

Answers to the Written Assembly Questions for answer on 25 August 2010

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

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

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To ask the Minister for Business and Budget

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): What estimates have been made as to the average annual reduction of (i) cash terms as a percentage, and (ii) real terms as a percentage of the Welsh Assembly Government's total DEL budget for 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15. (WAQ56382)

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): What estimates have been made as to the average annual reduction in (i) cash terms as an amount, and (ii) real terms as an amount (in £) of the Welsh Assembly Government's total DEL budget for 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15. (WAQ56383)

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): By how much is it expected that the total Welsh DEL budget will contract in real terms as a percentage by 2014-15 compared with 2010-11. (WAQ56384)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

Until the outcome of the UK Government's Comprehensive Spending Review is announced in October, we do not know our actual budget settlement beyond the current year. In the absence of firm figures, we have been undertaking our deliberations on the basis of planning assumptions. These are based on a cautious assessment of information currently available. This gives us flexibility to respond quickly once the outcome of the CSR is known, but means that the actual settlement may vary from these assumptions. It is our normal practice to publish spending plans for a three year period. This takes us up to 2013-14 and we are not currently planning our expenditure beyond that year. Data is therefore provided below for the period between 2011-12 and 2013-14.

Planning Assumptions for Total Assembly Government DEL

	Total WAG DEL in Cash Terms (£bn)	Annual Change in Cash Terms		Total WAG DEL in 2010-11 Prices (£bn)	Annual Change in 2010-11 Prices
2010-11	15.5			15.5	
2011-12	14.9	-3.8%		14.6	-5.6%
2012-13	14.3	-3.7%		13.8	-5.8%
2013-14	13.8	-3.7%		12.9	-6.0%

	Change in Cash Terms	Change in 2010-11 Prices
Average Annual Reduction	-3.7%	-5.8%
Average Annual Reduction (£bn)	-0.55	-0.85
Change over Period	-10.7%	-16.5%
Change over period (£bn)	-1.7	-2.6

Source: HMT GDP deflator as at June 2010 Budget

2010-11 budget figures are taken from Supplementary Budget June 2010

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): By what amount (in £'s) is the total Welsh DEL budget expected to have declined by 2014-15, below that of its 2009-10 peak in real terms. (WAQ56385)

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): By what amount (in £'s) and percentage is Wales's capital DEL set to fall in real terms between 2009-10 and 2014-15. (WAQ56386)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

Until the outcome of the UK Government's Comprehensive Spending Review is announced in October, we do not know our actual budget settlement beyond the current year. In the absence of firm figures, we have been undertaking our deliberations on the basis of planning assumptions. These are based on a cautious assessment of information currently available. This gives us flexibility to respond quickly once the outcome of the CSR is known, but means that the actual settlement may vary from these assumptions. It is our normal practice to publish spending plans for a three year period. This takes us up to 2013-14 and we are not currently planning our expenditure beyond that year. Data is therefore provided below for the period between 2011-12 and 2013-14.

On these assumptions, we are planning on the basis that the total Welsh DEL budget may decline by as much as £2.8 billion between 2009-10 and 2013-14, in 2009-10 prices.

In terms of capital budgets, we are planning on the basis that the capital DEL may reduce by as much as £715 million between 2009-10 and 2013-14 in 2009-10 prices – that equates to a 39.2% reduction in real terms.

To ask the Minister for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning

Dai Lloyd (South West Wales): What discussions has the Minister had regarding the number of children living in poverty in Swansea. (WAQ56381) *Transferred for answer by the Deputy Minister for Children*

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

The Deputy Minister for Children (Huw Lewis): The Children and Families (Wales) Measure, which was passed by the National Assembly for Wales on 10 November 2009, places a duty on Welsh Ministers to publish a new Child Poverty Strategy in 2010. On 12 May 2010, a new Child Poverty Strategy and Delivery Plan were published for a three month period of public consultation.

During the three month period of public consultation, consultation events were held across Wales. These were attended by representatives from local authorities, Children and Young People's Partnerships and the voluntary sector – and included representatives from Swansea. In addition to these consultation events, we have received over 160 consultation responses, including two from Swansea Local Authority. Over the next few weeks, we will give full consideration to these responses, with the view to strengthening the Child Poverty Strategy and publishing a revised version at the end of the year.

