

Written Questions answered between 4 and 18 January 2007

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

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

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Questions to the First Minister

Nick Bourne: Will the First Minister list details of all the companies from which he has accepted corporate hospitality since taking office? (WAQ44108)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan): To the best of my knowledge and records I have received corporate hospitality on six occasions—three with Ford Motor Company, two with International Rectifier and one with Alphasteel. On each occasion the purpose was to discuss their operations in Wales.

Leanne Wood: How many task and finish groups has the Welsh Assembly Government established for each year since 1999, how many reports have they published and what was the cost of producing them? (WAQ47681)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The First Minister: An updated list of the task and finish groups established by the Assembly since 1999 has been compiled and has been placed in the Library. The table below shows how many groups have been established in each year since 1999:

1999	2
2000	15
2001	34
2002	36
2003	48
2004	56
2005	37
2006 (To end July 2006)	30
Total	258

It has not been possible to provide the more detailed information you requested regarding the number of reports published and the cost of producing them. By their nature, task and finish groups are set up to advise officials and Ministers. Their advice is not generally made public although it is, of course, taken into account in the development and implementation of policy the results of which are published through the decision report process. The Assembly Government is committed to working in partnership and this is achieved to a great extent through the establishment of these groups. Groups do not have their own programme or administrative budgets and costs associated with their work, because of their marginal nature, are difficult to identify in a comprehensive way and at proportionate cost.

In line with a commitment given in response to a previous question, officials will continue to publish a six-monthly update on these groups although, in view of the costs involved in producing the list, future updates will not contain details on membership, terms of reference or outcome. These will however be available from a named contact for each department to be included in future lists.

Nick Bourne: What discussions has he held with members of the Arts Council of Wales in the last 12 months and will he publish details of these discussions? (WAQ46444)

Nick Bourne: What discussions has he had with members of the Arts Council of Wales regarding the appointment of a new chair in the last three months and will he publish details? (WAQ46445)

Nick Bourne: What discussions has he had with Cabinet colleagues regarding the Arts Council of Wales in the last 12 months and will he publish details of these discussions? (WAQ46446)

Nick Bourne: What discussions has he had regarding the appointment of a new chair of the Arts Council of Wales in the last 12 months and will he publish details? (WAQ46447)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The First Minister: Most of the documents relating to this request were released to you under previous requests, reference number 1238 sent to you on 11 April 2006, and have been published on the Assembly website www.information.wales.gov.uk. I can confirm that all other documents relating to this request have been published in the access to information disclosure log (reference 424 and 488) on the Assembly website.

Your request was considered according to the principles set out in the Assembly's Code of Practice on Public Access to Information (third edition). The code is published on the internet at www.information.wales.gov.uk. I can send you a printed copy if you prefer.

If you believe that I have not applied the Code of Practice on Public Access to Information correctly or have not followed the relevant laws, please contact me to request a first stage review. If after that, you are still not satisfied you may request a formal review by the Assembly. When dealing with any concerns, we will follow the principles of the Assembly's Code of Practice on Complaints which is available on the internet www.wales.gov.uk or by post.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. Normally, however, you should pursue the matter through our internal procedure before you complain to the Information Commissioner.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Also, if you think that there has been maladministration in dealing with your request then you may make a complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales who can be contacted at:

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
Ffordd yr Hen Gae
Pencoed
Bridgend
CF35 5LJ

Questions to the Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport

Owen John Thomas: Pa drafodaethau y mae'r Gweinidog wedi eu cael ynghylch ehangu Oriol Ynys Môn i greu canolfan deilwng i arddangos gwaith y diweddar Kyffin Williams? (WAQ47826) [W]

Ateb terfynol yn dilyn yr ateb dros dro.

Y Gweinidog dros Ddiwylliant, y Gymraeg a Chwaraeon (Alun Pugh): Yr wyf wedi trafod ag rweinydd Cyngor Ynys Môn am eu cynigion i greu Galeri Syr Kyffin Williams yn Oriel Ynys Môn, Llangefni. Mae fy swyddogion mewn cysylltiad â'r cyngor ynghylch y cynnig hwn.

Owen John Thomas: What discussions has the Minister had regarding the expansion of Oriol Ynys Môn to create a fitting centre to exhibit the work of the late Sir Kyffin Williams? (WAQ47826) [W]

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport (Alun Pugh): I have had discussions with the Leader of the Isle of Anglesey Council about its proposals for a Sir Kyffin Williams Gallery at Oriol Ynys Môn, Llangefni. My officials are in contact with the council about progress with the proposal.

Questions to the Minister for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks

Alun Cairns: Will the Minister list all inward investment projects, together with the numbers of jobs created in every constituency in Wales since the Assembly was established? (WAQ42498)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Minister for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks (Andrew Davies): The disproportionate costs in researching this information mean that I am unable to provide a response.

Lisa Francis: Can the Minister provide a breakdown of the proposed new structure for the Welsh Assembly Government's 'tourism' department post April 2006, including the roles and responsibilities/job specifications for the most senior positions? (WAQ44962)

Substantive answer following holding reply issued on 2 December.

Andrew Davies: Details of the senior posts may be found at www.wales.gov.uk/themesmergers/content/structure/edt-senior-posts-e.pdf.

Glyn Davies: What is the progress on enabling Broadband access for small exchanges? (WAQ46124)

Substantive answer following holding reply issued on 9 March 2006.

Andrew Davies: The regional innovative broadband support project, which I announced on 14 March, is being taken forward as part of the Welsh Assembly Government's Broadband Wales programme. This project has awarded a contract to BT Group to provide a first generation (512 kbps to 2 Mbps downstream) speed broadband service to the telephone exchange areas in Wales that currently cannot receive broadband. The project will also seek to provide a resolution to the broadband 'blackspot' areas across Wales.

My officials are confident that the exchange enablement process will begin immediately. Identified and addressable 'blackspots' will be tackled once the exchange enablement process is complete. I will write to you separately to provide an exact timetable of exchange enablement.

Rosemary Butler: How is the Welsh Assembly Government working with local authorities to promote the education of young drivers? (WAQ47437)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: We are working with local authorities to support a new initiative, Pass Plus Cymru, which was launched on 1 June. This unique driver training scheme aims to provide young drivers with additional driving skills and experience to help reduce their risk of being involved in road collisions. We provide funding to local authorities via the local road safety grant enabling them to subsidise the cost of the course through this funding.

Ann Jones: How many people in Wales have (a) died and (b) received serious head injuries as a result of a cycling accident in each of the last 10 years? (WAQ47669)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: The following table shows the number of pedal cyclist casualties, by severity, in Wales during the last 10 years for which data are available:

Pedal cyclist casualties (a) (b)

Killed or seriously injured (KSI)					
	Killed	Seriously injured	Total KSI	Slightly injured	All casualties
1996	7	117	124		
1997	2	80	82		
1998	8	78	86		
1999	6	83	89		
2000	3	60	63		
2001	8	66	74		
2002	3	60	63	435	498
2003	6	70	76	433	509
2004	9	57	66	450	516
2005	2	59	61	370	431

(a) The statistics refer to personal injury accidents on public roads reported to the police and forwarded to the National Assembly for Wales. Figures for deaths refer to people killed immediately or who died within 30 days of the accident.

(b) The data do not contain information on the type of injury sustained.

