

## National Assembly for Wales Sustainability Committee

### Report on Mainstreaming Sustainability into Ministerial Portfolios – 10 years of the Statutory Duty

#### Introduction

1. On 22<sup>nd</sup> May at the Hay Festival the First Minister and I launched the Welsh Assembly Government's Sustainable Development Scheme, One Wales: One Planet. This confirms that sustainable development is the central organising principle of the Welsh Assembly Government, and our Scheme sets out the action we will undertake to achieve this. It sets out the aspiration that WAG will be an exemplar organisation in the way that we mainstream, and demonstrate leadership on, sustainable development. I therefore welcome the Committee's report, and am pleased to be able to accept in part or in principle all its recommendations.
2. The Scheme sets out our vision of a sustainable Wales. The supporting definition of sustainable development within our Scheme is as follows:
  - enhancing the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of people and communities, achieving a better quality of life for our own and future generations, in ways which:
    - promote social justice and equality of opportunity, and;
    - enhance the natural and cultural environment and respect its limits - using only our fair share of the earth's resources and sustaining our cultural legacy.

We recognise that sustainable development is the process by which we reach the goal of sustainability.

3. Our Scheme makes it very clear that sustainable development is the overarching strategic aim of all Assembly Government policies and programmes, across all Ministerial portfolios. We measure our progress on sustainable development using our five headline indicators of sustainable development which cover the economy, social justice, the environment, resource use, and the wellbeing of Wales. We are also clear that climate change is a consequence of unsustainable development, and that sustainable development is the process by which we will reach the goal of becoming a sustainable nation..
4. We are therefore clear about the distinction between sustainable development and climate change. The Committee's report has made recommendations relating to action that we are undertaking, both on sustainable development, and on climate change
5. The Scheme makes it clear that climate change is the clearest example that our current lifestyles are unsustainable. This is shown by our ecological footprint, one of our headline indicators of sustainable development, which tells us that if everyone on the earth lived as we do, we would use 2.7 planets worth of resources. This is why our Scheme

commits us to using only our fair share of the earth's resources within the lifetime of a generation. To help take us forward with this ambition, I launched in June a consultation on our Climate Change Strategy, setting out proposals for a detailed programme of action to meet our One Wales target of an annual 3% cut in our greenhouse gas emissions, where we have devolved responsibility, by 2011.

6. I am grateful to the Committee for their inquiry into mainstreaming sustainability in Ministerial portfolios, which ran parallel to the production and publication of our new Sustainable Development Scheme, following a 12 week consultation. The Scheme sets out how we will promote sustainable development through all our actions. Our response below reflects the Assembly Government's response to the Report's detailed recommendations.

### **Response to Specific Recommendations**

7. Although the Committee's report does not number the specific recommendations, for ease of reference I have referred to these as recommendations 1 to 8, in the order in which they have been presented in the Committee's report.

### Clarity of roles – who is responsible for what?

**Recommendation 1: We recommend that each Minister examines their portfolio and establishes explicit links between their portfolio responsibilities and sustainable development.**

**Response:** Accept

8. Our Scheme sets out how Welsh Ministers propose to promote sustainable development "in the exercise of their functions", and is the overarching document that clearly sets out how the Welsh Assembly Government's policy agenda, across all portfolios, contributes to sustainable development. This was published during the Committee's hearings, and sets out the links between portfolio responsibilities and sustainable development in the five areas of Sustainable Resource Use, Sustaining the Environment, A Sustainable Economy, A Sustainable Society, and the Wellbeing of Wales. It also sets out the action we will take to mainstream sustainable development as our central organising principle.
9. The Committee also received, during the course of its inquiry, submissions from all Ministers setting out in greater detail how the work of their departments contributes to sustainable development.
10. I am pleased to recognise the leadership that my Cabinet colleagues are bringing to Sustainable Development, as shown in the Scheme and through the evidence provided. It is important to recognise, as our definition makes clear, that sustainability is about the joining up of

economic, social and environmental considerations to achieve a better quality of life for people and communities in Wales, and all my Cabinet colleagues can demonstrate this within their portfolios. However, we recognise the Committee's wish for an expression of clear linkages following its inquiry, to reflect how new and existing policy work will continue to take forward our sustainability aims. Ministers have highlighted the following areas of high-profile existing and upcoming policies and programmes which will explicitly refer to the linkage with sustainable development as set out in the SD Scheme definition:

### Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing

11. The Cabinet Sub Committee on Climate Change, chaired by the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing, agreed at its meeting in June 2009 to the following set of proposed changes to embed sustainable development as WAG's central organising principle :
  - A clearer statement on Cabinet Papers indicating how WAG's SD principles have been embedded in the policy issues proposed;
  - A clearer set of messages within individual Ministerial portfolios, used in Ministerial speeches and communications, that can be used to demonstrate the key SD priorities within that portfolio and how these are to be taken forward;
  - A clear process within each Department demonstrating how sustainable development is to be taken forward as a central organising principle within that Department;
  - A continued overview and steer from this Committee on the way in which the Assembly Government is embedding sustainable development as its central organising principle.
12. The Minister ESH has made sustainable development the central organising principle in the way that the policy responsibilities within the department are developed and taken forward.
13. Following the launch of the Sustainable Development Scheme, One Wales: One Planet, we have:
  - held engagement events on the importance of sustainable development as a central organising principle for local authorities and National Park Authorities, for the wider public sector in Wales, and for businesses in Wales. Further engagement events for the third sector, and for communities, will be held over the coming months. We have developed and promoted a draft Sustainable Development Charter that sets out the key ways in which organisations can make sustainable development their central organising principle;
  - published our Sustainable Development Indicators 2009, outlining the progress we making in becoming a more sustainable nation. This showed that:
    - 18 of 41 indicator show a clear improvement;
    - 14 of 41 indicators show little or no change;
    - 5 of 41 indicators show clear deterioration;

- 4 of 41 indicators have insufficient or no comparable data.
14. The Assembly Government's training providers, Eliesha, have run 12 training courses, at WAG offices throughout Wales, on the WAG's SD Scheme and the implications of this for the work of WAG. A further 12 courses will be provided before the end of March 2010.
  15. We are working with Forum for Future (a sustainable development think tank set up by Jonathan Porritt) on a number of projects that aim to embed sustainable development in departments across WAG, and we have established, at an official level, a WAG-wide network of sustainable development advocates to share best practice and learning from this.
  16. Sustainable development has been fully reflected in the way that other policy commitments have been developed and taken forward, and key examples of this are:
    - We shall shortly be launching the annual report on the first year's achievements under the Environment Strategy Action Plan 2008-11, which the Minister launched in October 2008. This reports on the actions that have been taken by a wider range of stakeholders throughout Wales in support of the WAG's Environment Strategy outcomes, in ways which contribute to economic and social wellbeing and sustainable development;
    - We are currently consulting on our draft strategy for Marine Protected Areas in Wales;
    - Over the summer, we have concluded consultations on our climate change strategy programme of action, our National Energy Efficiency and Savings Plan; our Waste Strategy, our Bioenergy Action Plan for Wales, our waste strategy, Towards Zero Waste; and on our proposals for a charge on single use carrier bags; and our approach to each will be confirmed in due course.
  17. On climate change, we are developing a comprehensive programme to support community action on climate change and wider sustainable behaviours. For example:
    - We have produced a community information pack with advice and guidance on a wide range of sustainability projects that the communities could undertake and an accompanying DVD showcasing good practice examples.
    - We have arranged a Sustainable Behaviour Change workshop in September led by Doug McKenzie Mohr, a world expert on social marketing and behaviour change, which stimulated and enthused the audience into thinking differently about local and national action. The seminar provided a framework for future work and the feedback from the eighty community groups, local activists, community councillors and others who attended the training was very positive.
    - We have established have established Community Action for Climate Change Networks, which are locally led and developing distinctive

approaches to tackling climate change. The next three Network events (in Newport, Llangollen and in Aberystwyth) will focus on planning community action planning.