Household Below Average Income (HBAI) data are used to provide estimates of the number of children living in poverty in Wales. HBAI data are not available at the local authority level. Using a proxy indicator (the number of children in workless households), Swansea had 24.8% of children in workless households (Annual Population Survey 2008).

The Welsh Assembly Government has made clear its commitment to doing all that we can, within the powers available to us, to help achieve the goal of eradicating child poverty by 2020. The new Child Poverty Strategy sets out three new strategic objectives for tackling child poverty in Wales. These are:

- 1) To reduce the number of families living in workless households.

2) To improve the skill level of parents and young people in low income families so that they can secure well paid employment.

3) To reduce the inequalities that exist in the health, educational and economic outcomes for children living in poverty, by improving the outcomes of the poorest.

By having these three Strategic Objectives we intend to address the needs of low income families with children in all parts of Wales, and ensure that policies, resources and services from across Assembly Government Departments are aimed at improving their outcomes and reducing the inequalities that currently exist.

We are also responding to the strong evidence that points to employment as the most sustainable route out of poverty. In so doing we will promote and facilitate paid employment opportunities for families with children (including the delivery of support mechanisms such as appropriate and high quality childcare and providing parents with the skills necessary for paid employment).

Paul Davies (Preseli Pembrokeshire): Will the Minister make a statement on what the Welsh Assembly Government is doing to encourage students to take up modern apprenticeships in Wales. (WAQ56387)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

Skills that Work for Wales sets out our strategy to build on the success of the all-age apprenticeship programme and expand opportunities, particularly for young people to provide a high quality progression opportunity to further learning and higher skills for young people leaving school and college. We have put in place a number of initiatives to encourage greater participation in apprenticeships:

All young people in Wales receive information on Apprenticeships when they are making their options choices at 14 and 16 through Learning Choices. Careers Wales advisors provide impartial advice to young people and provide support to help them obtain apprenticeships. To build upon this we are working with Careers Wales to develop an Apprenticeship Matching Service as part of Careers Wales online. This will enable young people to access and apply for apprenticeship opportunities online and to obtain information on apprenticeships when they are making their option choices. The pilot matching service was launched in West Wales in July.

A new dedicated Apprenticeship Unit has been established to better coordinate and promote apprenticeships in Wales. The Unit has been in place since June 2009 and provides the coordination point for initiatives designed to stimulate greater employer involvement in the apprenticeships. It is working with local partners, Sector Skills Councils and Careers Wales to tackle barriers to participation and support employer engagement

The Apprenticeship Unit is taking forward 2 major ESF funded initiatives to ensure that apprenticeship training is maintained during the economic downturn:

The Pathways to Apprenticeship Programme (PtA) provides a flexible route for young people to acquire the underpinning knowledge and skills be required for successful completion of the full apprenticeship framework. Individuals spend up to one year on a full-time intensive pre-apprenticeship training programme, specified by the relevant Skills Sector Councils (SSCs) Support is available for up to 2000 learners on this programme in 2010-11.

The Young Recruits Programme supports employers offering high quality apprenticeship programmes to recruit and train additional young apprentices. Approximately 1000 learners will be supported through this scheme in 2010 .

In order to create more opportunities for apprenticeships with small and medium sized employers we are currently piloting two shared apprenticeship models in construction and engineering. There are 119 apprentices taking part in the pilots and we will be inviting providers to take forward similar models when we contract for apprenticeship delivery from 2011.

In partnership with Sector Skills Councils and 14-19 learning networks we have developed pilot. Work Based Learning Pathways in schools. These enable students at key stage 4 to combine learning in school

and college with vocational learning in the workplace which can provide progression to apprenticeship training.

We also aim to create more opportunities for progression from apprenticeship to higher education and skills training and we are encouraging SSCs and learning providers to develop more opportunities for Higher Level Apprenticeships.

Through these initiatives, and our increasing drive to raise quality standards in apprenticeship development and delivery, we are ensuring that apprenticeships maintain their status as our flagship skills programme providing a high quality work-based route to qualifications and skills which are valued by employers and students alike.