Lisa Francis: How much has the Welsh Assembly Government spent on adverts for its 'Do More with Broadband' campaign and would the Minister give a detailed breakdown of where advertisements have appeared and the cost of each? (WAQ48289)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: My Broadband Wales programme's marketing campaign 'Do More with Broadband' began in April 2006 and is currently running across Wales. The amount spent on this campaign is £184,719. A detailed breakdown of where adverts have been placed is given below.

'Do More with Broadband campaign' April 2006-Sept 2006

Type of Advert	Format	Distribution/Region	Cost
Outdoor	Roadside Billboards	Pan Wales	£65,510
	Interior/Exterior railway stations	Pan Wales	£11,424
	Bus interiors	Pan Wales	£26,000
	Leisure Centres	Pan Wales	£15,000
Radio	The Wave	Swansea/Cardiff	£5,392

	Real Radio (Wales)	Swansea/Cardiff	£14,528
	Coast FM 96.3	Colwyn Bay/Bangor	£1,492
	MFM 103.4	Chester/Wrexham	£2,656
Press	Press advertisements	Western Mail	£3,760
	Press advertisements	Powys County Times	£2,121
	Press advertisements	North Wales Weekly News	£2,316
	Press advertisements	Daily Post	£2,916
Trade Press	Magazine advertisements	Building for Leisure	£1,197
	Magazine advertisements	North Wales Living	£1,600
	Magazine advertisements	Welsh Farming	£3,456
	Magazine advertisements	Campaign Series	£4,154
	Magazine advertisements	Golwyg	£1,197
Online	IC Wales www.icwales.co.uk	Pan Wales	£20,000
e-media- Customer dial- up identifier	This is	Pan Wales	
	Network	Pan Wales	
	Business List buying	Pan Wales	
Total spend (April 06-Sept 06)			£184,719

Nick Bourne: What is the Welsh Assembly Government doing to improve road safety in Wales? (WAQ48321)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: We continue to develop and implement our wide-ranging road safety strategy which set casualty reduction targets to be met by 2010. The 2005 casualty figures show that we are now over three-quarters of the way towards the target of a 40 per cent reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured.

Eleanor Burnham: What representations have been made to the Welsh Assembly Government by the Wrexham, Shropshire and Marylebone Railway Company? (WAQ48324)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: I wrote to the Wrexham Shropshire and Marylebone Railway in February of this year stating that the Assembly Government would be interested to hear further proposals of their venture. WSMR submitted a business proposal and my officials subsequently met with WSMR to discuss all aspects of their business case in terms of costings and investment.

Eleanor Burnham: What negotiations has the Minister had with the Wrexham, Shropshire and Marylebone Railway Company? (WAQ48325)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: I wrote to the Wrexham Shropshire and Marylebone Railway in February of this year stating that the Assembly Government would be interested to hear further proposals of its venture. WSMR submitted a business proposal and my officials subsequently met with WSMR to discuss all aspects of their business case in terms of costings and investment.

Eleanor Burnham: What support has the Welsh Assembly Government offered to Wrexham, Shropshire and Marylebone Railway Company? (WAQ48326)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: I have asked my officials to undertake a thorough review of the project proposal to identify any funding mechanisms which could be available for this scheme.

Eleanor Burnham: What discussions has the Minister had with Wrexham County Borough Council regarding the Wrexham, Shropshire and Marylebone Railway Company? (WAQ48327)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: I have written to the deputy leader of the council this month. I informed him that the Welsh Assembly Government has considered the proposal to establish an operating base at Wrexham against the employment grant mechanisms currently available but that it has not been possible to pursue this approach for capital grant funding because the town of Wrexham falls outside the eligibility boundary for regional selective assistance grant aid. Also, the proposal put to the rail regulator is for an 'open access' service which, unlike a franchised service, is specifically not eligible for public subsidy.

I have asked my officials to undertake a thorough review of the project proposal to identify if any further funding mechanisms are available for this scheme.

Eleanor Burnham: What assessment has been made of the economic advantage of the Wrexham, Shropshire and Marylebone Railway Company plans to Wrexham? (WAQ48328)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: The proposal would create new employment of a permanent nature in the form of 55 new jobs, plus a direct rail link linking Wrexham to London. This is recognised. However, it has not been possible to pursue capital grant funding from the Welsh Assembly Government because the town of Wrexham falls outside the eligibility boundary for regional selective assistance grant aid.

I have asked my officials to undertake a thorough review of the project proposal to identify if any further funding mechanisms are available for this scheme.

Eleanor Burnham: What action is the Welsh Assembly Government taking to improve train services for the people of Wrexham and across north Wales as a whole? (WAQ48329)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: North Wales, along with all other parts of Wales, has benefited from Arriva Trains Wales's standard pattern timetable (SPT) which commenced on 11 December 2005. Benefits of the SPT are:

- additional 950 services a week across the network;
- more seats on peak-time train services;
- a 28 per cent increase in Sunday services;
- a new two-hourly direct service from Holyhead to Cardiff with connections at Shrewsbury for Aberystwyth;
- a 22.4 per cent increase in drivers and conductors;
- improved connections for journeys to and from London;

- a new two-hourly direct service from Milford Haven to Manchester via Swansea and Cardiff;
- Manchester services extended to Swansea and Carmarthen hourly;
- new early morning service into Aberystwyth from Birmingham;
- class 175 rolling stock being introduced on north/south train services and services to south-west Wales.

Other benefits to north Wales include:

Cardiff to Holyhead services

Arriva Trains Wales is introducing 12 modern class 175 trains into its fleet from December 2006 as direct replacement for the equivalent number of older class 158 trains. These trains will be deployed on the west Wales to Manchester service group and the Cardiff to Holyhead services.

Wrexham-Bidston Line

Welsh Assembly Government and Merseytravel have jointly commissioned a feasibility study to understand the potential scope and associated costs of either full or part electrification of the line. The feasibility study is being undertaken by Network Rail. The cost of full electrification is not known although a pre-feasibility study by the TAITH regional transport consortium indicated costs circa £60 million.

Enhancing the capacity between Wrexham and Saltney by dualling most of the present single line.

This was a recommendation of the Committee on Rail Infrastructure and Improved Passenger Services. TAITH regional transport consortium, Network Rail and Welsh Assembly Government have commissioned Scott Wilson Consultants to undertake an engineering feasibility study into increasing capacity and building additional stations. The study is nearing completion and is currently in draft format.

Consideration will be given to taking forward the committee's suggested improvement once the outcome of the engineering feasibility study is known and subject to the availability of funding in the light of future Welsh Assembly Government investment priorities and decisions.

Improvements for rail passengers in north Wales.

- £1.5 million funding for station improvements to 11 railway stations in north Wales;
- £0.5 million transport grant for improvements to the bus/rail interchanges at Flint and Shotton station;
- funding train services between Cardiff and Holyhead since May 2000;
- providing partnership funding to British Transport Police for a community safety manager and a uniform inspector for north Wales;
- encouraging Virgin Trains to run more trains to north Wales using modern rolling stock.

Station improvements.

The Welsh Assembly Government has provided £2.5 million for station improvements to 47 stations across south and mid Wales and £1.5 million for station improvements to 11 railway stations in north Wales.

These station improvements have improved rail safety and customer information displays, CCTV, computerised information systems, electronic help points and improved lighting have been provided.

Community safety manager.

We have provided partnership funding to British Transport Police for a community safety manager and a uniform inspector for north Wales.

British Transport Police is using this funding to boost its operational capability.

Arriva Trains Wales has also provided an operational vehicle for British Transport Police in north Wales and it allows all uniformed officers from any of the Welsh police forces free travel on all Arriva Trains Wales train services.