- We are developing three pilots for community-wide action on climate change with differing focus and providing support to enable groups non-environmental groups to take a more active role on climate change.
  - Next steps include developing further materials and exploring the delivery of additional training and we are working with academics working in this field in Wales on this.
18. The Building Regulations transfer of functions order was laid in Parliament on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2009. Transfer would allow the Assembly Government to prescribe a standards framework for all buildings, whatever their source of funding, which is tailor made for Wales. The intention is that following transfer that the priority will be to introduce a step change in reducing carbon emissions as soon as is practical.
  19. We have established the Zero Carbon Hub for Wales to engage stakeholders, disseminate learning and provide a forum for discussion in support of the Assembly Government's objective to move to low carbon new construction.
  20. In addition to contributing to the Assembly Government's climate change and fuel poverty targets, the funding available for domestic energy efficiency in Wales constitutes a significant economic stimulus. We estimate that over the next three years, should we be successful in leveraging funds into Wales, up to £350m will be invested here in domestic energy efficiency. In taking a more strategic and coordinated approach to domestic energy efficiency funding, our priorities are to ensure that (a) as much funding as possible is secured for Wales and (b) it is channelled into activities where it will bring Wales the greatest environmental, social and economic benefits.
  21. The Assembly Government considers that renewables present the best of the long term sustainable options to meeting our sustainable energy challenges. The Minister will shortly be publishing a low carbon energy statement which will set out the Assembly Government's vision of a sustainable development framework for the acceleration in Wales of the essential transition to an efficient low carbon energy based economy.
  22. In July 2009, the Minister published a Strategic Policy Statement on Marine Energy in Wales. The Policy Statement proposes how we can maximise our marine energy resource, with the minimum of local environmental impact. The statement provides high level support for marine energy development in Wales and sets the strategic framework for the development over the next 20 years of a strong marine-energy sector in Wales.

23. In 2007 the Marine Renewable Energy Strategic Framework was launched, to improve our understanding of the marine resource in Wales, and its potential for exploitation within a sustainable development framework. The Framework is due to be completed in the Autumn of 2010.
24. The tidal energy resource of the Severn Estuary provides a potential means of generating up to 5% of the UK's electricity needs. In January 2008, the Assembly Government embarked with the UK Government and South West England's Regional Development Agency on a two year, £9 million feasibility study into the costs and benefits of capturing this energy. The Welsh Assembly Government is also working together with DECC and the Southwest RDA to fund a £500,000 additional study, known as the Severn Tidal Power Embryonic Technology Scheme (SETS). This will explore further the potential for deployment of three innovative options for tidal power generation in the Severn Estuary: two tidal fence schemes and a low-head barrage.
25. We have secured significant additional funding for flood and coastal erosion risk management from the Structural Funds. This investment, in addition to our existing flood risk management programme and Strategic Capital Investment Funding, makes a major contribution to sustainable development by providing enhanced flood risk protection.
26. Sustainable development frames our approach to water policy in Wales. Our Strategic Policy Position Statement on Water sets out our core principles are ensuring access to safe drinking water, maintaining water and sewerage services at an affordable price and compliance with statutory obligations that drive all round water quality. We are exploring the potential to use the concept of a water footprint to better understand the resources used in the manufacture of products and this compliments our work on the ecological footprint.
27. Collectively the policy agenda will move us towards the vision of a sustainable Wales that was set out in our Sustainable Development Scheme.
28. In the portfolio of the Deputy Minister for Housing, the Assembly Government is in the process of producing a new national housing strategy, *Sustainable Homes*, to replace the existing strategy, *Better Homes (2001)*. A draft of the new strategy was the subject of public consultation earlier this year. Responses to the consultation have been considered. A final version is being prepared and is expected to be published early next year.
29. The strategy will provide a coherent framework for action to address housing and related issues throughout Wales. It will incorporate the principles of sustainable development and the broader role of housing.

As well as addressing meeting housing needs and affordability, it will reflect the role of housing in improving lives (social justice, health and wellbeing), strengthening communities (economic, physical and social regeneration) and reducing the carbon footprint (energy performance and climate change).

30. WAG has adopted the **Code for Sustainable Homes** as the assessment framework for new housing and is requiring Code Level 3 for all new housing that we influence through grant funding, investment and land disposals.
31. In pursuing a step change towards zero carbon we have will take account of latest UK Government thinking on the definition of zero carbon and its consequent implications for the Code for Sustainable Homes. Gaining early experience of higher standards is crucial to ensure we fully understand their implications. The Assembly Government is funding a programme of 22 schemes, up to 400 homes, within the RSL development programme to be built to code levels 4 and 5 a number of which are now under construction.
32. The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) set in 2002 includes an energy efficiency target equivalent to an Energy Performance Certificate rating of D. In 2004 the Living in Wales Survey assessed 15% local authority stock. 57% of housing association stock complied with the energy efficiency standards of WHQS. An update of the Living in Wales Survey is due to be published in 2009.
33. Through the Assembly Government funded Inform to Involve (i2i) work, guidance and support has been provided to local authorities and stock transfer organisations and traditional Registered Social Landlords as to how investment programmes can add value providing local employment and training. Targeted recruitment and training is now a feature of transfer RSL improvement programmes and other public sector projects. This includes using targeted recruitment and training (TR&T) as a contract condition to provide 'green' jobs within the energy and sustainability fields. For example, i2i is currently supporting Fairlake properties to use TR&T to tie contractors into creating additional jobs and training places for 'energy advisors' on a Code Level 5 scheme in Newport. The new posts will be created to support tenants to use new energy efficiency technology within their new homes.
34. WAG is supporting two RSL pilots :
  - DEVCO and GENUS are assessing their stock to provide a base line indicator on sustainability, using the latest in the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) suite of environmental performance tools – EcoHomes XB.
  - Valleys to Coast Housing Association (V2C) are refurbishing five houses in South Wales in a sustainable manner and appraising the work against current and best practice solutions propose to pilot a

scheme managed by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) Wales to assess the sustainability standards it is possible to achieve for refurbishment of housing in Wales in relation to WHQS.

35. The results of these two pilots will be used as a Best Practice Example for other Social Housing Providers to learn from and use as a model to follow as well as informing future standards.

Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy & Transport:

36. The approach to a more sustainable economy will be delivered through the One Wales commitment of a Green Jobs Strategy. This Strategy will be one of the key mechanisms whereby the Department for the Economy and Transport will deliver the broader Welsh Assembly Government values for sustainable development and climate change. The Strategy will be a key strategy to shape and drive the business opportunities associated with a move to a low carbon, low waste economy, including delivering in the following areas:
  - the 'Sustainable Economy' chapter of the new Sustainable Development scheme 'One Wales: One Planet'
  - the One Wales target to reduce CO2 emissions by 3% a year by 2011 in areas of devolved competence;
  - the proposal to increase municipal waste recycling targets;
  - the Renewable Energy Route Map.
37. The preparation of a statutory Wales Transport Strategy is a key part of the new framework for transport planning put in place by the Transport (Wales) Act 2006. The Strategy has replaced the non-statutory *Transport Framework for Wales*, which was published in 2001. A high level framework sets out transport policies for how we will seek to develop an integrated and effective transport network. It also sets out how transport contributes to the national policy agenda, including economic and sustainable development, health and the environment.
38. The National Transport Plan, which was published for consultation in July, takes its lead from the Wales Transport Strategy, setting out details of specific transport policies and national/strategic programmes. Regional Transport Plans will deliver the Wales Transport Strategy at the regional and local level.
39. On sustainable buildings, we require the following criteria for all new buildings promoted or supported by the Welsh Assembly Government (whether directly procured, the subject of financial support, joint ventures or projects on lands sold, leased or disposed of in any way for development):
  - residential developments to achieve as a minimum the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3;



- non-residential developments to achieve BREEAM 'Excellent' (or equivalent);
- a minimum of 10% (by value) of recycled materials to be used in all new buildings.

DE&T have produced and issued a guidance document for our delivery staff and partners.

Minister for Finance and Public Services Delivery:

40. There are a number of key areas within the portfolio where sustainable development is being taken forward:
- Value Wales' Sustainable Procurement Action Framework, where we are working to achieve the highest level (5) by 2010;
  - the Strategic Capital Investment Framework, which considers sustainability in assessing new project proposals;
  - ongoing work to improve planning and budget allocation processes, and develop tools to improve policy development and which help better measure the impact of proposals and investment, to ensure that policies are more effective in enhancing the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of people and communities, achieving a better quality of life for our own and future generations;
  - the work of Local Service Boards, Spatial Plan Groups and Community Strategies, which provide the collaborative leadership required to enable holistic decision-making, and ensure that sustainable development principles guide the planning and implementation of local public services;
  - the innovative and cross-cutting Low Carbon Regions and Networked Environment Regions work being developed under the auspices of the Wales Spatial Plan process; and
  - our public service improvement agenda will continue to focus on enhancing the wellbeing of people and communities in Wales, by engaging more closely with citizens in the design and delivery of services, and responding more effectively to those with the greatest needs.