Paul Davies (Preseli Pembrokeshire): Will the Minister make a statement on Welsh Assembly Government engagement with student unions in Wales with regard to the current clearing process forecast. (WAQ56388)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

All UK higher education institutions are autonomous bodies with responsibility for their own academic and administrative affairs, including their admissions processes. The Welsh Assembly Government has no power to intervene in this process. I do, however, meet on a regular basis with the President and officers of NUS Wales to discuss issues impacting on students' experience of higher education in Wales.

Paul Davies (Preseli Pembrokeshire): Will the Minister give an update on his latest actions in response to recommendations made by the Enterprise and Learning Committee's report on Specialist provision for young people with autism in further education. (WAQ56389)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

I presented my response in plenary on 14 July.

Paul Davies (Preseli Pembrokeshire): Will the Minister detail what the Welsh Assembly Government is doing to promote teaching foreign languages in both primary and secondary schools. (WAQ56390)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

Learning a foreign language is a skill for life and all pupils are required to study a foreign language during the first three years of secondary education. In addition, a foreign language has been included within the 5 specified domains of learning to be made available in the local curriculum underpinning Learning Pathways 14-19. I have made funding available to CILT Cymru, the National Centre for Languages, to work with schools in improving the quality of provision and the standards achieved by learners. This includes advice and professional development for practitioners in secondary schools. CILT Cymru also works with primary schools already offering a foreign language with a focus on building partnerships that will secure continuity in learning for pupils transferring to secondary education.

In July I published an action plan, Making Languages Count, setting out further work to support the teaching and promotion of foreign languages. Specific attention will be given to extending the range of qualifications offered to students to improve their skills or learn a further foreign language as part of their Learning Pathways 14-19. A copy of the action plan can be accessed on the Welsh Assembly Government's website.

Paul Davies (Preseli Pembrokeshire): Will the Minister make an assessment of the Making Languages Count strategy. (WAQ56391)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

Making Languages Count, published in July, sets out the action to be taken to improve the teaching and promotion of foreign languages. It builds on the views registered by partners across Wales in response to a consultation undertaken last year to identify strengths and areas for improvement in the provision of foreign languages.

The action plan focuses on improving provision in the first three years of secondary education and extending the options offered to students to improve their skills or learn a new language as part of their Learning Pathways 14-19. The plan is, therefore, directed primarily to practitioners and identifies how we will work with CILT Cymru, the National Centre for Languages, and partners across Wales to develop and promote the learning of foreign languages. A copy of the plan can be accessed on the Welsh Assembly Government's website.

Dai Lloyd (South West Wales): Will the Minister make a statement on the number of children living in poverty in Swansea. (WAQ56396) ***Transferred for answer by the Deputy Minister for Children***

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

The Deputy Minister for Children (Huw Lewis): The Children and Families (Wales) Measure, which was passed by the National Assembly for Wales on 10 November 2009, places a duty on Welsh Ministers to publish a new Child Poverty Strategy in 2010. On 12 May 2010, a new Child Poverty Strategy and Delivery Plan were published for a three month period of public consultation.

During the three month period of public consultation, consultation events were held across Wales. These were attended by representatives from local authorities, Children and Young People's Partnerships and the voluntary sector – and included representatives from Swansea. In addition to these consultation events, we have received over 160 consultation responses, including two from Swansea Local Authority. Over the next few weeks, we will give full consideration to these responses, with the view to strengthening the Child Poverty Strategy and publishing a revised version at the end of the year.

Household Below Average Income (HBAI) data are used to provide estimates of the number of children living in poverty in Wales. HBAI data are not available at the local authority level. Using a proxy indicator (the number of children in workless households), Swansea had 24.8% of children in workless households (Annual Population Survey 2008).

The Welsh Assembly Government has made clear its commitment to doing all that we can, within the powers available to us, to help achieve the goal of eradicating child poverty by 2020. The new Child Poverty Strategy sets out three new strategic objectives for tackling child poverty in Wales. These are:

- 1) To reduce the number of families living in workless households.
- 2) To improve the skill level of parents and young people in low income families so that they can secure well paid employment.
- 3) To reduce the inequalities that exist in the health, educational and economic outcomes for children living in poverty, by improving the outcomes of the poorest.

