support for the allocation of chairs of scrutiny committees to be in accordance with political balance and this message is being reinforced in the Assembly's statutory guidance, 'Guidance for County and County Borough Councils in Wales on Executive Arrangements' which is being updated. This was also one of the recommendations contained in the Local Government and Public Services Committee's report on new political structures in local government, published in May 2004. At the committee's request I agreed to provide Members with a note on the political leadership of all local authorities and the political affiliation of their scrutiny committees. This note was sent to the committee chair on 14 November 2005.

David Lloyd: Further to WAQ40704, will the Minister provide a progress report on revised statutory guidance provided to local authorities following the consultation regarding political balance within local government? (WAQ46879)

Sue Essex: The consultation on the revised statutory 'Guidance for County and County Borough Councils on Executive and Alternative Arrangements' has concluded, and I will be considering the responses shortly. The principle of political balance among chairs of overview and scrutiny is enshrined within the guidance and I hope to be in a position to issue the guidance in due course. In addition the research we have commissioned into the role and functions of elected members, due to commence in July, will review the current operation of scrutiny including arrangements for scrutiny chairs.

David Lloyd: Further to WAQ40704, will the Minister provide a progress report on the consultation regarding political balance within local government? (WAQ46880)

Sue Essex: I assume you are referring to the consultation exercise on the revision of the statutory guidance for local authorities entitled, 'Guidance for County and County Borough Councils in Wales on Executive Arrangements'. I refer to the answer I gave you to WAQ46879.

Alun Ffred Jones: Pryd fydd y Gweinidog yn cyfarfod â Gweinidogion San Steffan nesaf i drafod newidiadau posibl i'r system etholiadol? (WAQ46889) [W]

Sue Essex: Os ydych yn cyfeirio at y newidiadau arfaethedig i broses etholiadau'r Cynulliad, caiff y darpariaethau hynny eu cynnwys ym Mesur Llywodraeth Cymru, sy'n cael ei dywys drwy Dy'r Cyffredin gan Ysgrifennydd Gwladol Cymru a'i gydweithwyr.

Os yw eich cwestiwn yn cyfeirio at drefniadau'r etholiadau lleol, mae'n ddyletswydd ar y Comisiwn Ffiniau Llywodraeth Leol i adolygu trefniadau etholiadol cynghorau sir a chynghorau bwrdeistref sirol yn rheolaidd. Yr wyf wedi gofyn i'r comisiwn ystyried gohirio'r broses nes ar ôl etholiadau lleol 2008 ond nid wyf wedi ystyried unrhyw newidiadau i drefniadau etholiadol cyfredol.

Nid wyf yn bwriadu cyfarfod â Gweinidogion Llywodraeth y DU i drafod y materion hyn.

Byddwch yn ymwybodol bod y Cynulliad wedi cymeradwyo cynnig mewn Cyfarfod Llawn ym mis Ionawr mewn cysylltiad â'r Mesur Gweinyddu Etholiadol. Mae'r Prif Weinidog wedi ysgrifennu at Ysgrifennydd Gwladol Cymru i'w hysbysu o gynnwys y cynnig hwnnw, a oedd yn cynnig sawl newid i'r Mesur.

Alun Ffred Jones: When will the Minister meet with Westminster Ministers to discuss possible changes to the electoral system? (WAQ46889) [W]

Sue Essex: If you are referring to the proposed changes to the Assembly election process, those provisions are contained within the Government of Wales Bill, being taken forward in the Houses of Parliament by the Secretary of State for Wales and his colleagues.

If your question is referring to arrangements for local elections, the Local Government Boundary Commission has a duty to review the electoral arrangements for county and county borough councils on a regular cycle. I have asked the commission to consider delaying the process until after the 2008 local elections but I have not considered any changes to existing electoral arrangements.

I do not intend to meet with UK Government Ministers to discuss these matters.

You will be aware that the Assembly approved a motion in plenary in January concerning the Electoral Administration Bill. The First Minister has written to the Secretary of State for Wales to inform him of the content of that resolution, which proposed various amendments to the Bill.