Minister for Rural Affairs:

Farming, Food & Countryside – building a secure future

41. The Department of Rural Affairs published its new overarching departmental strategy, titled 'Farming, Food & Countryside – building a secure future' (FFC), in May of this year. The strategy contributes to the sustainable development agenda across many areas: from sustainable land management and climate change targets to more sustainable agricultural sector jobs and sustainable tourism. It targets energy conservation and alternative energy sources and supports the Welsh

language by making the sustainability of family farms and rural communities a corner-stone of the new strategy. FFC sets the agenda for a number of sub-strategies which in turn hold sustainability at their core, including the Food & Drink strategy, Woodlands for Wales Strategy and the agri-environment strategy Glastir.

#### Glastir

42. Glastir, as also announced in May 2009 by the Minister for Rural Affairs, is a shift in approach to land management schemes in Wales. From 2012, the five existing agri-environment schemes will be replaced by one scheme, Glastir, which is better positioned to meet current and future environmental challenges.
43. Current agri environment schemes were designed to meet a different agenda. We now face new challenges and opportunities and schemes need to be able to respond to future demands. The new scheme reflects the Welsh Assembly Government's new environmental commitments as well as our new strategies on food and farming.
44. Glastir will pay farmers to manage the land in a way that will meet today's challenges and priorities, including biodiversity, climate change and water management.

#### Woodlands for Wales

45. *Woodlands for Wales*, the Welsh Assembly Government's revised woodland strategy, was launched by the Minister for Rural Affairs on 27th March 2009. The previous strategy, published in 2001 needed revision to reconfirm existing priorities, to align it the WAG Environment Strategy and to identify forestry's response to new themes such as climate change.
46. Forestry Commission Wales (FCW) acts as the Welsh Assembly Government's department for forestry and is responsible for the delivery of the new Strategy through its revised Corporate Plan. This describes detailed actions based on the five strategic themes of the Strategy: Welsh Woodlands and Trees; Responding to Climate Change; Woodlands for People; Developing a Competitive and Integrated Forest Sector and Improving Environmental Quality.
47. The Woodland Strategy and FCW Corporate Plan sets demanding targets aimed at increasing the amount of native woodland in Wales as well bringing more woodland, especially small and fragmented blocks, into management. The Better Woodlands for Wales grant scheme supports private owners to seek certification to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard to demonstrate sustainable management.

## Local Sourcing Action Plan

48. The Welsh Assembly Government's Local Sourcing Action Plan "Food and Drink for Wales" was launched on 2 April 2009.
49. The Plan outlines actions to be delivered as a partnership between key relevant Divisions of the Welsh Assembly Government, the food and drink production and manufacturing sectors, local government and the retail and foodservice sectors.
50. It aims to support Welsh food and drink companies in accessing local markets and to make it easier for consumers to buy and eat food and drink from Wales. In addition, it aims to increase the 'awareness' and supply of local food into the private and public sectors. These initiatives will increase the levels of local sourcing whilst reducing "food miles".

## Wales Land Use Climate Change Group

51. A new group to advise the Welsh Assembly Government on how agriculture can meet the challenge of food security while reducing greenhouse gas emissions was also established in 2009 (January).
52. Farming and countryside organisations, government agencies and academic institutions are represented under the chairmanship of Professor Gareth Wyn Jones.
53. The group will use an integrated, holistic approach based on assessing the trade-offs between benefits and dis-benefits in delivering ecosystem services:
  - provision of food, fibre, water and fuel,
  - delivery of fundamental support services – primary production, nutrient cycling, soil formation,
  - delivery of regulating services – flood control, climate control, disease control, air quality control, and
  - delivery of cultural services – landscape, biodiversity and recreation.

The scope of the Group's work will include:

- a). how to reduce and, as appropriate offset, emissions from agriculture and land use and rural activities taking account of
  - the life cycle of the food production chain from field to fork,
  - the inputs to the sector from other sectors e.g. fertilizers, transport, other chemicals,
  - the overall rural economy in terms of resource needs and sustainability e.g. energy
  - the renewable energy generation potential of rural communities
- b). how agriculture and woodland can adapt to climate change – taking account of opportunities and threats of climate change

c). how to manage our land to improve the capacity of other sectors of society to adapt to climate change.

54. The Group is due to report back to the Minister for Rural Affairs towards the end of 2009.

#### Minister for Social Justice and Local Government:

55. The Communities First programme explicitly identifies the need to enhance the economic, social and environmental wellbeing in our most deprived communities to promote social justice and equality of opportunity. The Communities First Consultation exercise in 2008 outlined the proposals for moving the programme forward. These included a greater focus on tackling economic activity, income maximisation and child poverty. Since the consultation, the Communities First Programme has been strengthened and renewed. Core funding has been awarded for each of the 151 CF partnerships for the next three years (2009-12) and the Outcomes Fund has been introduced which will provide at least £25million to fund new projects in CF areas over these three years in partnership with key service providers. This Fund will enable Partnerships to apply to the Welsh Assembly Government for projects supporting the key themes of the Vision Framework.

#### Child Poverty

56. The Welsh Assembly Government has made clear its commitment to the UK Government's child poverty targets. We are committed to doing all that we can within the powers available to us to help achieve the goal of eradicating child poverty by 2020.

#### The proposed Children and Families (Wales) Measure

57. The National Assembly for Wales (Legislative Competence) (Social Welfare and Other Fields) Order 2008, enables the National Assembly for Wales to legislate on matters relating to the social welfare of children and young people up to the age of 25. In July 2008 the First Minister announced that the Welsh Assembly Government would be proposing an Assembly Measure in respect of child poverty and vulnerable children which would be brought forward in 2009.

58. The proposed Children and Families (Wales) Measure was laid before the Assembly on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2009. A Legislative Statement was made by the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government in Plenary on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009. The proposed Measure was considered by Legislation Committee No2 who published their Stage 1 Committee Report in June 2009. A debate on the general principles took place in Plenary later that month. The general principles, and the financial resolution, were agreed by the Assembly and the proposed Measure has now progressed to

Stage 2 for its detailed consideration. The proposed Measure is a key deliverable of the Welsh Assembly Government's vision for children and young people set out in *'One Wales'*. It takes a Welsh approach to deliver Welsh solutions to tackle child poverty and social exclusion for some of the most disadvantaged children and families in Wales. It enables us to provide support to those families and children in greatest need who without additional support would be most disadvantaged.

## Overall Strategy

59. The challenges posed by the current economic climate make it even more important for us to do all that we can to ensure that our policies and processes are responsive to the needs of those children living in poverty. It is also important that the Assembly Government provides a lead role in setting the framework for action at a national and local level.
60. The Assembly Government published its Child Poverty Strategy in February 2005, *'A Fair Future for our Children'*. This confirmed that policy action would be widely focussed encompassing Income, Service and Participation poverty. This Strategy was informed by the work of the 2004 independent Child Poverty Task Group. The Strategy was followed in May 2006 by the Child Poverty Implementation Plan with many of the policy proposals from the Plan since taken forward. As a result of further developments in the evidence base and in policy focus in recent years, the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government has indicated that work should start on a new child poverty strategy in 2009.

## New Child Poverty Strategy: Preparatory Phase (February – September 09)

61. Work has been undertaken to map the evaluation results of existing Assembly Government child poverty programmes. This forms part of a "One Wales" commitment to conduct "a robust evaluative review of the outcomes of existing anti-poverty programmes in Wales". A syntheses report will be published in the autumn of 2009.
62. Internal analysis has been undertaken of those policy areas within the competence of the Assembly Government that have the most potential to contribute to the child poverty agenda in Wales. Further analysis of the 2009 HBAI figures has also been undertaken by Peter Kenway on behalf of the Child Poverty Expert Group. Initial work on the development of a new Child Poverty Strategy for Wales has also looked at recent research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Bevan Foundation, which considers what is needed to end child poverty by 2020.
63. On 5 October 2009 the Children and Young People Cabinet Committee agreed the framework and broad policy approach around which the new child poverty strategy will be developed. It is important that we build the new child poverty strategy on the basis of what we know works. The

analysis of the existing evidence base will provide a strong foundation for the new strategy.