By having these three Strategic Objectives we intend to address the needs of low income families with children in all parts of Wales, and ensure that policies, resources and services from across Assembly Government Departments are aimed at improving their outcomes and reducing the inequalities that currently exist.

We are also responding to the strong evidence that points to employment as the most sustainable route out of poverty. In so doing we will promote and facilitate paid employment opportunities for families with

children (including the delivery of support mechanisms such as appropriate and high quality childcare and providing parents with the skills necessary for paid employment).

Jenny Randerson (Cardiff Central): Will there be a delay in funding the primary phase of the The Works Education project in Ebbw Vale and, if so, how long. (WAQ56399)

Answer issued on 07 April 2011

In answer to your question, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council with the University of Wales Newport and Coleg Gwent wish to re-arrange their educational provision in Ebbw Vale and across the rest of the County. This will be centred around a programme of new building on the old steel works site in Ebbw Vale known as 'The Learning Works'. No delays are envisaged with the primary phase of the 'Learning Works'. It should be noted that there are some issues with the funding from WEFO which are expected to be resolved shortly but these will not affect the primary phase in any case.

Andrew RT Davies (South Wales Central): With reference to the £7.5m Welsh Assembly Government contribution to the Airbus-led Composite wing research programme, will the Minister confirm whether all payments to Airbus were made on time and whether any issues arose out of the programme in relation to the amount of research actually being carried out in Wales. (WAQ56402)

Answer issued on 21 September 2010

Payments have been made to Airbus in line with the offer letter. Although some delays have been experienced this is largely due to technical issues which have subsequently been resolved to the satisfaction of both parties.

In relation to the proportion of research undertaken in Wales, there have been a number of issues which have been resolved in conjunction with Airbus and the Technology Strategy Board. The project will continue to be closely monitored to ensure that the agreed amount of research is undertaken in Wales. The project continues to progress to the satisfaction of Technology Strategy Board and Welsh Assembly Government officials.

Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire): Will the Minister make available the seating plans for the refurbishment of the Arriva Trains Wales Class 158 fleet. (WAQ56408)

Answer issued on 21 September 2010

The seating plans for the refurbishment of the Arriva Trains Wales Class 158 fleet have now been made available. A copy is attached for your information.

To ask the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing

Lynne Neagle (Torfaen): What assessment has the Minister made of the implications for Wales of the consultation announced by the Prime Minister to end the right to secure tenancies for social housing tenants. (WAQ56397) ***Transferred for answer by the Deputy Minister for Housing and Regeneration***

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

The Deputy Minister for Housing and Regeneration (Jocelyn Davies): Your question stems from the announcement by Prime Minister, David Cameron that he "wanted to look at a more 'flexible' system of

tenure for future tenancies". This raises the possibility of fixed term tenancies for new tenants of social housing.

The responsibility for housing tenure has been fully devolved to Wales and any decision relating to the future direction of social housing is a matter for the Welsh Government.

The Welsh Government is not looking to change security of tenure for Welsh social housing tenants and any future policy change would be subject to consultation.

As part of the One Wales Agreement the Welsh Assembly Government prioritised affordable housing. We have already made significant progress in meeting our target of 6,500 extra affordable homes during the term of this Government.

As you are aware the National Assembly for Wales has recently gained new powers over housing in Wales through the Legislative Competency Order. We are currently preparing a Housing Measure which will allow us to take further action to address the shortage of affordable housing in communities across Wales.

Mark Isherwood (North Wales): How many homeless persons are there in Wales and of these will the Minister detail how many ex-services. (WAQ56398) *Transferred for answer by the Deputy Minister for Housing and Regeneration*

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

Jocelyn Davies: Figures collected on homelessness by the Welsh Government relate to households rather than persons. A household is accepted as statutory homeless by a Local Authority if it is eligible, unintentionally homeless, and falls within a defined priority need category.

The latest figures collected from Local Authorities cover the period January to March 2010. There were 1,468 households accepted as homeless by the Local Authorities and therefore owed the main statutory duty to rehouse.