Alun Cairns: Would the Minister list the potential benefits and risks associated with public sector information and communications technology aggregation? (WAQ48355)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: The initial benefits of public sector broadband aggregation are:

- an effective and efficient collaborative procurement process;
- procurement of best value networking, through economies of scale and other efficiencies;
- creation of a network solution with appropriate resilience, security and reliability for its users;
- delivery of a connectivity solution for public services in Wales capable of supporting future projects and initiatives to realise further benefits.

The PSBA project team is managing the risks associated with this kind of project in a careful and rigorous manner.

Alun Cairns: Would the Minister make a statement on public sector ICT aggregation? (WAQ48356)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: The public sector aggregation project is being delivered by the Welsh Assembly Government to provide efficiencies and economies in the procurement and use of broadband network capacity to support public services in Wales.

Public sector organisations within Wales have traditionally separately procured their own IT networks in order to deliver their respective services. Many of the core networks are due for renewal, creating a unique opportunity for aggregating current and future demand across large parts of the public sector and to procure an all-Wales consolidated broadband network solutions for the delivery of public services.

Through core contracts and framework contracts the project will ensure the provision of broadband connectivity across the public sector and will be able to serve the needs of health, local government, higher and further education, fire and rescue, national parks, museums and libraries among others.

The effect of this large scale procurement will be not only to deliver financial savings to sectors but also operational and strategic benefits by creating an ICT network architecture which has the ability to facilitate increased and more efficient cross-sector collaborative working and inter-operability across the Welsh public services as set out in 'Making the Connections: Delivering Better Services for Wales' and 'Beyond Boundaries'.

The implementation of the public sector aggregation project is one of the first of its kind on this scale within the UK: it allows Wales to lead the way in the joined up public service agenda.

Alun Cairns: What partners are involved in public sector ICT aggregation, and how are they involved? (WAQ48360)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: All public service organisations in Wales will have the opportunity to benefit from the public sector broadband aggregation (PSBA) project through the innovative procurement approach being adopted.

The sectors which will benefit from the *core* network services are the NHS in Wales, local government and the higher and further education community. The framework will enable all parts of the public sector to purchase best value connectivity services for use in their own areas or organisations. An example would include wide area networks within unitary authorities.

There are a range of partners involved in the PSBA project:

- A) policy colleagues within the Welsh Assembly Government are represented on the advisory board. These strategic partners are responsible for ensuring that:
- i) the project supports and enables the Assembly's policies;
 - ii) impacts and potential benefits are understood by the Assembly's local sectors stakeholders;
 - iii) the implementation strategy is appropriate for each sector.
- B) external strategic partners are from Informing Healthcare Wales, the Welsh Local Government Association, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales and the United Kingdom Education and Research Network.
- C) User partners are NHS Wales (including trusts, hospitals and GPs), higher and further education, local government (including social services, schools, libraries, ICT learning centres and corporate offices) fire and rescue services, the national parks authorities and Welsh Assembly Government officials. Each of these partners has appointed representatives who sit on one of four local sector support boards to act as the organisation to speak on behalf of their own local user communities. Specific responsibilities for representatives are:
- i) Ensuring that they are able to represent local stakeholders and user sectors the PSBA project;
 - ii) Quality assuring and signing-off relevant project deliverables.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister make a statement about a reception hosted by the Assembly Government at the Vale of Glamorgan Hotel at May's FA Cup final, including costs incurred, invited guests, transport costs to and from the event, what benefits were accrued to Wales and what publicity was given to the event? (WAQ48876)

Andrew Davies: I am writing in response to your recent WAQ to the First Minister on a reception at the Vale of Glamorgan Hotel at May's FA Cup Final.

Fourteen guests were invited to the FA Cup Final to build and develop relationships with financial services companies that are being encouraged to invest in Wales for the first time plus existing investors that have the potential to re-invest more here. The question of publicity does not arise. Within the next few weeks, announcements are expected in relation to two successful outcomes from the event, involving about 100 well paid new jobs and in addition there are longer term prospects for a further 100 plus jobs. In addition, we were able to facilitate trade opportunities and to involve existing investors in assisting our inward investment efforts.

The overall cost of the whole event at the Vale of Glamorgan Hotel, guest transport and at the Cup Final was £34,683.92.

Questions to the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills

Owen John Thomas: A wnaiff y Gweinidog gymryd camau i sicrhau nad oes unrhyw oedi gyda'r broses o lunio rheoliadau ar gyfer adran 29 Deddf Plant 2004? (WAQ47807) [W]

Ateb terfynol yn dilyn yr ateb dros dro.

Y Gweinidog dros Addysg, Dysgu Gydol Oes a Sgiliau (Jane Davidson): Nodwyd cynigion Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru ar gyfer cychwyn adran 29 yn fy llythyr diweddaraf atoch, dyddiedig 10 Medi. Fe wnaethom hefyd drafod hyn fel rhan o fy adroddiad y Gweinidog i'r Pwyllgor Addysg, Dysgu Gydol Oes a Sgiliau ar 20 Medi.

Mae ein cynigion yn cael eu datblygu ar y cyd ar draws portffolios y Gweinidogion er mwyn adlewyrchu'r cyfleoedd trawsbynciol posibl.

Owen John Thomas: Will the Minister take steps to ensure that there is no delay in the process of making regulations for section 29 of the Children's Act 2004? (WAQ47807) [W]

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Jane Davidson): The Welsh Assembly Government's proposals for bringing forward commencement of section 29 were set out in my most recent letter to you, dated 10 September. We also discussed this as part of my Minister's report to the Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee on 20 September.

Our proposals are being developed in a co-ordinated way across ministerial portfolios to reflect the potential cross-cutting opportunities.

Owen John Thomas: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ymchwilio i'r ffordd y mae cyllid Cymorth, mewn rhai siroedd, yn methu â hyrwyddo buddiannau addysg trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg ym maes anghenion addysgol arbennig a'r sector addysgofal? (WAQ47866) [W]

Ateb terfynol yn dilyn yr ateb dros dro.

Jane Davidson: Byddwn yn falch o gynnal ymchwiliad o'r fath ac er mwyn gwneud hynny yr wyf yn gwahodd Mr Thomas i ysgrifennu ataf i ddarparu mwy o fanylion am ei bryderon.

Owen John Thomas: Will the Minister investigate the way Cymorth funding in some counties fails to promote the benefits of Welsh-medium education in the field of special educational needs and the educare sector? (WAQ47866) [W]

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Jane Davidson: I would be pleased to make such an investigation and in order to do so invite Mr Thomas to write to me providing more details regarding his concerns.

Questions to the Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside

Alun Cairns: Would the Minister list his activities to aid local authorities in identifying landfill sites and areas for recycling? (WAQ48243)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside (Carwyn Jones): The regional waste plans, funded by the Welsh Assembly Government, were published in 2004, and set out the additional waste management capacity required in each local authority to accommodate all waste streams, including landfill and recycling facilities, to meet EU waste directive targets.

The Assembly commissioned a project in 2005 to establish a geographical information system (GIS) to assist in the search for the most suitable locations for the new waste facilities and this project was disseminated in October 2005.

The Assembly Government is funding further work commissioned by the regional waste groups to refine the waste mapping GIS, to inform the revision of the regional waste plans that will be completed by 2008.

