

Answers to the Written Assembly Questions for answer on 5 July 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 was the annual cost of Welsh Assembly Government cars for the last three years for which figures are available. (WAQ56156)

Answer issued on 09 July 2010

The annual running costs of the Welsh Assembly Government cars for the last three years are shown in the table below. The figures include vehicle purchase, maintenance, fuel charges, insurance, road tax, and breakdown cover. Occasionally there are times when Assembly cars are not available and in these circumstances, private hire cars are utilised. The costs arising from these occasional uses are included in the table below.

An adjustment was necessary in the resources required in the latter part of 2007/8 to meet the additional Ministerial complement and responsibilities brought forward under provisions made in the Government of Wales Act 2006.

Year	Cost (£)
2007-2008	240,016
2008-2009	155,160
2009-2010	177,599

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): What was the cost of legal services to the Welsh Assembly Government for the last two years for which figures are available. (WAQ56157)

Answer issued on 06 July 2010

Please see my answer to WAQ55470 and the First Ministers response to WAQ54825, WAQ54831, WAQ54826, WAQ54827, WAQ54828, WAQ54830, WAQ54833 and WAQ54832. As the Welsh Assembly Government's accounts for 2009-2010 have yet to be finalised financial information relating to this year is not yet available.

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): What was the cost to the Welsh Assembly Government of employing agency staff for the last two years for which figures are available. (WAQ56158)

Answer issued on 08 July 2010

The cost to the Assembly Government of employing agency staff in the financial year 2008-09 was £2.7M. This information has previously been provided in WAQ54823 which further broke the amount down by Ministerial Department. The cost for the financial year 2009/10 is not yet available and work is continuing to produce these costs. We will confirm the costs in due course once this work is complete.

To ask the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing

Nerys Evans (Mid and West Wales): Will the Minister make a statement regarding the details surrounding the changes to TAN 6 and the timetable for these changes. (WAQ56160)

Answer issued on 06 July 2010

Technical Advice Note 6 Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities will be published this summer. TAN 6, together with associated amendments to Planning Policy Wales, will set out the role of the planning system in supporting the delivery of sustainable rural communities. They will include new planning policy and guidance for rural enterprise dwellings and One Planet developments. Once published, the new policy and guidance will be a material consideration that should be taken into account when development plans are prepared and decisions on relevant planning applications made.

Nerys Evans (Mid and West Wales): Will the Minister make a statement on the Welsh Assembly Government's One Planet policy. (WAQ56161)

Answer issued on 06 July 2010

One Wales: One Planet confirms sustainable development as the central organising principle of the Welsh Assembly government. It sets out our vision of a sustainable Wales, based on using only our fair share of the Earth's resources and becoming a fairer and more just nation. Sustainable development is the overarching strategic aim of all our policies across the Assembly Government.

To take this forward we have developed a Sustainable Development Charter to enable organisations to commit to making sustainable development their central organising principle. I launched the Charter in May this year at the Hay Festival when 22 organisations signed up to this initiative. The signatories represented industry, education, local authorities, sponsored bodies and third sector.

We have adopted the ecological footprint as one of five headline indicators of sustainable development in Wales.

More detail on the action that we are taking to reduce Wales' footprint is set out in:

- The Climate Change Strategy which will be published in October.
- Towards Zero Waste which sets the overarching strategic direction for waste and resources management in Wales.
- The Low Carbon revolution, Energy Policy Statement for Wales which sets out actions that will be taken to accelerate the transition to an efficient, low carbon-energy based economy in Wales.

To ask the Minister for Health and Social Services

Andrew RT Davies (South Wales Central): Will the Minister set out in detail the progress she has made against each of the recommendations of the 2009 Audit Office Report on Maternity Services. (WAQ56154)

Answer issued on 06 July 2010

Following the publication of the Public Account Committee report into Maternity Services in February 2010 I reported, in March 2010, on progress against the recommendations made within that report. This also included a response to all the recommendations within the Welsh Audit Office report.

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): Will the Minister advise if any Welsh Assembly Government money was spent on plans to merge Powys County Council and Powys Local Health Board. (WAQ56155)

Answer issued on 06 July 2010

No Welsh Assembly Government money has been spent on plans to merge Powys County Council and Powys Teaching LHB.

Andrew RT Davies (South Wales Central): Will the Minister make a statement on the role of Maternity Services Liaison Committees. (WAQ56159)

Answer issued on 06 July 2010

Three regional Maternity Services Liaison Committees were set up in 2005, with clear terms of reference and reporting mechanisms.

The Wales Audit Office, in their Report into Maternity Services published in 2009, found that most maternity services are not using their existing forums or committees effectively in service planning and development. For example, only 4 of the 13 trusts reported that their maternity services liaison committee has representation from LHBs, and only seven trusts said that the committee had shared recommendations for improvement with the trust board in the past year.

My officials carried out a review of the committees, at the end of 2009, and identified that they have not been successful and have been underused.

I have therefore agreed to disband the regional committees and have written to Chief Executives of all LHB's, requesting that they set up local Maternity Service Liaison Committees, with clear terms of reference and reporting mechanisms.