Of these, four households were classified as being in priority need as a result of leaving the armed forces.

Andrew RT Davies (South Wales Central): Will the Minister outline Welsh Assembly Government plans to support the production of marine renewable energy solutions in Wales including whether she has consulted with the Department of Energy and Climate Change, for example, to discuss ways of harnessing tidal energy in Wales. (WAQ56405)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

outlined the high level support for marine energy development whilst setting the strategic framework for the development of a strong marine-energy sector in Wales, which would not only serve the needs of Wales and projects in the rest of the UK, but also could seize the growing international opportunities.

Published in March, the Low Carbon Energy Statement estimates that Wales could produce double the amount of electricity we currently consume from renewable sources by 2025 and sets out the actions we will take to move Wales towards a low carbon economy. Our wave and tidal stream resource around our coasts is amongst the best in the UK, with an estimated potential of some 40GW. Our current target for wave and tidal stream technologies is to capture 10% of the estimated potential energy (4GW) by 2025.

Work is continuing, jointly with Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and the Southwest RDA on a two year feasibility study into the costs and benefits of capturing the massive tidal energy of the Severn Estuary. Funding for an additional study for the development of innovative schemes which may have less environmental impact was also funded jointly by the Assembly Government, the SWRDA and Defra. We anticipate that the results of the feasibility study will be published later this year alongside

the results of the study of embryonic technologies. It is possible that the emerging technologies could be used to harness the excellent tidal energy resource in other areas around our coastline, as well as in the Severn Estuary.

We are approaching the final stage of the Marine Renewable Energy Strategic Framework for Wales (MRESF) which will assist in defining potential areas of commercially exploitable resource, providing a management tool for government and an evidence base for developers. This is an innovative piece of work which will add significant value to the recently announced wave and tidal Strategic Environmental Assessment for English and Welsh waters.

In June I met with Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change and discussed a wide range of energy issues including Wales' capabilities in contributing to climate change targets and the transfer of energy consents.

My officials continue to work closely with DECC's Office for Renewable Energy Deployment, The Crown Estate, ETI regulators, plus technology developers and academia through various forums to ensure the right framework to achieving our marine aspirations.

Kirsty Williams (Brecon and Radnorshire): From what year are the most up to date figures regarding the number of households/people in fuel poverty in Wales and were these figures used to inform the Fuel Poverty Strategy, and, if not, from what year are the figures that were used. (WAQ56407)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

The 2004 Living in Wales Survey provides the most up to date figures on the number of people in Wales in fuel poverty. The Living in Wales data was modeled to produce estimates of the number of people in fuel poverty in 2005 and 2006 and these figures were used to inform the Fuel Poverty Strategy.

Data from the 2008 Living in Wales Survey will be published in the autumn and will provide more up to date figures on the number of people in Wales in Fuel Poverty. The implications of this new data on our Fuel Poverty Strategy will be carefully considered.

As part of our Fuel Poverty Strategy we will review how we can get better and more regular data on fuel poverty in Wales in the future.

Peter Black (South Wales West): In the BEL 1286 Community Land Trusts, what Rural Housing projects and Enablers has the budget been spent on, and how much has gone into the "Land for People" fund. (WAQ56410) *Transferred for answer by the Deputy Minister for Housing and Regeneration*

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

The Deputy Minister for Housing and Regeneration (Jocelyn Davies): In 2008 the Rural Housing Development Fund was created, utilising the £100k from the Community Land Trust BEL (1286), as well as another £100k from the Social Housing Management Grant BEL (1220) in order to provide a clearer focus on delivering the commitment to promote the expansion of Community Land Trusts in Wales as well as a platform from which to deliver an expanded network of Rural Housing Enablers, both of which will help to promoting the development of affordable housing in rural Wales.

Of the £200k Rural Housing Development Fund annual budget, £50k per annum is used to fund Land for People who promote community land trusts in Wales.

The remaining £150k per annum is used to part fund the ten rural housing enablers currently operating in Wales, who are tasked with working with rural communities to find practical solutions to meet their affordable housing needs. This funding constitutes approximately one third of the total cost of the projects, with the local authorities, Housing Associations and, where applicable, National Parks contributing financially to meeting the remaining cost of individual Rural Housing Enabler projects.