Ann Jones: What the total level of subsidies was given by his department to farmers in Wales in each of the last 10 years, and what each figure represents per farmer? (WAQ48245)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: The information you have asked for is not readily available from centrally held records without incurring a lengthy exercise. However I can provide you with some information for subsidy payments in the 2002 and 2005 scheme years for comparative purposes between the new single payment scheme and the previous common agricultural policy production subsidy schemes. The latter subsidies cover the arable area payments, sheep annual premium, suckler cow premium, beef special premium, extensification payments and slaughter premium schemes.

Under the 2005 SPS, £206.2 million was paid to Welsh farmers by the close of the 2005 payment window on 30 June 2006. This equates to an average payment per farmer of £11,500.

In the 2002 scheme year for the above CAP production schemes, £166 million was paid to Welsh farmers. This equates to an average payment per farmer of £9,823.

Elin Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on any response he made to the EC consultation on cattle compensation, which was conducted during August and September 2006? (WAQ48246)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: I refer you to my answer to WAQ48230.

Glyn Davies: What guidance has been issued to local planning authorities regarding the installation of wind turbines purchased from the DIY sector on their property? (WAQ48247)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: I assume you are referring to wind turbines for residential properties. No guidance has been issued to local planning authorities on the installation of domestic scale turbines purchased from the DIY sector. I have commissioned research, with the Department for Communities and Local Government, into the interface between microgeneration and planning permission. When I have the recommendations, I will consider what action is required.

Ann Jones: What plans does the Welsh Assembly Government have to change planning regulations as a consequence of the energy review? (WAQ48284)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: DTI have plans for changes to the rules relating to inquiries into major energy projects. The Assembly Government has no plans to change the legislation for which it is responsible.

Ann Jones: How many cases of pollution involving raw sewage being found on or near a beach around the Welsh coast have occurred since 2003 and will the Minister list the areas so affected, detail what action is being taken to eliminate such occurrences and will he make a statement? (WAQ48285)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: The Environment Agency advises that since 1 January 2003 it received 70 reports of sewage-related pollution incidents on or near the Welsh coast. Sixty-four were classified as category 4 or 3 (no or minor impact), six were classified category 2 (significant) and there were no category 1 (major) incidents. The significant incidents occurred at:

Date Reported	National Grid Ref	Location
17/02/2004	SH 57387 38866	Porthmadog (Gwynedd)
04/06/2004	SS 0588 9741	Manorbier Bay (Pembrokeshire)
29/06/2005	SN 38932 60143	New Quay Ceinwydd (Ceredigion)
12/09/2005	SM 86197 14048	Harold Stone (Pembrokeshire)
07/09/2005	SS 49297 85207	Holy's Wash (Port Eynon, Swansea)
20/08/2006	SN 23502 08092	Pendine (Carmarthenshire)

The Environment Agency attended and investigated each incident ensuring that all necessary remedial action was taken and, where appropriate, it instituted prosecutions of those responsible.

It is not possible to eliminate all short-term problems completely that are caused, for example, by leaks from sewers. If a pollution incident occurs that could result in a risk to the health of bathers, provision exists to warn the public and, if necessary, close any affected areas.

Glyn Davies: How many officials will be accompanying the Minister to attend the Hybu Cig Cymru Welsh Lamb launch in Dubai for the period 28 to 30 October and what will be the overall cost? (WAQ48287)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: I will be accompanied by my diary secretary and the director of the Food and Market Development Division. The overall costs for the two officials are estimated to be around £4,000.

Elin Jones: Will the Minister detail the total TB slaughter payments made in 2005-06 and to date in 2006-07, and will he detail the budget allocated for each financial year? (WAQ48290)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: In 2005-06 the final budget was £10.850 million with an outturn for TB slaughter payments, net of carcase receipts, of £12.375 million. The shortfall was made up from savings from elsewhere in my main expenditure group. The initial budget this financial year is £8 million with similar expenditure to date of £5.715 million.

Elin Jones: Will the Minister detail what projects are intended to be funded by the £8.1 million proposed in the draft budget to be moved from the revenue line in Tir Cymru to the Tir Cymru capital budget line? (WAQ48291)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: The £8.1 million in the 2007-08 draft budget to be moved from the Tir Cymru revenue to the capital budget line is to provide cover for capital works within Tir Gofal.

Ann Jones: What assessment has the Minister made of the problems caused by urban gulls and will he make a statement on local authorities powers to take measures aimed at minimising such problems? (WAQ48293)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: A limited number of our commoner British birds are recognised to cause significant and widespread damage throughout Wales. For this reason, the National Assembly for Wales, under the power conferred by section 16(1) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, issue a number of general licences which allow authorised persons to kill or take specified species of 'pest' birds for specified purposes. Herring gull, Great Black-backed gull and Lesser Black-backed gull are included on this list.

The problems caused by gulls in urban areas of Wales relate to health and safety issues, spread of disease, noise, and the management of litter and waste.

The management of urban gulls by local authorities involves an integrated approach encompassing environmental management, anti-roost measures and, ultimately, population control. This approach also requires the co-operation of businesses, residents and visitors. The most effective, long-term control solution is likely to involve restricting the birds' access to food, nesting and breeding sites.

There is no single approach that will provide a vigorous, long-lasting solution and the combination of techniques outlined above should be used to effectively tackle the difficulties posed by gulls.

Elin Jones: Will the Minister detail how the fallen stock scheme was funded for each year since its inception, and will he detail any limitations for contributions from public funds for those years and for future years? (WAQ48294)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: The national fallen stock scheme was launched in November 2004 to assist farmers in the safe removal of fallen stock. UK Government has part-funded the scheme and the Welsh Assembly Government contribution was set at £3.2 million split over three years, £1.5 million in 2004-05, £1.5 million in 2005-06 and £0.2 million in 2006-07. This funding is provided to farmers to subsidise collection costs. The recent independent review of the National Fallen Stock Company undertaken by Bob Bansback recommended an extension of the period of Government funding for a further year until November 2008. The extension, to which I have agreed, will not involve new commitment of Government funding but assist in the smooth transition to a post subsidy scheme.

Lisa Francis: How much of the funding for the proposed coastal protection scheme at Tywyn and Aberdyfi is from European priority funding? (WAQ48295)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: Eligibility for European funding is dependant upon a robust business case prepared and submitted by the promoting authority. Gwynedd Council has the powers to promote such works in this area and would be the relevant promoting authority. I understand that Gwynedd Council have not submitted any application for the current round of European funding in regard to this scheme. Applications for funding from the 2007 to 2013 round have yet to be invited.

Lisa Francis: What is the Welsh Assembly Government funding for the proposed coastal protection scheme at Tywyn and Aberdyfi dependent upon and when is it anticipated that funding will be released for this scheme? (WAQ48296)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: Welsh Assembly Government provides financial support in the form of grant aid to local authorities across Wales which seek to promote both flood and coastal defence schemes. Grant rates for such schemes can vary between 35 per cent and 100 per cent depending on existing burden and affordability criteria. Eligibility for financial support depends on a sound business case demonstrating both a clear understanding of the problems to be resolved and a proposed solution which is technically, environmentally and economically sustainable. Officials are now considering the detail of an application from Gwynedd Council with a view to determining whether the current proposal would be eligible for support.

The estimated cost of the proposal for the Tywyn and Aberdyfi scheme is approximately £16 million. Local authorities across Wales have identified a further £70 million of investment required for flood and coastal defence infrastructure improvements. The Welsh Assembly Government's budget for such work for 2006-07 is £5.8 million. In the past this budget has not been fully utilised, however it is clear that in the future it is unlikely that this budget will be sufficient to satisfy all the potential requests for support.