64. It is vital that the new strategy creates a sense of unified national purpose, working with the UK Government to eradicate child poverty by 2020. The UK Government will be developing its new Child Poverty Strategy to 2020 alongside the Welsh Strategy and it will be important that the Welsh Strategy dovetails with the UK Strategy in view of the significant policy levers at the UK level that have the capacity to reduce levels of income poverty in particular.
65. It is anticipated that a first draft of the new Child Poverty Strategy will be considered by the Children and Young People Cabinet Committee in early 2010. This will be followed by a period of consultation in Spring 2010.

#### Joint Agreement

66. The consultation paper – Taking Action on Child Poverty included proposals for a Joint Agreement on Child Poverty. The Minister for Social Justice and Local Government launched the signing of the Joint Agreement on Child Poverty in March 09. A number of organisations joined the Minister in being the first to sign up to the Joint Agreement on Child Poverty. These included WLGA, One Voice Wales, WCVA, NHS Confederation, Save the Children, Sports Council for Wales, Greenhouse and the Chief Fire Officers Association.
67. By signing the Joint Agreement, these organisations agree that the activities set out in the Joint Agreement provide a means for organisations, where appropriate, to assist the Welsh Assembly Government to take forward the Three Strand Approach to Child Poverty. Organisations from across Wales are being encouraged to sign up and our website lists all the public bodies who have agreed to sign up to the Joint Agreement to date ( 4 Sept 09) - a total of 29 public bodies have signed the Joint Agreement, and many more have expressed an interest in doing so. One of the main benefits of having a Voluntary Agreement across the Welsh public sector is to raise its profile and confirm publicly that we all have a role to play in reducing child poverty. All public agencies will be encouraged to sign the Joint Agreement including those who also have a duty under the proposed Children and Families (Wales) Measure.
68. Having this Joint Agreement on Child Poverty demonstrates high level agreement from both the Welsh Assembly Government and other organisations to the shared goal of eradicating child poverty.

#### Local Government (Wales) Measure

69. The Local Government (Wales) Measure has now passed into law and this reforms local authorities', national park authorities' and fire and

rescue authorities' duties in relation to making arrangements to secure continuous improvement, in particular by providing that improving local wellbeing, sustainability and fairness are as valid as improving quantified service outputs or efficiency. During this autumn the Welsh Assembly Government will be consulting on related statutory guidance that will help local authorities in discharging their duties under this measure. This will include developing the general duty to improve in terms of assessing the opportunities for, and threats to, the sustainability of services that are provided, but also, and more importantly, the longer-term sustainability of the communities within that local authority's area. This includes the mainstreaming of considerations of sustainability right across the council's community leadership, decision-making and scrutiny roles. The Welsh Assembly Government will issue statutory guidance on the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 during March 2010 that will come into force from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010.

70. Preventing fires starting and effectively mitigating the consequences are consistent with our sustainable development approach. Fire and Rescue Authorities combine intervention with prevention and education to ensure that fires do not occur in the first instance. Prevention can be achieved by identifying and eliminating risk by way of influencing building design and ensuring people know what to do when fire occurs and how to escape. Arson continues to be a problem in Wales, particularly in the most disadvantaged communities. The Assembly Government's "Wales Arson Reduction Strategy" provides a template for targeting activity and resources among those organisations involved in tackling arson. The main problems include grass and mountain fires which cause widespread disruption to the environment and communities. We are also working with the Fire and Rescue Services and LEAs to undertake target hardening in schools (secure fencing, bin storage etc) thus contributing to the sustainability of school estates.

Minister for Health and Social Services:

71. The Minister for Health Social Services has indicated that she is very pleased to respond to the Sustainable Development Committee on mainstreaming sustainable development. The NHS in Wales has a proud record of taking practical action to meet the challenges of the Assembly's Sustainable Development Scheme. The Minister for Health and Social Services has, over the past two years, been keen to promote these developments wherever possible. She hopes the information drawn together here, representing some of the more major areas of such activity from across her portfolio responsibilities, will be of use to Members.

One Wales One Planet

72. In *One Wales One Planet*, the key actions for health and social services to ensure a healthy and sustainable future for Wales are:

- To invest £190 million in public health and health improvement through the Public Health Strategic Framework for Wales, *Our Healthy Future*; and
  - To put sustainable development at the core of the restructured NHS in all it does.
73. The two Departments leading on health and social care issues are delivering on the challenge in the new Sustainable Development Scheme of making sustainable development the 'central organising principle' of their work. Considerable progress is being achieved both within the NHS and across a range of policies and programmes within the Departments.

#### NHS Estates Energy

74. The 57 largest NHS sites in Wales use zero carbon-rated green tariffs to supply their grid electricity (89% of grid electricity consumed by NHS Wales) effectively saving 73,500 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions annually as against the equivalent figure for conventional tariffs.
75. Preliminary analysis of the 2008/09 energy returns indicate that Welsh hospitals currently generate approximately 9% of their total electricity requirement from embedded Combined Heat and Power (CHP) sets. This has almost doubled over the previous year and is expected to further increase as new systems become fully operational.
76. At Wales' largest hospital complex, the University Hospital of Wales in Cardiff, work has recently been completed to replace existing ageing CHP units with new models to contribute towards meeting the site's demand for heat and electricity. The project was completed in January 2009 and is fully operational. It will make a significant contribution to the site's annual gas and electricity demand:
- it is believed to be the largest new installation in the NHS
  - potential carbon savings from the CHP are estimated to be in excess of 3000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year compared to traditional grid supplied electricity
  - the total cost of the CHP installation is approximately £3.8 million with estimated annual financial savings of £1.6 million at current energy prices giving the scheme a very favourable economic payback.
77. From 2006, the Department for Health and Social Services allocated £3 million, over 3 years, from the NHS All Wales Capital Programme as a Central Energy Fund (CEF). This enabled NHS Trusts in Wales to invest in low to medium cost energy efficiency initiatives and low carbon technologies. Overall, the fourteen Trust programmes that received funding through the CEF incorporated a total of 149 individual schemes, and these schemes together identified a total of 13,400 tonnes of potential CO<sub>2</sub> savings.



78. The range of energy efficiency measures funded to date through the CEF have included:
- Installation of low energy external LED lighting,
  - Replacement burners on existing gas boiler plant to improve efficiency of boilers,
  - Improvements to insulation to reduce energy losses,
  - Installation of improved internal lighting controls such as light sensors and movement sensors together with more efficient lighting installations,
  - Installation of highly efficient condensing boilers to replace existing inefficient boilers and helping to reduce both carbon emissions and costs,
  - Installation of highly efficient variable speed drive pump motors.

#### Performance reporting

79. Welsh Health Estates annually collects environmental data returns and analyses the environmental performance of the NHS in Wales via its Estates and Facilities Performance Monitoring System. It annually reports its findings in an Estate Condition and Performance Report. This report contains an analysis of energy performance, carbon emissions, waste, transport and water use.

#### Waste

80. The Assembly Government and NHS Wales published a Healthcare Waste Strategy in June 2006, which included targets for waste reduction and recycling to be achieved by 2010. Current examples of good environmental waste minimisation and recycling practice include:
- At Gwent Healthcare Trust a major programme of waste segregation and mixed recycling facilities has been introduced resulting in recycling rates in excess of 50% of domestic waste being achieved at some hospitals,
  - In the North Wales Trust, an investment was made in equipment to recover waste oil from the kitchens and to convert it into bio-diesel for use in grounds maintenance vehicles and equipment,
  - Several Trusts have invested in baling and compacting equipment to improve recycling of packaging cardboard and paper waste.

#### Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM)

81. The BREEAM Healthcare tool introduced in July 2008 is a second generation BREEAM with a greater emphasis on sustainability and low

carbon issues. It has been developed by the Building Research Establishment in partnership with the Department of Health and Welsh Health Estates. BREEAM Healthcare is now integrated into the business case process for the procurement of major capital schemes.