Peter Black (South Wales West): In the BEL 1220 and 1221 Social Housing Management Grant (and BME), how much money is spent on "the development of community land trusts" and what exactly is this money spent on. (WAQ56411) *Transferred for answer by the Deputy Minister for Housing and Regeneration*

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

Jocelyn Davies: A Community Land Trust is a not for profit organisation whose governing instrument allows the organisation to provide and manage affordable housing or other facilities for the benefit of the community.

In 2008 the Rural Housing Development Fund was created, utilising the £100k from the Community Land Trust BEL (1286), as well as another £100k from the Social Housing Management Grant BEL (1220) in order to provide a clear focus on delivering the commitment to promote the expansion of Community Land Trusts in Wales as well as a platform from which to deliver an expanded network of Rural Housing Enablers, both of which help promote the development of affordable housing in rural Wales.

Of the £200k Rural Housing Development Fund annual budget, £50k per annum is used to fund Land for People. A not for profit company with charitable objectives, Land for People are funded in order to raise the profile of Community Land Trusts in Wales and assist individual communities who are interested in this approach to affordable housing.

Peter Black (South Wales West): In the Housing SPA 'Increase the supply choice of housing', why did the Budget Expenditure Line 'Management Promotion & Publicity' increase from £250,000 in 2009/10 to £465,000 in 2010/11 and what has it been spent on or what is it intended to be spent on. (WAQ56413) *Transferred for answer by the Deputy Minister for Housing and Regeneration*

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

Jocelyn Davies: The Management Promotion and Publicity budget (Budget Expenditure Line – BEL 1180) of £465k is due to be moved to the Central Services and Administration Main Expenditure Group (MEG) as a Departmental Revenue Cost (DRC) budget and will not be used by the Housing Directorate in 2010/11.

This budget was, in fact formed by moving £465k budget from the "Stock Transfer / Community Mutual Support budget (BEL1162) which was previously £750k, in order to support the development of the Regulatory function which has been funded by increased DRC budget. Therefore this budget of £465k is earmarked to be vired out of Housing during the next supplementary budget to the above DRC budget.

The £250k budget in 2009/10 which was part of the original Management and Promotion budget was in fact moved to a newly created budget "Management and Advice" (BEL 1181) and was held at this level of funding, although due to the 2009/10 Resource Allocation Exercise (RAE), this budget was reduced to £246k.

This budget is used for a number of housing management functions such as the housing management awards, marketing and publications, support for the Residential Property Tribunal, leaseholder enfranchise scheme, valuations, Essex review costs, HRAS and Rent reviews.

Peter Black (South Wales West): What budget Expenditure Line does the £500,000 to help support First Time Buyers come from and what are the grants being used for, or what are they intended to be used for. (WAQ56414) *Transferred for answer by the Deputy Minister for Housing and Regeneration*

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

Jocelyn Davies: Budget Expenditure Line 1004 (Financial Assistance for First Time Buyers) provided help for first time buyers with the cost of energy efficiency in their homes. A fall in demand for the Grant, coupled with the changing economic position, resulted in this budget being diverted to the Mortgage Rescue Scheme in 2010/11. This decision was taken with the agreement of the Welsh Local Government Association.

Veronica German (South Wales East): How is Welsh Assembly Government Housing Association audit and inspection information shared and used with local authorities, if at all. (WAQ56417) ***Transferred for answer by the Deputy Minister for Housing and Regeneration***

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

Jocelyn Davies: As a result of the Essex Review of Affordable Housing in Wales, a new regulatory framework for Housing Associations is being put in place, effective from this financial year. The new framework is characterised by the need for associations to undertake a robust self-assessment, which is structured around governance arrangements, financial management and service delivery.

The self-assessment is based on a suite of housing performance standards with a strong outcome focus. A new risk-based proportionate, annual regulatory assessment will be completed by the Welsh Government as the statutory regulator. An annual regulatory report including, for the first time, a formal public judgement on the financial viability of the association will be published. A new Regulatory Board has been established to oversee the regulation function. In addition, the planned Housing Measure will also provide the Welsh Government with a broader range of intervention powers where there are instances of performance or delivery failure.