Recognising this fact local authority officers from Gwynedd Council have met Assembly Government officials on several occasions to discuss the funding position and how this can be addressed. As a result of these discussions a study to investigate all funding options was commissioned. The councils' report, which was received on 25 September, does not appear to identify any feasible funding solutions at the present time.

In early September I met a delegation of members and officers to consider the current situation. At that meeting I explained that given the size of the proposed scheme and the current financial situation it is unlikely that this scheme could be funded wholly from the Assembly Government's flood and coastal defence budget. I have however instructed officials to explore alternative sources of funding from within the Assembly Government and I await their findings.

Lisa Francis: How much funding has the Welsh Assembly Government agreed to give to the proposed coastal protection scheme at Tywyn and Aberdyfi? (WAQ48297)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: Until a proposal has been approved for grant eligibility then the Welsh Assembly Government is unable to commit funding to a particular scheme. However given the estimated cost of this scheme and the anticipated funding difficulties I have provided an indicative figure as to the possible level of Assembly Government funding to be used as the basis for the future planning of the scheme. I indicated the possibility of up to £2.5 million per annum for the next five years to be allocated from existing budgets.

Elin Jones: Will the Minister detail his reasons for the reduced bid for the Wales Rural Observatory in the 2007-08 draft budget? (WAQ48301)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: From 2007, the observatory will be linked directly to the monitoring and evaluation of the rural development plan and attract European funding of £150,000 annually under the technical

assistance measure. In addition, £150,000 annually will be available from the Assembly Government. There is no reduction in funding for the observatory.

The Welsh Assembly Government is currently considering how it will use the income derived from any wind-farm development on the land managed by the Forestry Commission in Wales.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Will the Minister make a statement on the responsibility of cutting roadside hedges and detail any funding available to landowners? (WAQ47528) *Transferred for answer by the Minister for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks.*

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Minister for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks (Andrew Davies): In general roadside hedges mark boundaries to property and as such their maintenance is the responsibility of adjoining landowners, not the highway authority.

Exceptionally a highway authority may be responsible for a hedge if it was created to mitigate the environmental impact of a new scheme and cut other hedges to maintain the safety of road users, where the owner is in default of a notice properly served to that effect under section 154 of the Highways Act 1980.

There are two schemes providing funding for hedges on agricultural land:

Tir Gofal, a scheme sponsored by the Countryside Council for Wales, pays for the planting of new hedges but is currently closed to applications pending a move to Assembly Government administration later this year; and

Tir Cynnal, a scheme administered by the Rural Payments Division of the Department for Environment Planning and Countryside, provides for the preservation of hedgerows and includes a training element to equip landowners with the skills necessary to cut and lay hedges to ensure their preservation.

Questions to the Finance Minister

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Will the Minister make a statement about any consideration given to raising the break off point for local authority council tax? (WAQ46773)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Finance Minister (Sue Essex): A council tax revaluation working group was established in May 2002 in conjunction with the Welsh Local Government Association to consider numerous aspects of the current council tax system and options for change with the key aim of revaluation as fairness to the council taxpayer.

The group's objectives related specifically to investigating the relationships between the existing bands and to consider changes to the number of bands and their values as well as the proportions that might be used. This included consideration of more progressive bands whilst keeping the amount raised from council tax across Wales constant.

The choice was narrowed to add one extra band at the top of the scale (band I). This was largely because that while property values are not a perfect link to the ability to pay they are, in the majority of cases, a good indication. It was considered an inevitable consequence that more progressive proportions, on top of an upward band change would mean higher levels of tax for householders in the bands G to I. However

the amount of tax payable, relative to property values, for higher banded properties would still be significantly lower than that paid by the lower value properties. The profile of the Welsh housing stock was a consideration, in that the number of high valued properties in Wales was so small (only 5,106 in band I) that the effects of significant progressive change for the higher bands would not be sufficient to reduce the proportions payable in the lower bands.

Nick Bourne: Has the Minister received any correspondence or complaints about the performance of Carmarthenshire Environmental Health in the last 12 months and, if so, will she provide details? (WAQ46892)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Sue Essex: I have not received any correspondence or complaints about the performance of Carmarthenshire Environmental Health in the last 12 months.

Michael German: What discussions has the Minister had with UK Government Ministers regarding the future funding of the Welsh Assembly? (WAQ47153)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Sue Essex: I have regular meetings with the finance Ministers of each part of the UK at which issues of funding are discussed.

Alun Ffred Jones: Beth oedd cyfraniad y taliadau treth annomestig i gyllid Llywodraeth y Cynulliad am y flwyddyn 2005-06? (WAQ47429) [W]

Alun Ffred Jones: Beth yw'r amcangyfrif am gyfraniad y taliadau treth annomestig i gyllid Llywodraeth y Cynulliad am y flwyddyn 2006-07? (WAQ47430) [W]

Ateb terfynol yn dilyn yr ateb dros dro.

Sue Essex: Mae incwm yr ardreth annomestig genedlaethol yn cael ei ailddosbarthu i awdurdodau Cymru yn ôl maint eu poblogaeth. Mae'r ffigurau archwiliedig fydd yn datgan faint o incwm a dderbyniwyd yn 2005-06 wrthi'n cael eu casglu. Caiff cyfrif yr ardreth annomestig ei chyhoeddi yn y man. At bwrpas paratoi setliad refeniw llywodraeth leol 2005-06, yr ardreth annomestig genedlaethol y rhagwelwyd ei chasglu oedd £672 miliwn.

Alun Ffred Jones: What was the contribution of non-domestic rate payments to the Welsh Assembly Government's budget for the year 2005-06? (WAQ47429) [W]

Alun Ffred Jones: What was the estimated contribution of non-domestic rate payments to the Welsh Assembly Government's budget for the year 2006-07? (WAQ47430) [W]

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Sue Essex: National non-domestic rate income is redistributed among the authorities in Wales based on population shares. The audited returns setting out what income was received in 2005-06 are currently being collected. The non-domestic rate account will be published in due course. For the purposes of preparing the local government revenue settlement for 2005-06, the amount forecast to be collected in national non-domestic rate income was £672 million.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister detail council tax benefit take-up for each year since 1999, and compare those with the number eligible? (WAQ48228)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Sue Essex: Responsibility for council tax benefit has not been devolved to the Welsh Assembly Government and remains the responsibility of the Department for Work and Pensions. We do not therefore collect data on take-up nor provide estimates on the number of people who may be eligible in Wales. There are, however, some data available on the DWP web-site at <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/hbctb.asp>. The following table gives the number of claimants in Wales since 2002, the earliest date for which data are available.

Quarter ending	Number of CTB Claimants
Feb 2002	264,000
Feb 2003	256,000
Feb 2004	178,100
Feb 2005	272,000
Feb 2006	278,500

The DWP provides estimates of take-up of benefits across Great Britain as a whole, which are presented as ranges within which true take-up is expected to lie. For council tax benefit, during the same period, it is estimated that between 63 per cent and 72 per cent of eligible claimants are actually claiming.

I have established a council tax benefit working group to look at ways in which take-up of this benefit could be improved across Wales and to identify any suggestions for legislative changes which could be made to the Department for Work and Pensions. The group acts as a forum for the dissemination of best practice in the area of council tax benefit administration and take-up. In addition it seeks to act as liaison between local authorities in Wales, the Department of Work and Pensions and representatives of service users.

For 2006-07 we have committed an extra £1.5 million in grants to local authorities to support them in their efforts to increase take-up of council tax benefit in Wales. Grants were allocated on the basis of the standard spending assessment and authorities are free to decide how the grant moneys should be spent.