82. The introduction of low and zero carbon technologies on major projects in the NHS in Wales is being progressed through the introduction of BREEAM Healthcare and there are a number of good examples particularly with regard to the introduction of biomass boilers. Two new hospital developments in Wales, Ysbyty Cwm Rhondda at Llwynypia and Ysbyty Alltwen in Porthmadog are installing biomass boilers to provide heating and hot water services.
83. Further new hospital developments in Gwent are also investigating the feasibility of utilising biomass boilers to provide their heating and hot water needs and the new Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan development will have a biomass boiler installed.

#### Travel Plans

84. In 2008 Welsh Health Estates launched a travel plan toolkit which can contribute to reducing carbon emissions and help NHS Trusts to develop and implement Travel Plans. Trusts will be able to obtain support, advice and guidance from Welsh Health Estates, the Welsh Health Environmental Forum transport and travel sub-group, the Welsh Assembly Government Regional Transport Consortia, the NHS Sustainable Travel Coordinator (employed by Sustrans, and funded by the Welsh Assembly Government) and other support agencies.

#### Sharing Good Practice

85. The Welsh Health Environmental Forum was formed to act as a central forum for the NHS in Wales where ideas, actions and good practice are shared between NHS Trusts and to act as a central point of contact between the service and Welsh Health Estates .
86. The forum is facilitated by Welsh Health Estates and has its own website for dissemination of information which also acts as a communication portal linking all Trusts in Wales on environmental issues. The forum also has a number of sub-groups on Energy, Waste and Transport, which are used to carry forward actions or progress single issues under these headings.
87. NHS Environment Week is now an annual awareness raising event that takes place at Trusts across Wales and coincides with World Environment Day and European Green Week at the start of June. NHS Environment Week is aimed at raising the environmental awareness of staff, patients and visitors through exhibitions, leaflets and posters and 2009 is the fifth year that Environment Week has taken place.

## NHS Reforms

88. New opportunities to reduce the environmental impact of the reformed NHS and its contribution to sustainable development in general will be actively pursued by a refreshed Sustainable Development and Health Steering Group. This will include all the new bodies and their responsibilities will be made clear in the new governance arrangements. The Steering Group will also re-develop the NHS Sustainable Development toolkit.

## Working with Social Services

89. Responsibility for sustainable development in relation to social services sits with Local Government. The departments will work with them on this issue and review opportunities within the regulation and commissioning regimes for promoting sustainable development.

## Our Healthy Future

90. Improving sustainability requires a reduction in avoidable ill health. Unhealthy environments and behaviours, and the illnesses and damage they cause, place a considerable and avoidable burden on individuals, families communities and organisations. This also generates costs to the NHS and other support services and reduces productive capacity. These burdens are huge and may be unsustainable in the future. Action is needed to tackle the causes and ensure that interventions to deal with problems that do arise are as effective and efficient as possible.
91. In this context, development of *Our Healthy Future*, is well advanced and under consideration by the Minister for Health and Social Services. Its aims and themes complement the Sustainable Development Scheme, and are focused on achieving a concerted shift towards health improvement and early intervention to help create sustainable healthy communities and reduce avoidable differences in people's health. In the NHS, focused efforts to measure and improve quality, including action to improve patient safety and ratchet up efficiency, has also begun. One of the overarching ambitions for *Our Healthy Future* is that all organisations and individuals in Wales work together for a sustainable future by "preventing the preventable" causes of ill-health and health inequalities.
92. In the longer term, this approach should result in a better quality of life for our own and future generations using an active prevention approach through the lifelong health pathway and ensuring that resources are used to best effect.

## Health Improvement

93. Funding for the Health Challenge Wales Voluntary Sector Grant Scheme from April 2008 to March 2011 supports three projects which promote

sustainability through partnerships with the third sector. The Green Exercise Partnership, comprising Sustrans Cymru, BTCV Cymru and Groundwork Wales delivers a local programme of activities for health improvement in the natural outdoors. This partnership is promoting sustainable activities including volunteering, active travel, gardening and conservation, growing produce, regeneration and awareness of nature.

94. Delivered by the National Federation of Women's Institutes in Wales, the Get Cooking! Project provides free cooking courses for parents across Wales working with the Cooking Bus, Health, Social Care and Well-being Co-ordinators and Communities First Partnerships. Project Co-ordinators and Tutors are taking part in a pilot of the Welsh Assembly Government's 'exploring sustainable well-being toolkit'. As a result, additional information is given to course participants on topics including food and waste recycling, saving energy and shopping locally.
95. The Well-being Wales Network is facilitating the inclusion of well-being in policy development and services at local level. The network is also piloting the 'exploring sustainable well-being toolkit', which assesses the levels of well-being and environmental sustainability in policies and services of local authorities and voluntary sector organisations. The Network reports on the evaluation of the toolkit pilot in its 6-months and end of year reports. It will also re-visit completed pilots in 2010-11 to evaluate implementation of the recommended actions.

#### Corporate Health Standard

96. Raising awareness about sustainability is a key component of the health and work agenda. The Corporate Health Standard is the national mark of quality for health and well-being in businesses and organisations across Wales. The Platinum level award recognises employers who demonstrate sustainable development as an integral part of their business practice and culture. This criteria has been developed in partnership with the Sustainable Development Commission in Wales and covers the topics of transport, capital build, waste, community engagement, employment and skills and facilities management. Applicants for the Platinum level award must provide a case study on their corporate social responsibility and sustainable development work.
97. In September 2009, the first two Platinum level awards were presented in Wales to Wylfa Power Station in Anglesey and Carmarthenshire County Council. Wylfa Power Station presented a strong case study on citizen engagement and corporate social responsibility while Carmarthenshire County Council's case study focused on sustainable local procurement.
98. As part of the on-going delivery of the Corporate Health Standard programme, the Department for Health and Health Professions will engage with the new NHS organisations to encourage them to work towards Platinum level awards. Public Health Wales, as the deliverer of

the CHS, is also encouraging businesses and organisations with current gold level awards to progress to the platinum level.

#### Health Protection

99. The Department for Public Health and Health Professions established a multi agency Climate Change and Health Working Group to co-ordinate the health response to the Welsh Assembly Government Climate Change Strategy. A vision for this group was to establish a long-term Welsh Assembly Government sustainable approach to the health threats of climate change.
100. The Department for Public Health and Health Professions has also been undertaking work to reduce the health implications of heatwave conditions. A final Heatwave Plan for Wales 2009: A Framework for Preparedness and Response was published electronically on the Welsh Assembly Government's website in June 2009 and emailed to all Stakeholder bodies and agencies in Wales. The plan aims to alert health, social care, other care agencies and members of the public to the dangers of excessive heat, and provide a framework to guide and support co-ordinated collaborative action at local, regional and national levels in response to extreme heat and heatwave conditions in Wales.
101. The Plan will be revised, as necessary, and re-issued on an annual basis. As part of the Framework, the Department enters into a contract with the Meteorological Office to provide heatwave alerts to stakeholders from 1 June to 15 September each year. Ensuring that effective plans are in place to respond in the event of a heatwave is a vital component of overall emergency planning, and will become increasingly relevant as a response to the impact of climate change. A robust system for dealing with potential heatwave situations in Wales is important given predictions that summers in future will become hotter.
102. Hotter summers and increased exposure to the sun bring increased risks of developing skin cancer. The Welsh Assembly Government has supported SunSmart, the UK's national skin cancer prevention campaign, since its launch in 2003. The campaign, which is managed by Cancer Research UK on behalf of the four UK health departments, raises public awareness of the risks of skin cancer and the need to adopt sun protection behaviours. The Department is maintaining support for the SunSmart public awareness campaign.

#### Minister for Heritage:

103. The Sustainable Tourism Framework was launched in November 2007. Visit Wales (VW) set up a Sustainable Tourism Forum which has been meeting regularly every 6 months since November 2007. To support the framework a Sustainable Tourism Action Plan has been produced with the assistance of the Forum to deliver the Framework.

