

## Written Questions answered between 5 and 12 December 2002

[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**

### **Changes to the Partnership Agreement**

**Cynog Dafis:** What changes have been made to the first published version of the partnership agreement? (WAQ20999)

**The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan):** None.

### **Trade and Investment Offices**

**Nick Bourne:** When did the First Minister first become aware of the plan to open trade and investment offices in New York, San Francisco, Hong Kong, Brussels, Tokyo and Sydney? (WAQ21151)

**The First Minister:** The establishment of Wales international centres in New York, San Francisco, mainland Europe (Brussels), Tokyo and Hong Kong was announced on 1 March 2002.

### **Visit to Florence**

**Nick Bourne:** What was the total cost to the Welsh Assembly Government of the recent visit of the First Minister and his entourage to Florence? (WAQ21227)

**The First Minister:** The travel and allied costs of my participation in the conference of regions with legislative power in Florence was £1,115.60.

### **Trinity House Lighthouse Service**

**Alun Cairns:** Would the First Minister make a statement on the latest discussions he has had with the Department for Transport on the future of the Trinity lighthouse service in Swansea? (WAQ21240)

**The First Minister:** The Minister for Environment wrote on this matter to the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions on 22 October.

The Trinity House chairman, Admiral Jeremy de Halpert, announced on 10 December the decision to stay in Swansea as part of a package of proposals for restructuring. This is very welcome news for Wales. Trinity House has a 77-year tradition in King's Dock, Swansea that will continue for the foreseeable future, providing the west coast base for Trinity House Lighthouse Service operations.

### **'A Winning Wales'**

**Alun Cairns:** Would the Minister make a statement on the progress being made toward achieving the targets set out in 'A Winning Wales'? (WAQ21241)

**The First Minister:** Half-year progress on 'A Winning Wales' was presented to the Economic Development Committee for discussion at its meeting on 31 October 2002. The first full annual report on progress towards achieving the targets will be published in early summer 2003.

## **Questions to the Deputy First Minister and Minister for Rural Development and Wales Abroad**

### **Trade and Investment Offices**

**Nick Bourne:** When did the Minister first become aware of the plan to open trade and investment offices in New York, San Francisco, Hong Kong, Brussels, Tokyo and Sydney? (WAQ21152)

**The Deputy First Minister and Minister for Rural Development and Wales Abroad (Michael German):** I refer you to the answer given by the First Minister to WAQ21151.

### **Welsh Fishing Industry**

**Richard Edwards:** What steps has the Minister taken to develop and promote the indigenous Welsh fishing industry since the creation of the National Assembly for Wales? (WAQ21161)

**Richard Edwards:** Is the primary responsibility of the fisheries division in the National Assembly to promote the indigenous Welsh fishing industry? (WAQ21167)

**Michael German:** The Welsh Assembly Government initiated a detailed study to identify the potential opportunities for the sustainable economic development of sea and inland fishing in Wales. The study has also been used to inform the support measures under the Welsh Objective 1 and non-Objective 1 fisheries programmes. The two programmes cover some £40 million of investment into the Welsh fishing industry up until 2006. In addition, the Environment Agency Wales was allocated £0.8 million for each of the years from April 2002 to develop inland fisheries in Wales.

The Assembly Government has also been instrumental in taking forward work to prepare a strategic framework for the commercial and recreational fisheries sectors in Wales. The Welsh Development Agency and Environment Agency Wales, respectively, are leading in the preparation of reports that will be subject to consultation. The intention is that the outcome to consultation, informed also by forthcoming decisions on the reform to the EU common fisheries policy, will form the basis for the development of an all-Welsh fisheries strategy.

These actions reflect the commitment of the Welsh Assembly Government to support the wider development of fisheries within Wales.

### **Fisheries Licences**

**Richard Edwards:** What inquiries are undertaken by the National Assembly into applicants for fisheries licences, as part of the application process? (WAQ21162)

**Richard Edwards:** Does the inquiry process into applicants for fisheries licences involve visits overseas if the applicant is foreign? (WAQ21163)

**Richard Edwards:** What percentage of fisheries licences around the Welsh coast are granted to indigenous Welsh companies? (WAQ21165)

**Richard Edwards:** What percentage of fisheries licences around the Welsh coast are granted to overseas companies? (WAQ21166)

**Richard Edwards:** Can the Minister make a statement on the length of time taken to deal with and process renewals for fisheries licences around the Welsh coast? (WAQ21168)

**Richard Edwards:** Can the Minister make a statement on the length of time taken to deal with and process applications for fisheries licences around the Welsh coast? (WAQ21169)

**Michael German:** The Sea Fisheries Inspectorate of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government, administers the vessel-licensing regime for vessels whose port of administration is in Wales.

Checks are carried out on all licence applications to ensure that the vessel is properly registered on the UK Register of Shipping. Applicants must satisfy the requirements of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995 as

regards qualification for ownership of British registered fishing vessels; no overseas visits are therefore involved.

All licences currently issued in respect of fishing vessels in Welsh ports are granted to individuals resident in Wales or to companies with a registered office in the UK. None are granted to overseas companies.

Fishing vessel licences for over 10-metre vessels are valid for the calendar year in which they are issued and are re-issued to licence holders annually on 1 January. Licences for under 10-metre vessels are valid for up to two years and are reissued on 1 July every other year. The Sea Fisheries Inspectorate endeavours to process all new applications for licences within five working days of receipt of the necessary documentation.

### **Sheep Annual Premium**

**Peter Rogers:** On what date was letter CA64 2002 notice to all sheep annual premium claimants posted to Welsh farmers? (WAQ21173)

**Michael German:** CA64 2002 was enclosed with the November 2002 *Gwlad* which was issued to Welsh farmers between 13 and 18 November.