A range of activities are taking place including:

- purchase of software to make the claims process simpler and faster, and to allow forms to be filled in by third parties so the claimant only needs to check and sign;
- working with the voluntary sector to target those most in need; and
- employing dedicated staff on fixed-term contracts to deal directly with possible claimants.

It is too early to judge what impact these additional activities are having as regards increasing take-up of this benefit.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister detail the estimated cost to local government in Wales of implementing equal pay claims, separately identifying the costs for job evaluations and back pay? (WAQ48288)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Sue Essex: The report of the expenditure sub group identified an estimated recurring cost of 4.5 per cent on the local government pay bill to implement the single status agreement. It was agreed with the WLGA that this increase would be spread over three years. I have provided through the local government finance settlement an average increase of 1.5 per cent in the non-teaching pay bill in each of the last two years

and I will be making similar provision in the settlement for 2007-08. This equates to a total of £54 million over three years. As regards the question of back pay, the expenditure sub group report indicated that the total cost for local government in Wales could be in the order of £250 to £300 million. However, until all authorities have completed their single status negotiations it is not possible to give a precise figure. Ultimately, it is for local authorities to put in place the necessary arrangements to deal with the costs arising from single status agreements.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister detail her reasons for the transfer of funding of £21.5 million to the Home Office? (WAQ48302)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Sue Essex: The annual transfer to the Home Office is an integral part of the way police authorities in Wales are funded and compares to similar arrangements that used to exist between the Department of Local Government and Communities and Home Office for funding police forces in England. DCLG has now permanently transferred resources to the Home Office. The transfer is top sliced from the police authority revenue support grant settlement and is used to fund services managed centrally by the Home Office, for example the Serious and Organised Crime Agency. A number of specific grants are also funded by the top-slice. The last time these services were reviewed in 2003-04 the benefits to policing services in Wales amounted to £22 million, which is more than the top-slice from the police revenue support grant in Wales.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister detail on what projects the £5.091 million from the Department for Communities and Local Government will be spent on? (WAQ48303)

Sue Essex: The transfer from the Department for Communities and Local Government is an integral part of the complex way police authorities in Wales are funded. The resources form part of the budget line for general police funding through the police revenue support grant. This provides core funding for policing services and does not fund specific initiatives.

Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Will the Minister produce a quarterly statistical bulletin on combined waiting times of patients discharged during the quarter being reported upon? (WAQ42497)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Minister for Health and Social Services (Brian Gibbons): Waiting times bulletins are issued on a monthly and quarterly basis. Systems are currently being developed to measure total combined waiting lists. However, it is not my intention at present to introduce a retrospective system for total combined waits.

Jonathan Morgan: What training is given to school nurses in support of the objectives set out in Welsh Health Circular (WHC 97/31) 'Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs in Schools'? (WAQ44936)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The mapping of school nursing in Wales, which was undertaken in 2004, found that 55 per cent hold a professional qualification in school nursing or children's nursing. In house training will vary across Wales depending on the employer, for example, whether employed by a trust, the local

education authority or a school. The role of the school nurse may also vary, but all qualified school nurses are registered general nurses.

The current specialist qualification training courses for school nurses, provided by universities in Wales, will evolve to become specialist community public health nursing courses. Universities are currently considering the curricula for these courses and HEIs in Wales are exploring the possibility of an all-Wales approach.

School nursing was discussed by the Cabinet sub-committee on children and young people in October and an across-Assembly group is being formed to agree a consensus on the role and to take forward a modern school nursing service in Wales.

Jenny Randerson: Are figures collected for the number of children in Wales who are prescribed anti-depressants? (WAQ46249)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: This information is not held centrally. Data on prescriptions are collated according to the British National Formulary classification of drugs. Data recorded are therefore for the number of items prescribed rather than numbers of individual people. The specific age of recipients is not recorded and the young people's age exemption threshold of 25 provides only a broad indication of age.

Jenny Randerson: Are there any plans to evaluate the health impact on the phasing out of charges? (WAQ46854)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: Research from Citizens' Advice has suggested that prescription charges can deter people from asking for national health service prescriptions and from having their prescription dispensed, either in part or in its entirety. If patients cannot afford the medicines they need to treat their condition, the long-term costs to the NHS could be far greater in terms of avoidable hospital treatment.

Phasing out prescription charges is a policy that is unique to Wales, and is part of a wider strategy aimed at reducing inequalities, promoting good health, supporting self care and tackling the problems of poverty and low income. To evaluate the impact of the phasing out and subsequent abolition of charges in isolation would therefore be very difficult.

The policy underlines the Assembly's commitment to providing the best possible access to healthcare for the people of Wales and I would hope that real health benefits will be seen in the long term.

Jonathan Morgan: How many staff are currently employed by the Department for Health and Social Services and will the Minister give an annual breakdown of this figure dating back to 1999? (WAQ47046)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: Sir Jon Shortridge will write to you and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Jonathan Morgan: What is the total cost of running Health Commission Wales and will the Minister give an annual breakdown for this figure dating back to its inception? (WAQ47536)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The total running costs of Health Commission Wales from inception are:

2003-04	£1.161 million
2004-05	£1.745 million
2005-06	£1.818 million

This represents 0.32 per cent, 0.39 per cent and 0.37 per cent of total programme expenditure for the same periods.

Jonathan Morgan: What provision is there for people with eating disorders in Wales and will the Minister make a statement? (WAQ47538)

Jonathan Morgan: How many patients with eating disorders have been sent to England for treatment and what proportion is this of the total number of Welsh patients suffering eating disorders who have been referred for NHS treatment? (WAQ47537)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: If a patient requires treatment that falls into the tertiary level services provided by Health Commission Wales, and meets their commissioning criteria, a treatment package is commissioned in England. Health Commission Wales is currently in the process of developing eating disorder services for adults in Wales.

Under 18s who present with an eating disorder are dealt with by the community intensive therapy teams and by the tier 4 provision in Wales (the Harvey Jones Unit in the south and Cedar Court in the north), if they require this level of treatment.

Patients who present with eating disorders who do not require an in-patient or specialist day-care package are dealt with by local services.

In 2005-06, 48 Welsh patients received some treatment in England for an eating disorder at tertiary level. Health Commission Wales does not keep data for the number of patients referred for NHS treatment.

Jenny Randerson: Does the Minister intend to announce a national service framework for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease on similar lines to that produced recently for England? (WAQ47627)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: No. However, we are developing service development and commissioning directives for respiratory conditions in Wales, which we aim to release for consultation in August this year. The document will be part of a series of strategic publications for redesigning the care of chronic conditions and it builds upon the agenda established by 'Designed for Life'. It is aimed at the health and social care community—planners, commissioners, and providers of services—as well as people living with respiratory conditions, the voluntary sector, carers and wider support networks. A wide range of key stakeholders, including the British Lung Foundation, have been actively engaged in the development of this work.

The purpose of the document is to set out a number of key actions to improve the health and quality of life of people with respiratory conditions, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and to promote the positive lifestyle changes needed to help prevent the onset of these chronic disorders. It aims to ensure that services are configured effectively to provide the right services in the right place, and at the

right time. The directives underpin the commissioning and organisation of services for people with respiratory conditions in Wales.