It is intended that an annual regulatory report including for the first time a formal public judgement on the financial viability of each Housing Association will be published. This will be available to the relevant Local Authorities. In addition regulation staff will have close working relationships with Local Authorities in their capacity as strategic housing enablers in order to help and inform the regulatory assessments at Housing Associations.

Peter Black (South Wales West): How frequently does the Welsh Assembly Government (or other bodies) monitor, audit or inspect Housing Associations, what is the procedure for this, and could you provide a breakdown of the cost, for example, for consultants, expenses etc. (WAQ56418) ***Transferred for answer by the Deputy Minister for Housing and Regeneration***

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

Jocelyn Davies: As a result of the Essex Review of Affordable Housing in Wales, a new regulatory framework for Housing Associations is being put in place, effective from this financial year. The new framework is characterised by the need for associations to undertake a robust self-assessment, which is structured around governance arrangements, financial management and service delivery.

The self-assessment is based on a suite of housing performance standards with a strong outcome focus. A new risk-based proportionate, annual regulatory assessment will be completed by the Welsh Government as the statutory regulator. An annual regulatory report including, for the first time, a formal public judgement on the financial viability of the association will be published. A new Regulatory Board has been established to oversee the regulation function. In addition, the planned Housing Measure will also provide the Welsh Government with a broader range of intervention powers where there are instances of performance or delivery failure.

The regulation work is undertaken by a team within the Welsh Government's Housing Directorate. A small programme budget is available should circumstances arise that require specific inspections to be commissioned by the Regulator. This need has not occurred to date.

To ask the Minister for Health and Social Services

Lynne Neagle (Torfaen): Will the Minister provide details of the percentage uptake for the 1st and 2nd doses of the MMR vaccine by local authority area. (WAQ56373)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

This information is in the public domain.

Lynne Neagle (Torfaen): Will the Minister provide details of the number of orthopaedic patients treated within the 26 week referral to treatment target set by the Welsh Assembly Government, and the number who were treated outside the target period, for the last six months and broken down by Local Health Board. (WAQ56374)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

This information is in the public domain.

David Melding (South Wales Central): How many people in Wales are currently under Community Treatment Orders. (WAQ56375)

David Melding (South Wales Central): How many Community Treatment Orders have been completely discharged. (WAQ56376)

David Melding (South Wales Central): How many Community Treatment Orders were resolved upon a patient entering a hospital. (WAQ56377)

David Melding (South Wales Central): How many Community Treatment Orders involved a patient being recalled to hospital for treatment temporarily. (WAQ56378)

David Melding (South Wales Central): How many Community Treatment Orders (under the Mental Health Act 2007) have been issued in Wales since 2008. (WAQ56379)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

Information on Community Treatment Orders is not available in the format you have requested but is in the public domain.

Kirsty Williams (Brecon and Radnorshire): Will the Minister make a statement on the commissioning of specialist services for those patients diagnosed with McArdle's Disease. (WAQ56380)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

Local Health Boards are responsible for planning and funding most health care services for patients in their areas. In the case of some very rare conditions, like McArdle's Disease, or conditions which require

very complex or specialist care, they may plan and fund services on an all-Wales basis through their joint work on the Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC).

Mark Isherwood (North Wales): How many Consultant Psychiatrists or Consultant Psychologists in Wales have a specialist interest in the treatment of Combat Related Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. (WAQ56394)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

This information is not centrally held.

Mark Isherwood (North Wales): How many ex-service/women have been given a specific diagnosis of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. (WAQ56395)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

This information is not centrally held.

Kirsty Williams (Brecon and Radnorshire): How many Local Health Boards make use of the 'script switch' programme, and does the Welsh Assembly Government encourage LHB's to use the programme. (WAQ56400)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

This information is not centrally held.

Andrew RT Davies (South Wales Central): What elements of the estimated £20.7 million increased costs incurred by the Welsh NHS due to the VAT rise could be reclaimed by the Welsh Assembly Government and will the Minister also provide an estimate that is broken down between capital and revenue spending. (WAQ56401)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

Individual NHS organisations are responsible for determining the appropriate treatment of VAT. A breakdown of the impact of the VAT increase between capital and revenue was provided in the answer to WAQ56294.