### **Publication of *Gwlad***

**Peter Rogers:** On what date was the November publication of *Gwlad* posted to farmers? (WAQ21174)

**Michael German:** The November publication of *Gwlad* was issued to farmers in Wales between 13 and 18 November.

### **Sheep Annual Premium Payment (Hardship)**

**Peter Rogers:** On what date were the farming unions made aware about the provision of SAPS payment on the grounds of hardship? (WAQ21175)

**Michael German:** A meeting was held on 18 September to discuss SAPS and other due payments. Farming unions were reminded that if any of their members were in any difficulty with claims due for payment they should contact their divisional office, which would consider whether there was anything it could do to help. Subsequently, the unions were informed on 13 and 14 November respectively, and again on 25 November, that anyone experiencing financial hardship should provide written evidence so that we could consider whether it would be appropriate to make a special payment.

### **Sheep Annual Premium Payment (Hardship)**

**Peter Rogers:** When was the first payment of SAPS paid to a Welsh farmer on the grounds of hardship? (WAQ21176)

**Michael German:** 20 November 2002.

### **Payments of SAP to Mr Richard Japhetii**

**Peter Rogers:** What date was an application received from Mr Richard Japhetii, holding number 53/002/9021, for payment under hardship of his SAPS, and when was payment made? (WAQ21177)

**Michael German:** It is not appropriate to use this method to discuss the financial position of named individuals. I will write to you in due course about your constituent's case.

### **Sheep Annual Premium Payment (Hardship)**

**Peter Rogers:** How many other payments of SAPS were made under hardship and on what date were these paid? (WAQ21178)

**Michael German:** To date (i.e. 4 Dec) we have received five applications for urgent payment of SAPS because of hardship. Two payments were made on 20 November, one on 28 November and one on 4 December.

The remaining request was an application from the farmer for a letter of confirmation of payments due under SAP scheme—this was issued on 27 November. This claim has also now been paid.

### **Provision of Payments under Hardship**

**Peter Rogers:** On what date were farmers told about the provision of payments under hardship? (WAQ21179)

**Michael German:** Publicising this facility widely among the farming community would have been counterproductive. A significant number of applications would have compromised our ability to get the vast majority of payments out as quickly as possible.

Rather, farmers who contacted their divisional office to inquire about SAP payments were advised of this facility and as appropriate were invited to submit evidence of financial hardship for consideration.

### **Bee Health Scheme**

**Peter Rogers:** Are there plans to reduce the bee health scheme in Wales? (WAQ21180)

**Michael German:** No.

### **American Foulbrood and European Foulbrood**

**Peter Rogers:** Will the Minister make a statement on the measures taken to prevent the two noticeable diseases American foulbrood and European foulbrood? (WAQ21181)

**Michael German:** Under an existing memorandum of understanding between the National Assembly for Wales and the National Bee Unit at the Central Science Laboratory, Welsh-based appointed bee inspectors provide statutory inspection and advisory services for beekeepers in Wales to help them deal with serious diseases, including American and European foulbrood.

### **Animal By-product Regulations**

**Peter Rogers:** Will the Minister make a statement on the date that the animal by-product regulations will commence? (WAQ21184)

**Michael German:** The EU Animal By-Products Regulation 2002 was formally adopted on 30 October 2002, and will apply in member states from 30 April 2003.

### **Farm Burials of Fallen Stock**

**Peter Rogers:** What provision has the Assembly put in place to collect fallen stock from Welsh farmers following EU legislation which has placed a ban on farm burials of animals? (WAQ21185)

**Michael German:** Along with other agriculture departments, that of the Welsh Assembly Government is working with the industry to develop a practical and effective scheme.

### **Companies Licenced for the Collection of Fallen Stock**

**Peter Rogers:** Will the Minister make a statement on how many companies across Wales will be licensed for the collection of fallen stocks? (WAQ21186)

**Michael German:** It is not possible to say as yet. I believe that a GB-wide solution is preferable, building on the experience of other disposal schemes such as the over 30-months scheme and the transmissible spongiform encephalopathies testing regime.

### **Financial Assistance to Provide Incineration**

**Peter Rogers:** If sufficient incineration plants are not available in Wales, will the National Assembly provide financial assistance to provide incineration? (WAQ21187)

**Michael German:** Financial assistance may be available for eligible projects from a variety of sources including regional selective assistance, the Assembly investment grant and Objective 1 (Priority 5, Measures 1 and 7).

### **Foot and Mouth Disease Prevention**

**Peter Rogers:** What, if any, legislation will be in place on collection of fallen stock to meet foot and mouth prevention rules? (WAQ21188)

**Michael German:** The EU Animal By-Products Regulation has already been adopted. Additional domestic legislation will be brought forward, taking into account the outcome of discussions with the industry and the requirements for effective bio-security.

### **Fallen Stock (Sealed Lorries)**

**Peter Rogers:** Will sealed lorries be required for the collection of fallen stock? (WAQ21189)

**Michael German:** This may be an option, for sheep in particular. It is being considered by the industry/Government working group.

### **Licences for Multiple Collections of Fallen Stock**

**Peter Rogers:** Will licences be required for multiple collections of fallen stock? (WAQ21190)

**Michael German:** This is under consideration by the industry/Government working group.

### **Fallen Stock (Average Collections)**

**Peter Rogers:** What average number of fallen stock will be required to be collected per day from Welsh farmers? (WAQ21191)

**Michael German:** A per-day figure would give little indication of the true level of demand. The numbers will vary considerably, depending particularly on seasonal factors.

### **Incineration Capacity in Wales**

**Peter Rogers:** What is the present incineration capacity in Wales of number of animals per day? (WAQ21192)

**Michael German:** The present incineration capacity in Wales is 170 animals per day, this is distributed between six incinerators throughout Wales.

### **Disposal of Ash from Incinerators**

**Peter Rogers:** What provision is in place for the disposal of ash from the incinerators? (WAQ21193)

**Michael German:** Following the introduction of the TSE (Wales) Regulations 2002, all ash must be disposed of to a licensed landfill site.