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister clarify what guidance is provided to local authorities regarding charging for respite care, and will he detail variation in costs for each authority? (WAQ47648)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: By law local authorities must charge for residential care and have discretion as to whether to charge for non-residential care. Under the Assembly Government's guidance 'Charging for Residential Accommodation Guide' respite care provided in a residential home is classed as a temporary stay. An assessment of a person's ability to pay a charge is not normally made for the first eight weeks of a temporary stay. Instead authorities can charge what it appears to them is reasonable for an individual to pay. After eight weeks an individual is expected to meet the residential care charges and a full financial assessment of his or her ability to pay is carried out.

For respite care provided at home or in a non-residential care setting it is a matter for the authority as to whether to make a charge. Our guidance to local authorities 'Fairer Charging Policies for Home Care and other Non-residential Social Services' provides general good practice guidance on charging for such services.

The Assembly Government does not hold information on the level of local authority charges for respite care.

Leanne Wood: Will the Minister state how much it costs per minute for people calling from outside hospitals to call patients in hospitals? (WAQ47752)

Leanne Wood: Will the Minister list what contracts the NHS Wales has awarded to Patientline to run hospital phone services, stating the value of those contract(s) and any limits on the price the company can charge for call costs included in the terms of the contract? (WAQ47758)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The NHS in England has made a statutory commitment to establish bedside entertainment and telephony services, and many hospitals have contracted to use Patientline's services. Wales has decided not to pursue this policy, and it remains a matter for individual NHS trusts in Wales whether such systems are introduced. Information on which trusts have contracts with Patientline or the costs per minute for people calling from outside to patients in hospitals is not held centrally.

Huw Lewis: Will the Minister make a statement on what steps the Assembly Government has taken to improve public safety following last year's E.coli outbreak in the south Wales Valleys? (WAQ48031)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The acting Chief Medical Officer published a report in January 2006 identifying a series of measures to reduce the risk of another outbreak. Work is already under way to implement these recommendations.

Since the outbreak, there has been a focus to raise people's awareness of the need to follow basic hygiene rules. In June this year we launched a new bilingual booklet called 'Mind the Germs'. This provides simple, practical advice to staff in nursery and pre-school settings helping them to better understand infections, what they can do to reduce the risk of them occurring, and what to do to reduce the risk of

infections spreading. This has been circulated to schools and nurseries. Following the success of 'Mind the Germs', we are in the final stages of developing the booklet 'Teach Germs a Lesson' which is intended to reinforce the importance to primary and secondary school children and teaching staff of preventing and dealing with infections efficiently and effectively.

There is now a public inquiry underway, led by Professor Hugh Pennington. The inquiry team is gathering information for a thorough inquiry into the outbreak and its handling and will make recommendations to reduce the risk of reoccurrence and protect public safety.

Jenny Randerson: Does the Minister give any guidance to trusts on the use of posters and other promotional material, where hospitals use the same waiting and consulting rooms for fertility and gynaecology clinics as they do for antenatal clinics? (WAQ48248)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The Welsh Assembly Government does not direct or guide NHS trusts on the use of posters and other promotional material in waiting and consulting rooms for fertility and gynaecology clinics. This and other operational matters remain the responsibility of each individual NHS trust to determine.

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister detail the administration cost of each NHS trust since 2003? (WAQ48274)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: There is no single definition of administrative costs reported in the annual accounts of NHS trusts and the provision of this information is not therefore possible. The information could not be provided without a single definition being established and without a detailed information collection exercise subsequently being undertaken. The cost involved would prohibit the collection of this information.

Ann Jones: How many deaths were there in Wales in which alcohol was the primary cause in each of the last five years? (WAQ48275)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The following table shows the number of alcohol related deaths in Wales in each of the last five years for which data are available.

Alcohol-related deaths(1) for normal residents(2) of Wales by sex and age group, 2000 to 2004(3)

Gender	Age Group	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Male	15-44	40	42	45	53	46
Male	45-74	157	184	163	192	199
Male	75+	14	9	19	30	16
Female	15-44	25	28	27	27	21
Female	45-74	95	104	82	95	109
Female	75+	15	29	29	25	27
Persons	All ages	346	396	365	422	418

Note 1

The definition of alcohol-related deaths which has been used by the Office for National Statistics only includes those causes regarded as being most directly due to alcohol consumption. It does not include other diseases where alcohol has been shown to have some causal relationship, such as cancers of the mouth, oesophagus and liver.

For the year 2000 the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision was used. This revision listed the following as the underlying causes of death related to alcohol consumption:

- Alcoholic psychoses
- Alcohol dependence syndrome
- Non-dependent abuse of alcohol
- Alcoholic cardiomyopathy
- Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis
- Accidental poisoning by alcohol

For the years 2001-04 the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) was used. To maintain comparability with earlier years the following list were used:

- Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol
- Alcoholic cardiomyopathy
- Alcoholic liver disease
- Chronic hepatitis, not elsewhere classified
- Fibrosis and cirrhosis of liver
- Accidental poisoning by and exposure to alcohol

Note 2

'Normal resident' refers to anyone for whom an address in Wales was recorded when their death was registered.

Note 3

For 2000 figures relate to deaths registered in each calendar year (deaths registered in a calendar year are those recorded at a register office in the period).

For 2001-04 figures relate to deaths occurring in each calendar year (deaths occurring in each calendar year are those deaths which occurred during the period. There is therefore the possibility of small differences where registrations are recorded in a different year to the death).

Ann Jones: What was the incidence of child asthma in Wales in each of the last 25 years? (WAQ48276)

Ann Jones: What was the incidence of adult asthma in Wales in each of the last 25 years? (WAQ48277)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: Some information on asthma is available from the Welsh health survey and the percentage of people reporting that they are currently being treated for asthma is shown in the table below. Comparable information for years before 2003-04 is not available.

	2003-04	2004-05
Adults (aged 16 & over)	10	10
Children (aged under 16)	12	11

Source: Welsh health survey.

Notes: The Welsh health survey is based on a sample of the general population living in private households in Wales. Around 16,000 adults and 4,000 children participate in the survey each year. The

results are based on a self-completion questionnaire (completed by adults on their own behalf and by a parent/guardian on a child's behalf), and therefore reflect people's own understanding of their health rather than a clinical assessment of their medical condition.

Ann Jones: What assessment has the Minister's department made of the use by (a) Welsh NHS trusts and (b) local health boards of money allocated for sexual health services? (WAQ48278)

Ann Jones: What recent discussions have the Minister's department had with LHBs and trusts in Wales regarding spending on sexual health services and will he make a statement? (WAQ48279)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: An additional £500,000 has been provided by the Welsh Assembly Government from April 2005 to a number of key service developments across Wales. A service specification has been issued to LHBs to help inform the commissioning process. Most NHS trusts now have detailed action plans in place to deliver the new integrated community based service. The modernisation programme director and my department's regional offices are working with the remaining trusts to identify the changes needed and how they will be achieved.

Draft quality requirements designed to ensure high quality sexual health services have been developed and will be issued for public consultation shortly. The all-Wales contraception and sexual health senior nurses forum is mapping nursing workforce development needs with the intention of developing education and training programmes, for nurses working in sexual health services. The advisory group for sexual health will shortly be considering a competence framework to underpin the development of a more nurse-led service. It will also be considering the results of detailed work on how high quality accessible testing for chlamydia in the under-25 age group can best be introduced across Wales. The group will be developing an audit tool which commissioners and providers can use to measure the quality of their sexual health services and ensure they are meeting the requirements of the Assembly Government's policy aims.

During 2006-07, the good progress made in the previous year needs to be built on further and action taken to tackle those services which are not moving forward as they should. Through effective performance management, my department's regional offices will monitor this progress and ensure that the NHS continues to make the improvements needed.