Andrew RT Davies (South Wales Central): Will the Minister confirm the proportion of GP surgeries in Wales now offering prescription and appointment reservation services online and when does the Minister envisage this being comprehensively rolled out across Wales. (WAQ56404)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

National rollout will begin shortly and it is anticipated that the majority of GP practices will be offering the My Health Online service to their patients by the end of 2011.

Veronica German (South Wales East): What assessment has the Minister made of the effect of drug patent expiry over the next five years on the purchase of medicines in the NHS. (WAQ56406)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

Officials monitor the patent expiry of branded medicines closely and the impact of these are monitored as part of the ongoing analysis of expenditure on medicines.

Veronica German (South Wales East): Does the Minister have any plans to ringfence medicines budgets when various drugs lose their patents over the next five years. (WAQ56409)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

There are no plans to ring fence medicines budgets due to patent expiry of particular medicines.

Veronica German (South Wales East): Will the Minister outline what the cost in audit fees for each Local Health Board in Wales is. (WAQ56416)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

This information is available in Local Health Boards' published annual accounts.

To ask the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government

Mark Isherwood (North Wales): How many service veterans are resident in Wales. (WAQ56392)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

According to a survey undertaken for The Royal British Legion in 2005, there were 4.8 million veterans in the UK, with a further 3.63 million adult dependents comprising an adult ex-service community of 8.43 million. According to the survey, some 5 per cent of the adult ex-service community were resident in Wales.

Mark Isherwood (North Wales): How many prisoners in Welsh jails are ex-servicemen or women. (WAQ56393)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

Responsibility for the Prison Service is non devolved and the Welsh Assembly Government does not hold data on the number of ex-service personnel in Welsh prisons.

Andrew RT Davies (South Wales Central): Will the Minister make a statement on the future of the Communities First programme, including an update on the progress of the review that has been taking place. (WAQ56403)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

Communities First is tackling the effects of multiple deprivation in over 180 areas in Wales and is planned to do so until March 2012, when the current programme period ends.

I want to ensure that we continue to deliver effective investment and support to people living within the most deprived areas in Wales. Therefore, my officials are currently looking at a range of evidence, from the current programme and more widely, in order to consider the future post March 2012. I expect to have further clarity on this issue later this year.

Part of this evidence base is the ongoing evaluation of the Communities First programme on Outcomes since 2001 and Processes for the current phase. The evaluations were commissioned by my officials in May 2010 and are being undertaken by two external consultants – Amion and Old Bell 3 – who are working collaboratively.

The evaluators are expected to deliver their final report in May 2011, with some early interim findings likely to be available in November 2010.

Veronica German (South Wales East): Will the Minister outline what the cost of external audits for each Local Authority in Wales is. (WAQ56412)

Answer issued on 27 September 2010

The Welsh Assembly Government does not collect information on the cost of external audits for each Local Authority in Wales centrally. The question would need to be addressed to each authority directly.

To ask the Counsel General

Kirsty Williams (Brecon Radnorshire): Will the Counsel General outline the process by which the Welsh Assembly Government identifies the potential for, and negotiates the inclusion of, framework powers in Acts of Parliament. (WAQ56415)

Answer issued on 08 March 2011

I would like to inform you that the process by which the Assembly Government requests Framework powers for Wales in UK Bills is undertaken through negotiations by officials and Ministers with their counterparts in accordance with the Devolution Guidance Note 9 and the guidance published on the legislation pages of the Welsh Assembly Government website.

Kirsty Williams (Brecon and Radnorshire): Does the fact that certain policy areas are excepted under Schedule 7 to the Government of Wales Act present any legal obstacles to the devolution of legislative powers within the scope of those policy areas. (WAQ56419)

Answer issued on 08 March 2011

I would like to inform you that the Government of Wales Act 2006 allows for future amendments to Schedule 7, by Order in Council under section 109 of the Act. Such an Order in Council could for example, remove or amend existing exceptions to the Assembly's legislative competence, or add further subject.