### **The Royal Welsh Agricultural Show**

**Peter Rogers:** Will the Welsh Assembly Government be giving financial assistance to the Royal Welsh Show and if so how much money will they be putting forward? (WAQ21196)

**Michael German:** The Welsh Assembly Government and its Team Wales partners offer a number of funding packages to support businesses in Wales. Any funding application submitted by the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society Limited will be considered in the usual way against the selection criteria and rules applying to the scheme or programme under which the application has been made.

### **Incineration Plants in Wales**

**Peter Rogers:** Will the Minister make a statement on the construction and strategic positioning of incineration of plants in Wales? (WAQ21197)

**Michael German:** This is essentially a matter for the incineration industry. The industry is working with livestock farmers, with the support of agriculture departments, on an agreed GB-wide scheme for proper disposal of fallen stock following the implementation of the EU Animal By-Products Regulation.

### **Royal Welsh Agricultural Show**

**Peter Rogers:** Does the Royal Welsh Agricultural Show receive any financial support from the Welsh Assembly and if so, what form does this take? (WAQ21363)

**Peter Rogers:** How much money was allocated to the Royal Welsh Agricultural Show in the years 2000, 2001 and 2002? (WAQ21364)

**Peter Rogers:** How much money will be allocated to the Royal Welsh Agricultural Show in 2003? (WAQ21365)

**Michael German:** The Welsh Assembly Government has made no direct financial support available to the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society Limited. Any application for funding relating to 2003 would be considered against the selection criteria relevant to the scheme or programme in question.

The Welsh Development Agency allocated £5,000 under the shows and events element of the rural recovery fund for this year's winter fair.

### **Migration from Rural Areas**

**Elin Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on levels of out-migration by young people in rural areas? (WAQ21380)

**Michael German:** The outward migration of young people from communities in rural Wales has been a source of major concern for some time, as recognised in a number of the Welsh Assembly Government's key policy documents, including 'Plan for Wales 2001'.

Figures for the year ending June 2000 show there is a high level of outward migration of young people (taken as the 16 to 24 age group) from all local authority areas of Wales (some 9 percent). However, this is balanced by inward movement, leaving an all-Wales net outflow of 0.5 percent. Against this backdrop, the rural authorities as a whole have a net outflow of 2.6 percent of the age group. The nine predominantly rural authorities are also the nine authorities with the highest percentage outflow (although only seven have net outflows).

## **Questions to the Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language**

### **Trade and Investment Offices**

**Nick Bourne:** When did the Minister first become aware of the plan to open trade and investment offices in New York, San Francisco, Hong Kong, Brussels, Tokyo and Sydney? (WAQ21157)

**The Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language (Jenny Randerson):** I refer you to the answer given by the First Minister to WAQ21151.

### **Arts Council of Wales Stabilisation Process**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Will the Minister make a statement on the outcomes of the Arts Council of Wales stabilisation process? (WAQ21359)

**Jenny Randerson:** ACW awarded £1,700,000 as part of the stabilisation of the Welsh National Opera from its 2001/02 lottery budget, in partnership with the Arts Council of England.

The arts council has a budget of £1,000,000 from the lottery for the stabilisation of other revenue clients for the period 2002/03 to 2003/04. ACW has advertised for consultants to do detailed work on implementing the scheme and will appoint shortly.

### **Arts Council of Wales Reorganisation**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** How is the Arts Council of Wales ensuring the arts sector is consulted on the outcomes of the reorganisation of the organisation? (WAQ21360)

**Jenny Randerson:** The arts council will be considering at its February 2003 meeting detailed proposals for evaluating the restructuring of the organisation after the first year. The proposals will include arrangements for involving a wide range of stakeholders including the arts sector.

### **Arts Council of Wales's Three-year Funding Agreements**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Will the Minister make a statement on how the Arts Council of Wales's three-year funding agreements are reviewed? (WAQ21366)

**Jenny Randerson:** This is the first year of revenue funding agreements. The arts council will be reviewing progress during the first three-year period and confirming the evaluation and renewal process in good time for the second three-year period.

The key monitoring point is the annual review meeting, which will be held in the summer of each year. Revenue-funded clients are required to submit financial reports on a quarterly or half-yearly basis; all governing body papers and minutes; half yearly and yearly activity reports and annual equal opportunities action plans. They also maintain a regular dialogue with their ACW lead officer who will attend a minimum of two board meetings a year. In addition, ACW staff or advisers attend many events and activities each year to assist with quality and strategic monitoring.



### **Arts Council of Wales's Capital Arts Strategy**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Will the Minister make a statement on updates regarding the Arts Council of Wales's capital arts strategy? (WAQ21367)

**Jenny Randerson:** The Arts Council of Wales's draft capital strategy is being considered by council on 13 December. A period of public consultation will take place in the new year, with a view to finalising the strategy for the 2003-04 financial year.

### **Arts Council of Wales Stabilisation Process**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Can the Minister confirm that £1 million was set aside for the Arts Council of Wales stabilisation process and make a statement on how this money will be distributed? (WAQ21368)

**Jenny Randerson:** I can confirm that the arts council has a budget of £1,000,000 from the lottery for a stabilisation scheme for its revenue clients, for the period 2002/03 to 2003/04. ACW has advertised for consultants to do detailed work on implementing the scheme and will appoint shortly.

### **Sherman Theatre and Chapter Arts Centre**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Will the Minister make a statement on how Sherman Theatre and Chapter Arts Centre will benefit from stabilisation process money? (WAQ21369)

**Jenny Randerson:** Both the Sherman Theatre and Chapter Arts Centre, as arts council revenue clients, will be eligible to apply for assistance under the council's stabilisation scheme, which starts next year.

### **2004 Disability Discrimination Legislation Requirements**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Is new funding being allocated to ensure arts venues have the financial support to meet the new 2004 disability discrimination legislation requirements? (WAQ21370)

**Jenny Randerson:** The Arts Council of Wales is undertaking an audit of arts venues in Wales to identify the specific costs associated with their compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Many venues are local authority-owned and in these cases it is the authority which is responsible for ensuring compliance.