104. Under the auspices of the Forum a Sustainable Transport & Tourism Task and Finish group was set up to identify ways in which the tourism and public transport sectors can work more closely together and they have submitted their report to the Deputy First Minister and the Heritage Minister. The report will be launched by the Ministers at a seminar on the 4th November. A study on the impact of climate change on tourism has also been commissioned which will be presented this autumn and VW is working closely with the Climate Change team.
105. Visit Wales is participating in a Britain & Ireland Sustainable Tourism group involving the national tourist boards to exchange experience and commission joint research. Visit Wales has also joined the ERNEST a European Network for research in Sustainable Tourism to share best practice and experiences at the European level.
106. Work is currently being done to improve our understanding of the scale of Tourism environmental impacts through the Wales Economic Research Unit development of the Tourism Satellite Account for Wales, to enable us to have a better understanding of the policy options to reduce these impacts.
107. On a programme level, VW is continuing to work through the Forum on a number of different sustainable tourism projects which include introducing best practice guidance in the Harmonised Grading scheme, a UK wide validation programme with Visit Britain to assess green accreditation as well as improving communication to the industry on sustainable advice and guidance via the FS4B portal, introducing toolkits and case studies.
108. Recently, VW also received approval for 2 strategic EU projects, whose total value is £35m, on sustainable and coastal tourism. Both projects will develop strategic centres of tourism excellence in Wales based on the built and natural environment. The focus of these 2 projects is activity tourism.
109. Cadw is actively involved in promoting walking, cycling and more sustainable transport options in relation to the monuments in the care of WAG, for example:
  - a. We incentivise travel by public transport and have arrangements in place with Rail operators - Freedom of Wales Flexipass and with Cambrian Railways both offering 2 for1 entry; an offer with National Express coach travel is being discussed.
  - b. Cadw will be involved in a programme being developed by Visit Wales which includes a package with attractions, accommodation providers and public transport operators. Proposals will be ready by November.
  - c. Cadw marketing and promotional materials carry information on the nearest National Cycle Network route and footpath references for walkers. There is also additional information on public transport bus and train routes as well as directions for car journeys.

110. Cadw also promotes energy efficiency in its lighting, including:
- a. Cadw is replacing existing monument floodlighting luminaires at 17 sites across Wales, with new generation Light Emitting Diode [LED] type fittings.
  - b. This initial eco-lighting scheme demonstrates Cadw's commitment towards the pan-wales sustainability agenda and a desire to significantly reduce CO2 emissions and reduce energy costs.
  - c. Cadw also has plans for further eco lighting developments across Wales and plans to develop micro generation hydro at a number of sites to promote sustainability and reduce energy use.

### Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills

#### Role of DCELLS

111. The Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS) has applied a broad definition of sustainable development in its policies, which is to enhance the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of people and communities in Wales. Climate change is an important factor in DCELLS decisions in terms of the environmental aspect of sustainable development. It is managed as an important constraint in its own right, but is also considered in the context of the wider sustainable development considerations.
112. Across Wales, services for children and learners of all ages have an important role to play. Not just in terms of managing estates, but significantly, in engendering attitudinal change, and giving people the skills and behaviours they need to live, learn and work in a sustainable Wales. DCELLS are supporting a range of activities to ensure that this happens, and key policies of the Department will directly contribute to the delivery of sustainable development in Wales. A broad overview of our flagship policies in DCELLS shows a coherent approach. As they enter the schools system, DCELLS maintain that growth and wellbeing through our youth services and participation programmes, and by aligning DCELLS policies to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

#### Early Years and Childcare

113. It is acknowledged that the best possible start and opportunities for learning is fundamental in raising attainment. We know that the early years, more than any other time in a learner's journey are crucial in building and enhancing outcomes and positive life chances for individuals.
114. It is that acknowledgement that instigated the Foundation Phase which is a holistic developmental curriculum based on the needs of the individual child to meet their stage of development. It places great emphasis on developing children's personal, social, and intellectual well-being, and

sets out to embed these skills to last for a lifetime. The curriculum engenders positive attitudes to learning so that they want to become lifelong learners, up-skilling and re-skilling as the demands of the world changes. DCELLS educates Welsh young people from the start to value the environment and its resources through one of the areas of learning within this programme. This provides opportunities for children to demonstrate care and have respect for all living things and the environment.

115. Schools, Local Authorities, and Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships work collaboratively to ensure that there is sufficient childcare to meet the needs of all families. Through Flying Start and Community Focused Schools DCELLS are providing a full programme of advice, guidance and support to ensure that universal childcare is available
116. Another key activity is Integrated Children's Centres, which are based on the concept of providing integrated education, care, family support and health services. These centres play a key role in securing good outcomes for children and their parents, giving children the best start in life, and building social and community sustainability.

#### Children and Young People

117. To ensure that their learning is sustained as they move from a play-based curriculum to a classroom-based curriculum, our School Effectiveness Framework underpins our work through tri-level partnerships i.e. government, local authorities and schools. This helps to build a sustainable approach to developing quality provision and delivery to our children.
118. The revised school curriculum, being implemented from September 2008, supports the principles of sustainable development and global citizenship throughout. For example, in the science curriculum, part of the range to be included at all key stages is "The Sustainable Earth". At Key Stage 2, pupils should be given opportunities to study what waste is and what happens to local waste. At Key Stage 3, pupils should be given opportunities to understand the key issues of sustainable development and global citizenship, and the need to reflect on personal decisions. From the Foundation Phase through to the end of compulsory education, Welsh children are taught to appreciate and understand impacts of decisions on resources, people and the environment, creating generations of people with a progressive knowledge of these subjects.
119. Sustainable development and global citizenship is a key theme within the Personal and social education framework for 7 to 19 year-olds in Wales. Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) seeks to find ways to raise awareness and deliver actions to address the consequences of our lifestyle choices and prepares us for sustainable living in the 21st century as global citizens. It is a holistic



approach to education which prepares learners for the new challenges that will be part of their future such as climate change and international competition for resources. The current ESDGC action plan has achieved 81% of its actions, and this is anticipated to rise to 95% by the end of this its final year. The action plan is currently being reviewed.

120. ESDGC is also part of the initial teacher training courses which meet the Qualified Teacher Status Standards, but this is just one small part of our pedagogy initiative. The focus on pedagogy will generate opportunities for practitioners to share and develop the good practice that we know exists across the country and for more widespread partnerships to be established. Pedagogy and developing teaching and learning skills links explicitly to the School Effectiveness Framework and the Quality and Effectiveness Framework, and will provide the strategic focus for the forthcoming review of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in Wales.
121. Throughout the learning experience, the Pedagogy Initiative is designed to improve the quality and consistency of our teaching practitioners to foster this learning and support our young people. Using international evidence, these policies combine well to create the foundations for the best school system designed to develop the individual as a whole-person and successful learner.
122. In addition, DCELLS is developing schools counselling services available to all school pupils, giving them confidence that their needs will be heard and addressed. This complements the range of approaches already available in schools that help to support the health, emotional and social needs of pupils and lead to a healthy school culture programme such as the Appetite for Life Action Plan recognises the need to embed sustainable development principles into the procurement of goods and services related to the delivery of our food in schools agenda. DCELLS are working with DHSS to make links to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services which can provide additional support for those who need it. Schools which promote the health and well-being of pupils are also more likely to create an effective learning environment.

## Learning Environments

123. DCELLS has also invested in making sure that children and young people learn in environments which foster their development, but that are also manageable and sustainable for government and delivery partners. DCELLS is building a shared vision of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools by working in partnership with the WLGA and all Local Authorities. Delivery of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools will implement a step change in the capital investment programme to address the long standing problem of condition and suitability of schools in Wales and assist Local Authorities in their plans for school re-organisation. It represents a strategic approach to funding, design and procurement including ICT integration is

being implemented, design quality and sustainability will also be important features.