Elin Jones: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am flaenoriaethau'r llywodraeth ar gyfer gwella gwasanaethau cyhoeddus yng Ngheredigion? (WAQ46890) [W]

Sue Essex: Gwella gwasanaethau cyhoeddus yw prif flaenoriaeth y Llywodraeth hon yng Ngheredigion fel ym mhob rhan arall o Gymru.

Mae Llywodraeth y Cynulliad am weld sefydliadau'n cydweithio'n llawer agosach â'i gilydd er mwyn creu trefniadau cyflwyno gwasanaeth sy'n ymateb i ddinasyddion a chymunedau. Bydd hyn yn gwneud gwasanaethau cyhoeddus yn fwy effeithlon a hygyrch i bawb sydd eu hangen a bydd yn gwella manteision y buddsoddiad sylweddol uwch rydym wedi'i roi i wasanaethau cyhoeddus.

Amlinellwyd ein gweledigaeth ar gyfer cyflawni hyn yn 'Creu'r Cysylltiadau', a gyhoeddwyd ym mis Hydref 2004. Dilynwyd hyn ym mis Mehefin 2005 gan 'Cyflawni'r Cysylltiadau', sef y cynllun gweithredu pum mlynedd ar gyfer bwrw ymlaen â'r newidiadau rydym eisiau eu gweld o ran cyflwyno gwasanaethau cyhoeddus. Bydd canfyddiadau'r adolygiad sydd ar y gweill o gyflwyno gwasanaethau lleol yn llywio hynt ein gwaith ymhellach.

Elin Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on the government's priorities for improving public services in Ceredigion? (WAQ46890) [W]

Sue Essex: Improving public services is the top priority for this Assembly Government in Ceredigion as in all other areas of Wales.

The Assembly Government wants organisations to work much more closely with each other to create service delivery arrangements responsive to citizens and communities. This will make public services more efficient and accessible to all who need them and enhance the benefits from the significant increased investment in public services we have made.

Our vision for achieving this was outlined in 'Making the Connections', issued in October 2004. This was followed in June 2005 by 'Delivering the Connections' which is the five-year action plan for driving forward the changes we want to see in the delivery of public services. The findings of the forthcoming review into local

service delivery will inform our progress further.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am y cynnydd ar y dreth gyngor er 1999? (WAQ46891) [W]

Sue Essex: Y cynnydd blynyddol ar gyfartaledd ym mand D y dreth gyngor ers 1999-2000 yw 6.9 y cant. Y cynnydd am eleni, sef 4.5 y cant, yw'r cynnydd isaf ond un ers cyflwyno'r dreth gyngor, ac ar £962 mae'n £306 yn is na'r cyfartaledd ym mand D y dreth gyngor yn Lloegr.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Will the Minister make a statement on the increase in council tax since 1999? (WAQ46891) [W]

Sue Essex: The average annual increase in band D council tax since 1999-2000 is 6.9 per cent. This year's increase of 4.5 per cent is the second lowest increase since the introduction of council tax, and at £962 is £306 lower than the average band D council tax in England.

Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

Karen Sinclair: What is the Minister doing to improve the provision of social services in Wales? (WAQ46871)

Brian Gibbons: I am:

improving the policy framework—I will consult in July on a policy paper on the future direction for social services over the next decade;

making more capital and revenue support available to expand the range and quantity of services;

enhancing social services authorities' capacity to improve, commission and collaborate by funding of the Social Services Improvement Agency;

taking other action to strengthen local partnerships;

driving up standards and helping to protect vulnerable people through regulations and national minimum standards independently enforced and inspected;

working with the Care Council for Wales, the Social Services Inspectorate for Wales and others to improve the status and qualifications of the social care workforce;

through the Social Services Inspectorate for Wales, I am helping to improve services through external inspection, performance evaluation and specific initiatives.

David Lloyd: What plans does the Minister have to establish an obesity surgery service in south Wales?
(WAQ46876)

Brian Gibbons: Swansea NHS Trust currently provides an obesity surgery service for south Wales.

Swansea NHS Trust, Health Commission Wales and the local health boards are continuing to work together to ensure that waiting-times targets at Swansea are met and that the service provided is safe, sustainable and effective.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on developing specialist obesity physicians in Wales?
(WAQ46877)

Brian Gibbons: There are currently a number of physicians serving the Welsh population who have a special interest in the medical management of morbid obesity, including doctors with backgrounds in endocrinology, diabetes and cardiovascular risk assessment. In addition there are also doctors who work within multi-disciplinary teams to support specialist obesity surgeons.