### **Arts Council of Wales Annual Conference**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Has an Arts Council of Wales annual conference for 2002-03 been held? (WAQ21371)

**Jenny Randerson:** No. The arts council will hold its first ever annual conference in May or June 2003.

### **Performance Space in Wales**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** What actions and funding are in place to act on the recommendations of the report on performance space across Wales? (WAQ21372)

**Jenny Randerson:** The Welsh Assembly Government is making an additional £2 million each year available for the arts outside Cardiff when the Wales Millennium Centre comes on stream. The audit of performance space provides information that will inform the distribution of this money. The audit must, of course, be seen in the context of approaches to the development of theatre nationally in Wales, and the impact of the WMC itself.

## **Arts Council of Wales Revenue Clients**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** What percentage of the Arts Council of Wales's revenue clients has three-year funding agreements and will the Minister provide a list of these clients? (WAQ21373)

**Jenny Randerson:** Three year revenue funding agreements are a new initiative for ACW. The council has adopted a phased approach to completing these agreements for all its 120 revenue clients, to spread the work across a three-year period.

The first group of agreements (between 40 and 50) are being completed in December 2002, to cover April 2002 to March 2005. The second group of agreements (between 70 and 80) will be completed by July 2003, to cover April 2003 to March 2006.

A list of the revenue clients with three-year funding agreements will be placed in the Assembly Library.

## **Quinquennial Review of the Arts Council of Wales**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Has the timescale been set for the quinquennial review of the Arts Council of Wales? (WAQ21374)

**Jenny Randerson:** The Finance Minister and I have decided that the quinquennial review of the Arts Council of Wales should be rescheduled to summer 2003 to allow the action resulting from the Wallace review of the council to be fully implemented and to have had time to bed down. This timetable will also mean that the results of the council's evaluation of the impacts of the new structure are available for the review.

## **Clwyd Theatr Cymru**

**Alison Halford:** What assistance is the Minister providing or has provided to Clwyd Theatr Cymru to enable them to take up residency in Cardiff's Ebenezer Chapel? (WAQ21381)

**Jenny Randerson:** None. Although I have been made aware of the proposal I have not been approached for assistance.

## **Questions to the Minister for Economic Development**

### **'A Winning Wales' Targets**

**Alun Cairns:** When does the Minister plan on revising the 'A Winning Wales' targets? (WAQ20652)

**The Minister for Economic Development (Andrew Davies):** 'A Winning Wales' sets out a 10-year strategy for transforming the economy of Wales. I have no plans to change the targets.

### **Steel Taskforce**

**William Graham:** Will the Minister make a statement on the progress being made by the Steel Taskforce to address the redevelopment of South Wales East? (WAQ21040)

**Andrew Davies:** I am pleased that good progress is being made with projects in the area. For example:

- ◆ Planning permission has been granted for the Valleys Innovation Technology and Communication Centre and a Welsh European Funding Office decision on European funding is imminent.

- ◆ Transport grant has been secured for the Ebbw Vale rail link. A bid for Objective 1 funding is under consideration, as is the Strategic Rail Authority Rail Passenger Partnership bid, on which a decision is expected later this month.
- ◆ The Newport Urban Regeneration Company was founded on 1 November 2002 and the designation report is due to be approved on the 31 December 2002.

I have also asked officials to produce an evaluation report so that the long-term success of the projects can be objectively assessed.

### **Objective 1 Mid-term Review**

**Lynne Neagle:** Will the Minister make a statement on how the mid-term review of the Objective 1 programme will be conducted? (WAQ21077)

**Andrew Davies:** The draft report of the independent mid-term evaluation of the Objective 1 programme will be available for consideration by the Programme Monitoring Committee in June 2003. The Welsh Assembly Government, as managing authority for the structural funds programmes in Wales, will take account of the draft report in preparing the mid-term review. A review paper will be put to the Programme Monitoring Committee in September 2003. Proposals will then be sent to the European Commission, which is required by regulation to respond before 31 March 2004.

### **Objective 1 Programme**

**Lynne Neagle:** Will the Minister give the per capita amount of funding received in south-east Wales, north Wales and west Wales under the Objective 1 programme? (WAQ21078)

**Andrew Davies:** This information is not currently available in the form requested. Under the new payment procedures introduced in September, as projects make claims for structural funds grant they are required to allocate the funding received to local authority areas. In order to provide the information requested it is necessary for a complete cycle of quarterly claims for all projects to be submitted to WEFO and analysed. This work will not be completed until February 2003.

### **Trade and Investment Offices**

**Nick Bourne:** When did the Minister first become aware of the plan to open trade and investment offices in New York, San Francisco, Hong Kong, Brussels, Tokyo and Sydney? (WAQ21154)

**Andrew Davies:** I refer you to the answer given by the First Minister to WAQ21151.

### **Trinity House Lighthouse Service**

**Alun Cairns:** Has the Welsh Development Agency sought to promote any other area in Wales in place of the Swansea depot of the Trinity lighthouse service? (WAQ21237)

**Alun Cairns:** What action has the WDA taken in seeking to secure the future of the Trinity Lighthouse service operation in Swansea? (WAQ21238)

**Alun Cairns:** What involvement has the WDA had with the Trinity Lighthouse service? (WAQ21239)

**Andrew Davies:** The WDA has not promoted any other area in Wales in place of the Swansea depot. The agency offered its assistance to Trinity House in October. The Trinity house Chairman, Admiral Jeremy de Halpert, announced on 10 December the decision to stay in Swansea as part of a package of proposals for restructuring.