124. But schools are a just part of DCELLS role it also ensures children and young people are offered joined-up, sustainable support in the development of Children and Young People's Plans, through which local authorities and their partners work together to agree their priorities and responsibilities for putting them into action. The partners work together to develop ways to support young people e.g. through Youth Support Services, which have the desired outcomes of developing social stability and community cohesion. Guidance for Youth Support Services is being prepared for formal consultation with revisions taking into account developments and lessons learned. It will ensure that it assists local authorities and their partners to coordinate and secure delivery of Youth Support Services in the context of a Children and Young People's Plan.
125. However, if we are to harness all the talents Wales has to offer we need to protect and nurture the more vulnerable members of society. The Not in Employment Education or Training (NEETs) figures published recently show that 20.3 per cent of 19-24 year olds and 13.5 per cent of 16-18 year olds are not in education, training or employment. A study over the period 2005-2007 showed that 31 per cent of this group had no qualifications compared with just 7 per cent for those young people who aren't NEET. DCELLS published a NEETs Plan in March 2009 after an extensive consultation on the best approaches. A key part of the approach is about getting the incentives and support correct, understanding finances and managing student support is a key challenge.
126. DCELLS will be reviewing the forms of financial support offered to 16-19 year-olds with a view to achieving great parity as well as conducting an evaluation of the Education Maintenance Allowance scheme in Wales to assess ways to maximise the potential of the scheme to encourage retain and progress the learning of young people.
127. In addition, the Welsh Assembly Government's approach to young offenders – as set out in the All Wales Youth Offending Strategy - is to regard them primarily as young people and secondly as people who have displayed offending behaviour. Evidence suggests that education is the single most important factor in preventing reoffending. With that in mind DCELLS are piloting programmes to support young offenders' learning by targeting the use of European funding.
128. By the time Wales' young people are ready to leave compulsory education, they will have experienced the 14-19 Learning Pathways which extends choice opportunities which are tailored to meet the needs of the individual. Our Transformation of the further education provider network will enable our providers to develop institutions which support the demand for learning in a flexible way according to needs, and with sustainability at the heart of these decisions.

## Skills and Higher Learning

129. The Leitch Review showed that a more highly-skilled society will be more prosperous, with higher rates of employment, lower levels of poverty and reduced inequality. People's future economic security and sustainability will depend on having the skills to take advantage of new opportunities, such as the 'green collar' jobs that will be created as we move towards a low-carbon economy. By 2010-11, the Assembly Government will be spending nearly £2 billion per year on education and skills. DCELLS has made strong progress in improving skills and helping people into jobs over recent years, and both our education outcomes and the skills of the workforce have improved.
130. *'Skills that Work for Wales'* addresses the whole range of the skills agenda, from the early years through schools, 14-19 Learning Pathways and on into higher education, training in the workplace and lifelong learning. It is designed to be a sustainable, whole-system approach to encouraging learning and skills development across the education spectrum, allowing access to training at several points.
131. Beginning with the 14 to 19 work, 14-19 Learning Pathways extends choice and opportunities through offering pathways which are tailored to meet the needs of the individual. Learners are able to:
- Choose from a wider range of courses, including both academic and vocational;
  - Access wider learning opportunities which help them to develop the skills that they need for life; and
  - Have access to a unique blend of learner support services, which will help them to develop solutions and overcome any barriers to their learning.
132. To enable young people to acquire the skills and experience, they need we have established apprenticeship training programmes. New Work-Based Learning Pathways are being piloted in schools which give young people experience and qualifications to enable them to progress to apprenticeship training. The Assembly Government is also aiming to achieve close alignment between apprenticeships and the Welsh Baccalaureate.
133. Learning Pathways challenged traditional conceptions of learning opportunities and the Welsh Baccalaureate provided a more holistic and flexible framework for learning. This reinforces the approach that Wales is taking to build a flexible and sustainable education and training system which develops young people according to their talents and interests, and enables them to be full participative and engaged members of Welsh society.

134. In terms of a long term economic and skills development, DCELLS played an active role in the development of DE&T's and DESH's '*Green Jobs Strategy*', and is also playing an active role in its delivery. The Department is working with the Heads of the Valley Regeneration team, Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) and Jobcentre Plus to ensure that the new British Gas Green Skills Academy, to be located in the Heads of the Valley regeneration area, is aligned with and supports Green Jobs creation in the area. Linking renewable energy skills development to such initiatives looks at an integrated way to achieve a range of sustainable outcomes e.g. to reduce fuel poverty, encourage energy efficiency and maximise the introduction of low carbon technologies, and thus drive up demand for skills. This initiative will contribute significantly to sustainable development and will help to mitigate climate change

#### Research and Development

135. The HE sector is important role in the economy and that is why DCELLS have used EU Structural Funding to enable investment in high quality, high impact Research and Development (R&D). Ministers have agreed priority areas for funding following consideration of the Assembly Government's agreed strategic sectors, the latest RAE results and a detailed mapping exercise. One of the major areas of R&D funding is the Low Carbon Economy (including climate change mitigation and adaptation issues).

136. From this came the Low Carbon Research Institute (LCRI) which is being supported by the Welsh Assembly Government until 2013. The four main streams of activity are:

- Low carbon energy generation, storage and distribution
- Energy demand reduction including zero-carbon built environment, and work on large scale power generation.
- An energy Graduate School
- Partnerships with industry, research organisations and government.

137. Furthermore, R&D funding has been given to the Climate Change Consortium Wales (CCCW) to undertake a strategic reconfiguration of climate change research in Wales and increase international competitiveness, with a view to achieving sustainability. We are also investing in high-level research in the impact of climate change and bio-energy on sustainable agriculture and bio-fuels.

#### Welsh Language

138. Welsh language is a thread which runs through the entire Department. The Welsh Medium Education Strategy is designed to have a major long-term impact on sustaining and increasing the use of the Welsh language in education services. The aim of the Strategy is to establish a holistic and sustainable infrastructure to support and develop Welsh-medium education and training.

139. Sustainable development is evident throughout the Welsh Medium Education Strategy. It strategically plans for the long-term future of Welsh medium education to avoid needing to react to the need for places in Welsh medium schools as-and-when the children are already of school age. Applying a whole-systems approach helps DCELLS to recognise that an important aspect of the Widening Access agenda is the availability and use of the Welsh language in higher education.

**Financial Implications** – None. The above areas of policy development and implementation are programmed within existing budgets. More broadly, the process of sustainable development as set out in One Wales: One Planet highlights that it is a process of decision-making for the longer term, for the benefit of the people of Wales, now and in the future. Sustainable development as a central organising principle emphasises the need for us take decisions in a way which produces sustainable outcomes, and to work differently to deliver these. As such, we do not anticipate there being extra costs incurred as a result of sustainable development being the central organising principle of WAG.

**Recommendation 2: We recommend that these links should be agreed with the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing and published on the Welsh Assembly Government's website**

**Response:** Accept in part

140. On the latter part of the recommendation, we agree that it is important to publish information on our progress and plans on sustainable development on the Welsh Assembly Government's website. We will publish the above information within this document on the Welsh Assembly Government website. We will publish updates on the above annually as part of our Sustainable Development Annual Report process, from the 2009/10 Report. The SD Annual Report is published on our website and also laid before the Assembly, and it includes commentary from the Sustainable Development Commission, our independent sustainable development advisors.

141. On the latter part of the recommendation, we note the role of the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing as the lead minister on sustainable development issues. However, we also note that the duty to set out how we propose to promote sustainable development within our Scheme is a duty for the Assembly Government under the Government of Wales Act 2006. Cabinet agreed the Assembly Government's Sustainable Development Scheme and agreed the need for sustainable development to be the central organising principle of the Welsh Assembly Government. Our collective commitment to delivering a more sustainable Wales is demonstrated by the leadership shown by various Ministers in making sustainability a key issue in their portfolios. As such, we believe it is for all Ministers and portfolios to decide how best they can become more sustainable and to take action in this regard. Their contributions to sustainability are collated and reported by the

Department of Environment, Sustainability and Housing on an annual basis as part of the SD Annual Report. From 2009/10, we will include within our Annual Report a report on how individual Ministers have embedded sustainable development as a central organising principle within their Department. Contributions from individual portfolios will be agreed by the relevant Ministers, but the overall report is agreed by the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing.

142. In addition, the Cabinet Sub Committee on Climate Change (Chaired by the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing) agreed at its meeting in June 2009 that each Department would have a clear process demonstrating how sustainable development is to be taken forward as a central organising principle within that Department, and that there would be a continued overview and steer from the Committee on the way in which the Assembly Government is embedding sustainable development as its central organising principle. The Committee is aware that the minutes of these meetings are published as a matter of course.

143. I have also undertaken to have a debate in the National Assembly about our Sustainable Development indicators and our SD Annual Report, to allow Assembly Members to give me their views on the action we are taking and the progress we are making towards being a sustainable nation.

