

REPORT BY THE ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND COUNTRYSIDE COMMITTEE

Tir Cynnal Regulations 2005

The Committee considered *The Tir Cynnal Regulations 2005* at its meeting on 5 October. The Committee had previously identified the Regulations for scrutiny.

In line with the Committee's protocol for handling the scrutiny of subordinate legislation, a number of questions were accepted beforehand for answer by the Minister:

1. Can the Minister provide details how funding for (i) Tir Gofal, (ii) Tir Cynnal, (iii) Tir Cymen will be divided within the Tir Cymru budget line, and can he detail also the amount allocated for running costs for each scheme?
2. What risk assessments have been made regarding possible difficulties or delays in making Tir Cynnal payments in light of proposals to bring in the administration of Tir Gofal payments into the Assembly, and any anticipatory surges in demand for applications?
3. What systems are in place to avoid the problems of long waiting lists that affected Tir Gofal applications?
4. Can the Minister detail how Tir Cynnal payments may be subject to change, and what opportunities may exist in increasing payment levels?
5. When will the next window open for applications?
6. Does the Minister envisage the need to increase modulation levels to fund Tir Cynnal and Tir Gofal in future years?
7. Can the Minister ensure match-funding for future years?

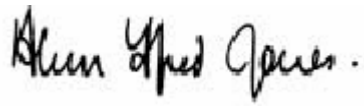
Question 1 was ruled to be beyond the scope of the regulations and the Minister agreed to provide information at a subsequent meeting.

On the issue of risk assessment, the Minister noted that Tir Gofal and Tir Cynnal payment regimes would be kept separate. With regard to waiting lists for payments, the Minister reminded Committee that farmers would be able to apply on the single payment application form and gave an assurance that there would be no waiting lists. On 4 and 5, the level of payment would remain the same for five years and farmers can apply for payments up to 15 May. On modulation, the

Minister could not give an assurance that the level would not change, but following further discussion it was noted that a level of 20 per cent could be set. On the issue of match funding, the Minister gave an assurance that he would continue to receive match funding.

A number of further issues arose during the discussion, with regard to monitoring, the inspection regime, access to farms and sharing of information with farmers. It was noted that the new scheme would cost £2 million.

Following the discussion, the Committee recommended approval of the Regulations without amendment.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Alun Ffred Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Alun Ffred Jones AM
Chair, Environment, Planning and Countryside Committee