## Newport Urban Regeneration Company

**William Graham:** Will the Minister make a statement concerning the ability of the urban regeneration company to respond to the effects upon the economy of south Wales resulting from changes within the steel industry? (WAQ21341)

**Andrew Davies:** As part of the Assembly Government's response to the Corus redundancies, a £76 million regeneration package has been approved. Part of this is the creation of the Newport Urban Regeneration Company.

The company was formally constituted on 1 November 2002. A designation report has been prepared and is currently being considered by the founding partners: the Welsh Assembly Government; Newport City Council and the WDA.

One of the first tasks of the URC will be to develop a master plan for the city centre, which will form the basis of a work programme over the life of the company to secure the sustainable regeneration of the city. Given the nature and scale of the exercise an advert has been placed in the *Official Journal of the European Communities* seeking expressions of interest from appropriate consultants. It is anticipated that the master plan will be completed by this time next year.

## Availability of Broadband in the Vale of Glamorgan

**Owen John Thomas:** Will the Minister make a statement on the availability of broadband in the Vale of Glamorgan? (WAQ21343)

**Andrew Davies:** There are no broadband-enabled exchanges in the Vale of Glamorgan, although a number are approaching the 'trigger level' of demand that will allow them to be enabled. As no exchanges are enabled, small and medium-sized enterprises in the area are able to access the SME satellite broadband subsidy scheme. NTL's cable network also extends into some parts of the Vale of Glamorgan. The Vale of Glamorgan is also benefiting from the roll-out of the Assembly Government's lifelong learning network. Our investment in this network, and the associated multi-media equipment and training, means that schools, learning centres and libraries will be able to access broadband—this benefits both the education sector and the wider community. The Vale of Glamorgan also stands to benefit from the roll out of the health service network, DAWN 2, which brings broadband availability to all hospitals and general practitioner surgeries in Wales. I am also aware that BT has approached the county council with a view to undertaking joint broadband marketing activities to stimulate demand for the upgrading of exchanges.

## Assembly Investment Grants

**Peter Black:** How many Assembly investment grants have been confirmed? (WAQ21345)

**Andrew Davies:** Since the Assembly investment grant scheme came into operation on 1 April 2002, 368 full applications have been received and there have been 198 formal offers of assistance worth some £6.3 million. These are expected to lever in £20.8 million of private investment and, although the scheme does not require job creation, applicants have indicated that 304 new jobs should result.

## Gross Domestic Product

**Alun Cairns:** What assessment has the Minister made regarding the latest gross domestic product (GDP) figures and forecasts? (WAQ21346)

**Andrew Davies:** The Office for National Statistics has withdrawn the recently revised regional GDP estimates for 1989-99. Revised estimates and new estimates for 2000 and 2001 will be published in the

spring of next year. My quarterly economic report to the Economic Development Committee contains a discussion of prospects.

### **‘A Winning Wales’**

**Alun Cairns:** What plans does the Minister have to revise targets set out in ‘A Winning Wales’ following the publication of recent economic data? (WAQ21347)

**Andrew Davies:** I refer the Assembly Member to the answer I gave to WAQ20652 on 20 November 2002.

### **UNESCO World Heritage List**

**William Graham:** Will the Minister detail how he has used the inclusion of Blaenavon on the UNESCO world heritage list in promoting the economic development of the area? (WAQ21348)

**Andrew Davies:** Blaenafon’s status as a world heritage site has created great opportunities for the south Wales Valleys and the development of that region’s tourism potential is already underway.

The various members of the world heritage site partnership are undertaking many investments in the area, co-ordinated within the world heritage site management plan and led by Torfaen County Borough Council. These have already shown benefits in the physical, economic and social regeneration of the area.

The Assembly Government and its agencies have been active contributors to the partnership and its work. CADW is undertaking a major programme of investment in the conservation and display of Blaenafon Ironworks, which is in its care, and it is investing grant aid in monument and building conservation throughout the area. The area is further benefiting from the development of Big Pit—now a national museum with free admission—and historic building repairs to key buildings in the town with CADW assistance.

The Wales Tourist Board and Welsh Development Agency are also key contributors to the regeneration of the area. The increased resources made available by the Assembly Government for tourism has enabled WTB to boost its funding for regional tourism initiatives. The new south-east Wales regional tourism partnership, Capital Region Tourism, is the lead body for the development of tourism in the region and is working with local partners to maximise the cultural and economic spin-off of Blaenafon’s new status.

A key initiative is the south Wales industrial heritage action plan, which is also benefiting from the Assembly Government’s steel regeneration package, which has allocated £1 million to support the development of tourism in south-east Wales. The action plan is a Valley-wide partnership of key stakeholders including WTB, WDA and the region’s local authorities. It will further capitalise on Blaenafon’s status and co-ordinate a programme of cultural, educational and economic investment across the region.

### **Broadband**

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on broadband roll-out in rural Wales? (WAQ21349)

**Andrew Davies:** Stimulating broadband roll-out and take-up in rural Wales is an issue that is being addressed through the implementation of the Assembly Government’s five-year, £115 million Broadband Wales programme. This is taking forward a wide range of activities to facilitate widespread access to affordable broadband in all parts of Wales, including rural Wales. To date these activities include:

- the roll-out of the SME broadband satellite subsidy scheme that has provided SMEs in even the most rural parts of Wales with the opportunity to access broadband connectivity via satellite.

- broadband showcasing facilities located at information and communications technology centres across Wales. Several of these centres are located in rural and semi-rural areas.
- Welsh Assembly Government investment in the Wales-wide roll-out of the health service network, DAWN 2, and in the Wales lifelong learning network connecting all 22 local authorities and every school in Wales to the internet.
- support for local projects such as the e-fro broadband wireless initiative that is providing broadband access to a community in rural north-west Wales.

These and the many other activities that will be taken forward as part of the Broadband Wales programme will be vital to addressing market deficiencies, helping to build the viable commercial marketplace that will encourage suppliers to rollout their broadband infrastructure in rural as well as urban parts of Wales.