144. I hope that the Committee agrees that these public reporting processes, alongside the SD Annual Report, demonstrate the Assembly Government's commitment to sustainable development and to reporting our progress and plans.

**Financial Implications** – None as the public reporting processes are already programmed into the DESH budget.

Measurement of outcomes – what is being achieved?

**Recommendation 3: We recommend that a tool is developed to measure the outcomes of policies in terms of sustainable development.**

**Response:** Accept in principle

145. We accept that it is valuable to understand how Welsh Assembly Government policies contribute towards sustainable development outcomes, but consider that we have sufficient tools in existence and in development to address this recommendation. Sustainable development needs to be at the heart of the way the Assembly Government develops policy, allocates resources, plans its business and manages delivery, rather than an add-on. The Assembly Government is continuously improving these processes and the tools that support them, and enhancing our ability to measure the impact of our activities, policies and investment on the outcomes that matter to the people of Wales is a key part of this improvement.

146. The Welsh Assembly Government's Policy Gateway has recently been renewed and will ask questions about a new policy's potential contribution to the sustainable development indicators. However, we recognise that the key issue for the process of sustainable development is to deliver policies which integrate economic, social and environmental objectives, and, where this is not possible, to use sustainable development as the framework to manage any trade-offs to produce the most sustainable outcome.. As such, we consider it critical that we assess how our policies as a whole are contributing to our national sustainable development indicators across the piece, and that we are using the messages from our indicators to inform the development of policy and programmes.
147. At a Wales-wide level, we currently report annually on our suite of sustainable development indicators, and these provide a good indication of the progress we are making towards becoming a more sustainable nation. Our new Scheme notes that we will ensure all our policies are aligned with the "direction of travel" provided by these indicators, to help ensure our policies produce sustainable outcomes. This will make it clearer how WAG policies as a whole contribute towards our sustainability aims.
148. This approach also recognises that a single policy may have a variety of impacts and outcomes – it may have direct and quantifiable impacts (eg on the percentage of the population in low income households), but a broader and indirect impact (eg on individual and community wellbeing) which is harder to measure and allocate as an outcome of that particular policy. Also, sustainable development is about making decisions for the longer-term, for our own and future generations, and there may be policy decisions made now which are aimed at preparing for the future which have no immediate impact for measurement.
149. Equally, we consider that outcomes which are informative to measure are frequently reliant on a number of different policy areas: for example Wales' ecological footprint, which is one of our headline indicators of sustainable development: 25% of the ecological footprint is due to the impact of housing; 20% to food and drink; 18% to transport; 15% to consumer items; 12% to public services; 5% to private services; and 4% to capital investment. It would be difficult to ascribe a change in our ecological footprint to the actions of any single policy.

**Financial Implications** – None. Collection of information on sustainable development outcomes is already programmed in.

**Recommendation 4: We recommend that these outcomes are published for each department as part of the statutory annual report to the Assembly.**

**Response:** Accept in part

150. We agree that sustainable development outcomes need to be published, and that Departmental policies and progress towards sustainable development should be published. These already happen within our existing reporting process. As noted above, the Assembly Government continues to work to improve our processes for recognising the impact of our activities, policies and investments on outcomes for the people of Wales, for example through the Policy Gateway process. The results of this are published
151. As per our response under Recommendation 2, our formal SD Annual Report sets out how the proposals in our Sustainable Development Scheme have been implemented by Departments. This report will contain commentary on the trends in our progress towards becoming a more sustainable nation, as evidenced by our sustainable development indicators, and the policy commitments we have made in our new Scheme for Sustainable Development. It will also reflect progress on new policies and Departmental commitments which contribute to a sustainable Wales.
152. As per our response under Recommendation 3, we report on our suite of Sustainable Development indicators on an annual basis. It should be noted, though, that some outcome indicators can be meaningfully reported on an annual basis – a good example, which we report on as part of our sustainable development indicators, is the amount of household waste recycled or composted each year. For other indicators, such as the ecological footprint, annual reporting is not meaningful, due to the amount of data that is required to calculate this accurately and the lags in collecting this data.
153. In addition to our annual reporting requirement, following each election to the National Assembly, we are required to publish a report that contains an assessment of how effective the proposals set out in the Scheme have been in promoting sustainable development.
154. Collectively these three reports make up a comprehensive and thorough reporting process to hold the Assembly Government to account for its performance on sustainable development.

**Financial Implications** – None as the reporting process is already programmed for within DESH budgets.

**Recommendation 5: We recommend that all departments should develop their own sustainability assessment tools in conjunction with the Department for Environment, Sustainability and Housing.**

**Response:** Accept in part



155. Departments have a variety of ways in which they mainstream sustainable development and these are often particular to the specific policy areas that they deliver. The Committee recognised the value of the Department for Health and Social Services integration tool, and the DE&T Creating Sustainable Places integration tool. At a strategic level, WAG's policy integration tool works to help to develop policies that deliver the Assembly Government's One Wales commitments in a joined-up way, and in a way that integrates the relevant economic, social and environmental considerations. The SD Scheme sets out the Welsh Assembly Government's core principles, aims and commitments on Sustainable Development, but we recognise that Departments will wish to address specific issues within their particular policy area. We agree that these tools can be very effective in mainstreaming SD if they are applied to the right type of process and are supportive of Departments who wish to develop these tools.
156. As set out in the Climate Change Strategy – Programme of Action Consultation we are also developing a suite of tools to enable Departments to assess the climate change impacts of policies and programmes.
157. However, we also recognise the achievements that some Departments have made without a specific sustainability assessment tool, for example the Wales for Africa programme, and the Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship agenda. To help take forward the new Sustainable Development Scheme, we have offered the services of Forum for the Future, the independent sustainable development think tank started by Jonathan Porritt, to colleagues across other Departments to help achieve this mainstreaming, whether through the development of a sustainability assessment tool or other means.

**Financial Implications** – None. Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

#### Carbon reduction and the 3% target

**Recommendation 6: We recommend that agreement should be reached amongst the cabinet members about who is responsible and therefore accountable for which areas of carbon emissions.**

**Response:** Agree in principle

158. This recommendation is being agreed in principle. Responsibility for the delivery of our climate change targets is held collectively by Cabinet. Ministers are responsible for emissions within their portfolios and there will be many areas where Ministers will wish to work jointly or collectively on a particular area to achieve the required reduction.

**Financial Implications** – None

**Recommendation 7** We recommend that these areas of responsibility are published on the Welsh Assembly Government's website and that each minister should report to the Assembly on the progress towards the achievement of their targets on an annual basis.

**Response:** Accept in part

159. The first part of the recommendation is being rejected because it is unnecessary as outlined in response to recommendation 6. On the second part of the recommendation, we already report progress annually in reducing our greenhouse gas emissions in Wales within our Sustainable Development Indicators for Wales publication. The Assembly Government have stated their intention to report on progress in achieving its collective climate change targets on an annual basis within the Climate Change Strategy – High Level Policy Statement. We have also confirmed that regular reports on progress against our targets would be presented to the National Assembly for Wales Climate Change Strategy – Programme of Action consultation. As such, this recommendation is already in progress.

**Financial Implications** – None, as the recommendation relates to producing an annual report which is already planned for and budgeted.

#### Examples of good practice

**Recommendation 8:** We recommend that the approach taken by the Department for Health and Social Services to the sustainable development and carbon reduction agendas be used as a model for other departments.

**Response:** Accept in part

160. We agree that it is important to identify best practice and share learning, and we have a network of official-level Departmental Sustainable Development Advocates who meet regularly to share views and learn from experience about mainstreaming SD. We think there are opportunities to promote further internal learning and development from the experiences of all departments as they continue to mainstream SD into their policies. We agree that the Department for Health and Social Services have significant expertise to share in many areas, but we are equally keen to share the good practice and positive experiences seen in other Departments and to encourage all Departments to become more sustainable in the most appropriate way for their own structure and relationships.

161. We have made collecting and sharing examples of good practice in all sectors as key component of the consultation on the Climate Change Strategy – Programme of Action and will be disseminating the many examples of good practice we have received as part of the final Strategy.

**Financial Implications** – None. Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

**Jane Davidson, AM**  
**Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing**

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