Ann Jones: How many GP practices have opted out of providing childhood immunisation services following the introduction of the new GP contract in 2003 and where each is located? (WAQ48280)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: As at 30 September 2005 there were 497 GP practices in Wales. On current information provided by the local health boards, five practices have opted out of providing childhood immunisation services following the introduction of the new general medical services contract on 1 April 2004. Four of these are located within the Powys LHB area and one within the Bridgend LHB area. Both LHBs have commissioned the re-provision of this service for the patients of those practices who have opted out.

In addition, two other practices, one located within Caerphilly LHB, and one within Merthyr Tydfil LHB, do not provide this service. However, this is a historical position which predates the new GMS contract.

Ann Jones: What steps is the Minister taking to reduce the rate of suicide amongst people over the age of 75? (WAQ48281)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: Suicide prevention is a priority for services in Wales. It should be addressed by delivering high quality and responsive evidence based care using relevant National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidelines and the recommendations of the national confidential inquiry into homicide and suicides, 'Safety First'.

Work continues to reduce suicide through the national service framework and through implementing strategies promoting social inclusion. The Welsh Assembly Government commissioned the National Public Health Service in Wales to develop good practice guidance around suicide prevention. Four draft modules have now been published on the health of Wales information service website. This guidance will apply for people of all ages.

Ann Jones: What is the Minister's target for reducing the rate of suicide among people over the age of 75? (WAQ48282)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The national health-gain targets and indicators provide both focus and direction for improving health and reducing health inequalities in Wales. These high-level targets provide a bridge between existing and future policies and action plans at national and at local levels.

A health outcome target for mental health is that by 2012 the European standardised mortality rate from suicide (including undetermined deaths) at all ages will be reduced by at least 10 per cent to no more than 11.1 per 100,000.

Ann Jones: What funding was allocated to work aimed at prevention of suicide in older people in the last year for which figures are available? (WAQ48283)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: It is for local health boards and local authorities to assess local health and social needs to make planning and commissioning decisions within the resources made available by the Welsh Assembly Government.

Additional investment will be used to improve the way mental health services are planned and delivered. It will also help develop community infrastructure and reconfigure and modernise mental health services in Wales.

The Welsh Assembly Government has provided funding to MIND for the sponsorship of 'applied suicide intervention skills training' workshops throughout Wales. The training is open to anyone interested in suicide prevention, but especially those involved in delivering front-line services to the public, such as the police, council staff and youth-service providers. It has also been developed to help ordinary people recognise those at risk of suicide and provide a suicide 'first aid'.

The mental health promotion action plan currently out for consultation proposes a range of action to improve the mental health and wellbeing of older people.

Ann Jones: What was the level of expenditure on health in real terms at today's prices in each of the last 25 years? (WAQ48292)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: This information is not collected centrally.

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister detail his reasons for the reduction of £692,000 in the bid for better access in the 2007-08 draft budget? (WAQ48298)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The reduction is due to transfers from the better access budget expenditure line in respect of:

- support for service and financial framework targets for cancer waiting times into the cancer budget expenditure line;
- endoscopy training into the education and training budget expenditure line;
- orthopaedics specialist registrars, Delivery/Support Unit and second offer scheme transferring into the LHBs and trusts and central budgets revenue expenditure budget expenditure line.

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister detail his reasons for the reduction of £13.3 million in the bid for trust and LHB capital in the 2007-08 draft budget? (WAQ48299)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The reduction is as a result of funding transferring into a new social services capital funding BEL. This funding is being used to progress the implementation of telecare services and to deliver a fully integrated health and social care community equipment service.

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister detail his reasons for the reduction of £5.6 million in the bid for primary care in the 2007-08 draft budget? (WAQ48300)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The reduction is as a result of a reprioritisation of the budgets contained within the primary care BEL used to manage pressures within the health and social services main expenditure group.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister make a statement on his strategy to treat autism in Wales? (WAQ48331)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The autistic spectrum disorder strategic action plan will cover adult and children's services across the devolved responsibilities of the Welsh Assembly Government. It will identify responsibilities at national and local level to deliver on specific actions that require a co-ordinated approach to planning, commissioning and delivery of services for people with ASD across health, education and social services and with partners in other agencies and areas of non-devolved responsibility.

The plan builds on the work of a steering group representing key interests and the input of key stakeholders including Autism Cymru and the National Autistic Society.

The consultation document on the draft plan will be issued later this year.

Michael German: Will the Minister make a statement on the procedures which prevent 'health tourism' in Wales? (WAQ48383)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The NHS provides healthcare for people who live in the UK. People who do not normally live in this country are not automatically entitled to access NHS services free of charge. This is regardless of their nationality, whether they hold a British passport, whether they have lived and paid National Insurance contributions and taxes in the past.

The NHS (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations 1989, as amended in 2004, place a legal obligation on NHS trusts in Wales to establish if patients to whom they are providing NHS hospital services are not normally resident in the UK. If they are not, then charges may be applicable unless the patient meets one of the exemption categories outlined in the regulations.

Lisa Francis: Pursuant to his answer to WAQ48306, will the Minister confirm the exact number of hepatologists in Wales? (WAQ48436)

Lisa Francis: Pursuant to his answer to WAQ48306, will the Minister make a statement on his Government's plans to recruit more hepatologists in Wales? (WAQ48437)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: There are no hepatologists practising in Wales at present. In Wales, patients with liver disease are treated principally by gastroenterologists. Therefore, although there are plans to expand hepatology services in Wales, these do not include the recruitment of hepatologists.

Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister give a progress report on community regeneration schemes in Mid and West Wales? (WAQ46400)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration (Edwina Hart): Community regeneration schemes in Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Powys and Pembrokeshire include those of the fourteen Communities First partnerships. While at various stages of development all are progressing well supported by dedicated Welsh Assembly Government funding of £9,004,047. Seventeen projects under the community facilities and activities programme, worth £1,121,633, have been approved to support community regeneration in these Communities First areas.

Other community regeneration schemes supported in these counties include 88 community facilities and activities programme projects, worth £5,461,129, and seven projects under the community and voluntary local regeneration fund, worth £1,725,027. These projects include funding for grant schemes of the county voluntary councils and key funds for community and voluntary organisations.

The physical regeneration fund supports the regeneration of community facilities, town centres and tackles prominent dereliction and decay. Funding of £4,507,031 to such schemes has helped to create confidence and opportunities in deprived communities in these areas.

Ann Jones: What consideration has the Minister given to handing out £5,000 to all first-time buyers in Wales? (WAQ47809)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Edwina Hart: This would not be an effective use of my housing budget as not all first-time buyers would need a subsidy. A much better way to help first-time buyers would be to extend our homebuy scheme, which is targeted specifically towards those who are unable to meet their housing needs without assistance. I am currently looking at the options for taking this forward.

Questions to the Business Minister

Jonathan Morgan: What is the Welsh Assembly Government's annual spend on communications? (WAQ47077)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Business Minister (Jane Hutt): In 2005-06 the Welsh Assembly Government spent £2,000,000 on staffing the Communications Division. In addition to this, £2,551,754 was spent on paid publicity which includes expenditure on public health campaigns such as smoking cessation and seasonal flu but excludes expenditure on recruitment and public notices and covers only expenditure procured by the Central Communications Division. A further £570,000 was spent on corporate activity including the Welsh Assembly's presence at major events, roadshows and cabinet open mic sessions.