The medical management of obesity is a developing sub specialty. It is probable that in south Wales at least one of the current specialist services will expand to act as a tertiary level service to offer care to treatment resistant patients i.e. those patients who have failed early preventative measures including standard drug, nutritional and exercise based weight management programmes.

Obesity is a chronic disease and the development of special interests in medicine for chronic disease management will require joint planning with the Royal College of Physicians.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on the NICE guidelines that apply to obesity surgery?
(WAQ46882)

Brian Gibbons: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence published health technology appraisal guidance on the use of surgery for morbid obesity (bariatric surgery) in July 2002. The guidance supports the use of surgery as a treatment option for patients meeting strict criteria. Because of the lack of capacity for provision of bariatric surgery within the NHS, the health technology appraisal guidance was exempt from the Department of Health requirement for implementation within three months of publication.

NICE is currently developing a clinical guideline for all obesity services, which will include a section relating to bariatric surgery. The guideline is due for publication in February 2007.

Laura Anne Jones: How is the Welsh Assembly Government helping to prevent deaths from deep vein thrombosis in Welsh hospitals? (WAQ46913)

The Minister for Health and Social Services (Brian Gibbons): Venous thromboembolism is a common and potentially serious condition, often following deep vein thrombosis. The Welsh Assembly Government recognises the need to raise public and professional awareness of this condition and its prevention. It is currently considering commissioning a national audit on the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of venous thromboembolism.

Laura Anne Jones: What are the regional figures for the number of deaths in hospitals related to deep vein thrombosis in Wales? (WAQ46914)

Laura Anne Jones: What is the figure for the total number of deaths in hospitals related to deep vein thrombosis in Wales? (WAQ46915)

Brian Gibbons: The information is given in the following table:

Number of deaths in Welsh hospitals due to deep vein thrombosis

Region	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
North Wales	92	81	84	85	84
Mid and West Wales	200	184	195	169	164
South-east Wales	194	150	151	149	150
Wales	486	415	430	403	398

Source: Patient episode database for Wales.

(a) Cause of death defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes I26, I80.1, I80.2, I80.3, I80.9, and I82.9.

Janet Ryder: How is the budget for the Artificial Limb and Alliance Service arrived at and what assessments of need take place to arrive at that budget? (WAQ46917)

Brian Gibbons: Health Commission Wales works with provider trusts to agree the budget for their ALAS services. As with other services HCW commissions these services to reflect overall commissioning priorities, the resources available, and ALAS pressures and priorities.

ALAS comprises six service elements, namely wheelchair services, artificial limb services, environmental control services, artificial eye services, war pensioner services and independent three-wheel vehicle services, meaning that ALAS is very different from other disability service providers.

HCW works with ALAS to assess service pressures and priorities and to agree future budgets in the light of HCW's priorities. For example, the north Wales ALAS is currently undertaking a demand/supply modelling exercise, looking at wheelchairs. HCW is in discussion with the National Public Health Service about a specific project to assess the need for wheelchairs.

Janet Ryder: What targets are set for ALAS, what are they based on and does the 28 week waiting target apply? (WAQ46919)

Brian Gibbons: For wheelchair services there is a target that 95 per cent of standard wheelchairs are to be issued within 21 days of receipt of referral. Approximately 15,000 wheelchairs are issued across Wales each year and around 12,000 of these are standard wheelchairs. There are no specific targets for the other ALAS services.

Jonathan Morgan: What is the cost to Conwy LHB of their dentistry contract with Oasis Dental Care Ltd? (WAQ46920)

Brian Gibbons: This is a matter for Conwy Local Health Board. The full cost of any contract negotiated is between the parties concerned following their agreement. The Welsh Assembly provided some financial assistance toward the start up costs. Local health boards have been issued with their general primary care dental services allocation for 2006-07.

Investment of an additional £30 million in NHS dentistry from 2006-07 is supporting LHB commissioning which gives greater control over the type and level of dental services to meet the local need.