### **Urban Regeneration Company**

**William Graham:** Will the Minister make a statement concerning the progress of the urban regeneration company in the economic development of South Wales East? (WAQ21350)

**Andrew Davies:** I refer you to my answer of the 11 December 2002 (WAQ21341).

### **UK Business Research and Development Expenditure**

**Elin Jones:** What is Wales's current share of UK business research and development expenditure? (WAQ21361)

**Andrew Davies:** In 2001 Wales's share of UK business research and development spending was 1.1 per cent.

### **Secondments to European Institutions**

**Elin Jones:** How is the Minister monitoring the commitment made in the 'BetterWales' document to double the number of secondments to European institutions by March 2003? (WAQ21389)

**Andrew Davies:** When the 'BetterWales' document was published in April 2000, the Assembly had one official on secondment to a European institution. Since then 12 secondments to European institutions have been arranged through a number of different schemes varying in length from four weeks to three years. All secondments are monitored by a team in Personnel Division.

### **Wales International Centres**

**Nick Bourne:** What consultation with Cabinet colleagues and outside organisations was undertaken prior to the announcement of the establishment of Wales international centres? (WAQ21403)

**Nick Bourne:** By whom was the announcement of the establishment of Wales international centres on 1 March 2002 made? (WAQ21404)

**Nick Bourne:** Where was the announcement of the establishment of Wales international centres on 1 March 2002 made? (WAQ21405)

**Andrew Davies:** The initiative to establish Wales international centres was announced by the First Minister on 1 March during his visit to New York. A press release was issued at the time. As a matter of courtesy, the First Minister wrote to you and other Assembly party leaders on 28 February, informing you of his intention to make the announcement and setting out the rationale behind, and the purposes of, the centres. The First Minister wrote similarly to the Foreign Secretary, copied to the Secretary of State for Wales and the First Ministers for Scotland and Northern Ireland. Copies of the letters have been placed in the Library.

The establishment of centres is an operational matter for the Government. As is normal in the conduct of Government, Ministers were involved and informed as appropriate to their portfolios.

## **Questions to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning**

### **Trade and Investment Offices**

**Nick Bourne:** When did the Minister first become aware of the plan to open trade and investment offices in New York, San Francisco, Hong Kong, Brussels, Tokyo and Sydney? (WAQ21153)

**The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning (Jane Davidson):** I refer you to the answer given by the First Minister to WAQ21151.

### **Religious Schools**

**Jonathan Morgan:** In light of section 91 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 being repealed by section 49 of the Education Act 2002, what statutory provision exists to allow voluntary-aided schools with a religious character to preserve that character through their admissions policy? (WAQ21194)

**Jane Davidson:** Under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, voluntary-aided schools are their own admission authorities. Those designated as having a religious character may make admission arrangements giving priority to members of their designated faith or denomination. Schools with a high level of demand from within the designated faith or denomination can thus, if they chose, admit pupils exclusively from that faith community.

Section 91 of the 1998 Act allowed schools which had agreed 'special' admissions arrangements to hold places empty if they received less than a specified level of applications from members of their own faith, rather than offer those places to pupils from other faith backgrounds or none. Only 11 such special arrangements existed in Wales, at Roman Catholic schools in the Cardiff diocese. In practice, all these schools had high levels of demand for places from Roman Catholic families and did not therefore bring their special arrangements into play. The Church authorities were consulted before section 91 was repealed and were content with the change.

Protection of a school's religious character is essentially dependent upon demand for places from the local faith community.

### **School Standards and Framework Act 1998**

**Jonathan Morgan:** When does the Minister expect to produce new guidance in light of the repeal of section 91 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998? (WAQ21195)

**Jane Davidson:** There is no need for additional guidance in the light of this repeal. No schools were actively using the special arrangements. Those few schools which had agreed special admission arrangements in place will simply need to revise their admissions documentation in due course to remove reference to the special provisions. Their criteria for allocating places in the event of over-subscription can remain unchanged. My officials will be writing to the diocesan authorities to remind them of the repeal of section 91 and of the need for a few schools to review their documentation.

### **Assembly Learning Grants**

**Jonathan Morgan:** Further to her answer to WAQ19688 what has been: a) the take-up of Assembly learning grants compared to anticipated take-up; b) the range of grants offered; c) the number of students who qualified for the full value of the Assembly learning grants? (WAQ21198)

**Jane Davidson:** Figures submitted by local education authorities giving the number of applications approved by 28 October 2002 show that 13,640 ALGs had been awarded; 11,850 were for students in higher education (11,720 full-time and 135 part-time); and 1,790 were for students in further education (1,550 full-time and 240 part-time). The total value of these awards was approximately £15 million. Because of the delays in take-up caused by uncertainties surrounding the benefits issue, it is too soon to compare these figures with anticipated take-up.

A summary of the figures from each LEA is below.

**Number of successful ALG applications as at 28 October 2002 by local education authority**

**Blaenau Gwent**

	Further Education		Higher Education		Total	
	Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)	Full-time (over 500 taught hours)	Part-time (over 30 credits)	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time
<b>Income</b>						
Between £0 and £5,000	0	60	10	100	10	160
Between £5,001 and £10,000	0	15	5	35	5	50
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	0	5	0	45	0	50
<b>TOTAL:</b>	0	80	15	180	15	260

**Bridgend**

	Further Education		Higher Education		Total	
	Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)	Full-time (over 500 taught hours)	Part-time (over 30 credits)	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time
<b>Income</b>						
Between £0 and £5,000	10	60	0	410	10	470
Between £5,001 and £10,000	5	10	0	155	5	160
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	5	10	0	150	5	160
<b>TOTAL:</b>	20	80	0	715	20	795

**Caerphilly**

	Further Education		Higher Education		Total	
	Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)	Full-time (over 500 taught hours)	Part-time (over 30 credits)	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time
<b>Income</b>						
Between £0 and £5,000	20	170	15	350	40	515
Between £5,001 and £10,000	10	10	0	145	10	155
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	5	20	0	160	5	180
<b>TOTAL:</b>	30	200	15	650	50	850

