

Answers issued to Members on 12 October 2007

[R] signifies that the Member has declared an interest.

[W] signifies that the question was tabled in Welsh.

Contents

- 2 Questions to the Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport
- 2 Questions to the Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills
- 2 Questions to the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing
- 3 Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

Questions to the Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport

Andrew R.T. Davies (South Wales Central): Will the Minister make a statement on funding for rail infrastructure in Wales? (WAQ50454)

The Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport (Ieuan Wyn Jones): Maintaining and renewing the rail infrastructure on a steady state basis is the responsibility of Network Rail.

The Railways Act 2005 provides the Welsh Assembly Government with the powers to fund enhancements to the railway network. The Government has committed funding for new stations at Llanharan, Abercynon and Newport, as well as improvements to the capability and capacity of the infrastructure on the Cambrian and Valleys lines. The Wales railway Planning Assessment sets out the options for prioritising future investment.

Questions to the Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills

Alun Ffred Jones (Arfon): A yw'r Llywodraeth yn bwriadu gweithredu argymhellion Adroddiad Bramley am gyllido sector addysg llywodraeth leol yn y flwyddyn ariannol 2008-2009? (WAQ50434) [W] *Trosglwyddwyd i'w ateb gan y Gweinidog dros Gyfiawnder Cymdeithasol a Llywodraeth Leol.*

Y Gweinidog dros Gyfiawnder Cymdeithasol a Llywodraeth Leol (Brian Gibbons): Cytunwyd ar adroddiad terfynol yr Is-grŵp Dosbarthu gan y Fforwm Ymgynghori ar Gyllid yn ei gyfarfod ar 4 Hydref ac ynddo roedd cynnig na ddylid cyflwyno'r argymhellion a wnaed yn Adroddiad Bramley ar gyfer setliad 2008-09. Cynghorwyd ymhellach fod angen ystyried yr argymhellion yn llawnach o fewn rhaglen waith yr Is-grŵp Dosbarthu ar gyfer y dyfodol.

Alun Ffred Jones (Arfon): Is the Welsh Assembly Government intending to implement the recommendations of the Bramley Report on financing the local government education sector for the financial year 2008-2009? (WAQ50434) [W] *Transferred for answer by the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government.*

The Minister for Social Justice and Local Government (Brian Gibbons): The final report of the Distribution Sub Group agreed by the Consultative Forum on Finance at its meeting on 4 October included a proposal that the recommendations in the Bramley Report not be introduced for the 2008-09 settlement. It further advised that the recommendations needed to be more fully considered in the future work programme of the Distribution Sub Group.

Questions to the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing

Lynne Neagle (Torfaen): Will the Minister make a statement on the method of allocating funding to local authorities for Disabled Facilities Grants? (WAQ50447)

The Deputy Minister for Housing (Jocelyn Davies): Resources for local authorities for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) come out of local authority General Capital Funding (GCF) provided by the Assembly Government. The funding is unhypothecated and this enables local authorities to target resources in line with local pressures and priorities.

Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

Alun Ffred Jones (Arfon): A oes bwriad i adolygu'r fformiwla sy'n dosrannu arian i lywodraeth leol ar gyfer Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol yn y dyfodol agos? (WAQ50433) **W Trosglwyddwyd i'w ateb yn gan y Gweinidog dros Gyfiawnder Cymdeithasol a Llywodraeth Leol.**

Y Gweinidog dros Gyfiawnder Cymdeithasol a Llywodraeth Leol (Brian Gibbons): Caiff y fformiwla ariannu ar gyfer y setliad refeniw ei ddatblygu a'i gynnal drwy'r Is-grŵp Dosbarthu, is-grŵp o'r Cyngor Partneriaeth rhwng Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru a llywodraeth leol yng Nghymru. Mae rhaglen waith yr Is-grŵp Dosbarthu ar gyfer setliad 2008-09 bellach wedi'i gwblhau. Roedd yn cynnwys newid data ar gyfer elfen blant y fformiwla gwasanaethau cymdeithasol. Ni chytunwyd ar raglen waith newydd yr Is-grŵp Dosbarthu ar gyfer 2008 a 2009 hyd yma. Bydd y broses o baratoi'r rhaglen waith yn cynnwys ystyried pa adolygiadau ychwanegol a allai fod yn briodol ym maes gwasanaethau cymdeithasol.

Alun Ffred Jones (Arfon): Are there any plans to review the formula which distributes money to local government for social services in the near future? (WAQ50433) [W] **Transferred for answer by the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government.**

The Minister for Social Justice and Local Government (Brian Gibbons): The funding formula for the revenue settlement is developed and maintained through the Distribution Sub Group (DSG), a sub group of the Partnership Council between the Welsh Assembly Government and local government in Wales. The work programme of DSG for the 2008-09 settlement has now been completed. It included a data change for the childrens' element of the social services formula. A new work programme for the Distribution Sub Group for 2008 and 2009 has yet to be agreed. Preparation of the work programme will include consideration of what further reviews might be appropriate in the area of social services.

Andrew R.T. Davies (South Wales Central): Will the forthcoming review of Agenda for Change include the scheme's implementation across Wales and the level of financial support given to NHS Trusts for its implementation? (WAQ50451)

The Minister for Health and Social Services (Edwina Hart): I refer you to my letter of 3 October.