**Carmarthenshire**

	Further Education		Higher Education		Total	
	Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)	Full-time (over 500 taught hours)	Part-time (over 30 credits)	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time
<b>Income</b>						
Between £0 and £5,000	15	75	5	460	15	530



Between £5,001 and £10,000	0	25	5	215	10	235
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	0	15	10	165	10	185
<b>TOTAL:</b>	15	115	20	835	35	950

#### Cardiff

	Further Education		Higher Education		Total	
	Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)	Full-time (over 500 taught hours)	Part-time (over 30 credits)	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time
<i>Income</i>						
Between £0 and £5,000	0	0	0	525	0	525
Between £5,001 and £10,000	0	0	0	170	0	170
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	0	0	0	200	0	200
<b>TOTAL:</b>	0	0	0	890	0	890

#### Ceredigion

	Further Education		Higher Education		Total	
	Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)	Full-time (over 500 taught hours)	Part-time (over 30 credits)	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time
<i>Income</i>						
Between £0 and £5,000	5	30	0	155	10	185
Between £5,001 and £10,000	0	5	0	70	0	80
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	0	5	0	90	0	100
<b>TOTAL:</b>	5	40	5	315	10	360

#### Conwy

	Further Education		Higher Education		Total	
	Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)	Full-time (over 500 taught hours)	Part-time (over 30 credits)	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time
<i>Income</i>						
Between £0 and £5,000	0	20	0	270	0	290
Between £5,001 and £10,000	5	10	0	135	5	145
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	10	10	0	155	10	165
<b>TOTAL:</b>	10	40	0	560	10	600

#### Denbighshire

	Further Education		Higher Education		Total	
	Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)	Full-time (over 500 taught hours)	Part-time (over 30 credits)	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time
<i>Income</i>						
Between £0 and £5,000	0	5	0	150	0	155
Between £5,001 and £10,000	0	5	0	90	0	95
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	0	0	0	90	0	95
<b>TOTAL:</b>	0	10	0	335	0	340

#### Flintshire

Further Education	Higher Education	Total
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	<b>Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)</b>	<b>Full-time (over 500 taught hours)</b>	<b>Part-time (over 30 credits)</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>	<b>Full-time</b>
<b>Income</b>						
Between £0 and £5,000	10	65	0	235	10	300
Between £5,001 and £10,000	0	20	0	115	0	135
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	5	10	0	120	5	130
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>565</b>

#### Gwynedd

	<b>Further Education</b>		<b>Higher Education</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)</b>	<b>Full-time (over 500 taught hours)</b>	<b>Part-time (over 30 credits)</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>	<b>Full-time</b>
<b>Income</b>						
Between £0 and £5,000	0	15	0	305	0	320
Between £5,001 and £10,000	0	5	0	145	0	150
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	0	0	0	155	0	160
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>605</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>630</b>

#### Merthyr Tydfil

	<b>Further Education</b>		<b>Higher Education</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)</b>	<b>Full-time (over 500 taught hours)</b>	<b>Part-time (over 30 credits)</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>	<b>Full-time</b>
<b>Income</b>						
Between £0 and £5,000	10	60	0	155	10	215
Between £5,001 and £10,000	5	5	0	50	5	60
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	10	5	0	60	10	65
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>340</b>

#### Monmouthshire

	<b>Further Education</b>		<b>Higher Education</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)</b>	<b>Full-time (over 500 taught hours)</b>	<b>Part-time (over 30 credits)</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>	<b>Full-time</b>
<b>Income</b>						
Between £0 and £5,000	5	15	5	195	10	210
Between £5,001 and £10,000	5	5	5	125	5	130
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	0	5	0	120	5	125
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>460</b>

#### Neath Port Talbot

	<b>Further Education</b>		<b>Higher Education</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)</b>	<b>Full-time (over 500 taught hours)</b>	<b>Part-time (over 30 credits)</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>	<b>Full-time</b>
<b>Income</b>						
Between £0 and £5,000	15	55	5	295	15	350
Between £5,001 and £10,000	5	10	0	115	5	120
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	0	0	0	105	0	105

<b>TOTAL:</b>	20	60	5	515	20	575
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**Newport**

	Further Education		Higher Education		Total	
	Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)	Full-time (over 500 taught hours)	Part-time (over 30 credits)	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time
<i>Income</i>						
Between £0 and £5,000	5	30	5	210	10	245
Between £5,001 and £10,000	0	15	0	170	5	185
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	5	5	5	135	10	140
<b>TOTAL:</b>	10	55	10	515	20	570

**Pembrokeshire**

	Further Education		Higher Education		Total	
	Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)	Full-time (over 500 taught hours)	Part-time (over 30 credits)	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time
<i>Income</i>						
Between £0 and £5,000	0	50	5	200	10	250
Between £5,001 and £10,000	5	35	5	110	10	145
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	0	10	0	130	5	140
<b>TOTAL:</b>	10	95	10	440	20	535

**Powys**

	Further Education		Higher Education		Total	
	Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)	Full-time (over 500 taught hours)	Part-time (over 30 credits)	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time
<i>Income</i>						
Between £0 and £5,000	0	70	0	255	5	325
Between £5,001 and £10,000	0	15	0	150	5	165
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	0	10	0	185	0	195
<b>TOTAL:</b>	5	95	5	590	10	685

**Rhondda Cynon Taff**

	Further Education		Higher Education		Total	
	Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)	Full-time (over 500 taught hours)	Part-time (over 30 credits)	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time
<i>Income</i>						
Between £0 and £5,000	10	130	0	510	10	645
Between £5,001 and £10,000	0	15	0	170	0	185
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	0	15	0	205	0	220
<b>TOTAL:</b>	10	160	5	885	15	1,045

**Swansea**

	Further Education		Higher Education		Total	
	Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)	Full-time (over 500 taught hours)	Part-time (over 30 credits)	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time
<i>Income</i>						

<b>Income</b>						
Between £0 and £5,000	5	45	10	475	15	515
Between £5,001 and £10,000	5	5	0	190	5	195
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	0	0	5	165	5	165
<b>TOTAL:</b>	10	50	15	825	25	875

**Torfaen**

Further Education		Higher Education		Total	
Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)	Full-time (over 500 taught hours)	Part-time (over 30 credits)	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time

<b>Income</b>						
Between £0 and £5,000	5	45	5	185	10	230
Between £5,001 and £10,000	0	5	0	65	0	70
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	0	5	0	75	0	80
<b>TOTAL:</b>	5	55	10	325	15	380

**Vale of Glamorgan**

Further Education		Higher Education		Total	
Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)	Full-time (over 500 taught hours)	Part-time (over 30 credits)	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time

<b>Income</b>						
Between £0 and £5,000	20	55	0	290	20	350
Between £5,001 and £10,000	5	20	0	100	5	120
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	5	10	0	115	5	125
<b>TOTAL:</b>	30	85	0	505	30	590

**Wrexham**

Further Education		Higher Education		Total	
Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)	Full-time (over 500 taught hours)	Part-time (over 30 credits)	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time

<b>Income</b>						
Between £0 and £5,000	0	80	0	285	0	365
Between £5,001 and £10,000	0	15	0	100	0	115
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	0	5	0	115	0	120
<b>TOTAL:</b>	0	100	0	500	0	600

**Ynys Mon**

Further Education		Higher Education		Total	
Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)	Full-time (over 500 taught hours)	Part-time (over 30 credits)	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time

<b>Income</b>						
Between £0 and £5,000	0	5	0	180	0	190
Between £5,001 and £10,000	5	10	5	95	10	100
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	0	0	0	80	5	80
<b>TOTAL:</b>	5	15	5	355	15	370

**All Wales**

Further Education	Higher Education	Total
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	<b>Part-time (275 to 500 taught hours)</b>	<b>Full-time (over 500 taught hours)</b>	<b>Part-time (over 30 credits)</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>	<b>Full-time</b>
<b>Income</b>						
Between £0 and £5,000	145	1,140	70	6,195	215	7,335
Between £5,001 and £10,000	45	245	30	2,710	75	2,955
Between £10,001 and less than £15,000	55	165	30	2,815	85	2,980
<b>TOTAL:</b>	240	1,550	135	11,720	375	13,270

Notes:

For reasons of confidentiality all numbers have been rounded to the nearest five; 0, 1, 2 are rounded to 0; all other numbers are rounded to the nearest five.

Total figures are also subject to this rounding and as such the sum of the numbers in each row or column may not add to totals.

### **Local Education Authorities (Litigation)**

**Alun Cairns:** How much compensation has been paid by each local authority since May 1999 as a result of successful litigation or out-of-court settlements, when all education policy is being questioned? (WAQ21229)

**Alun Cairns:** How much money has been paid in compensation by LEAs to individuals who have made successful legal claims since May 1999 for not fulfilling special education need requirements? (WAQ21230) [R]

**Alun Cairns:** Would the Minister list the number of litigation cases taken against LEAs year by year over the last seven years? (WAQ21231) [R]

**Alun Cairns:** Would the Minister make a statement on the risks of litigation against LEAs? (WAQ21232) [R]

**Alun Cairns:** What guidance is in place from the Minister in seeking to minimise litigation against LEAs? (WAQ21233) [R]

**Jane Davidson:** Information on the compensation paid by local education authorities as a result of successful legal claims and on legal actions taken against LEAs is not held centrally. It is for local authorities to ensure that they comply with their statutory obligations. Guidance issued by the National Assembly in the form of circulars is intended to assist local authorities in complying with those obligations.

### **Learning and Skills Council Tenders**

**Alun Cairns:** Does Education and Learning Wales's approval of a Welsh-based training provider give similar rights to Learning and Skills Council recognition in England in becoming eligible to tender for supported projects? (WAQ21375)

**Jane Davidson:** Organisations that are funded by the ELWa councils (the National Council for Education and Training for Wales and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales) are able to tender for business with the Learning and Skills Council should they wish to do so. The national council contracts with many work-based learning providers that also contract with the LSC.

### **Learning and Skills Council Tenders**

**Alun Cairns:** What agreements are in place between ELWa in Wales and the Learning and Skills Council in England relating to the approval of training providers eligible to tender for supported projects? (WAQ21376)

**Jane Davidson:** The ELWa councils (the National Council for Education and Training for Wales and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales) and the Learning and Skills Council each operate their own arrangements for the procurement of training providers.

### **Learning and Skills Council Tenders**

**Alun Cairns:** Does ELWa recognise training companies approved by the Learning and Skills Council, and are they allowed to tender for supported projects? (WAQ21387)

**Jane Davidson:** Organisations that are funded by the Learning and Skills Council are able to tender for business with both ELWa councils (the National Council for Education and Training for Wales and Higher Education Funding Council for Wales). Each proposal would be considered on its merits taking account of relevant factors, which might include performance on other public sector business, including contracts with the LSC.

### **Modern Apprenticeships in Wales**

**Elin Jones:** How many people are currently receiving modern apprenticeships in Wales? (WAQ21388)

**Jane Davidson:** As at 29 September 2002 there were 10,668 people participating in modern apprenticeships in Wales. In addition there were a further 12,190 young people on level 2 foundation modern apprenticeships and a further 1,317 people aged 25 or over on the modern skills diploma for adults.

## **Questions to the Minister for Environment**

### **Environmental Impact of Housing Developments in Wales**

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on the environmental impact of housing developments in Wales? (WAQ21140)

**The Minister for Environment (Sue Essex):** Effective protection of the environment is one of the four objectives of sustainable development established by the Assembly's sustainable development scheme. The planning system has a fundamental role in delivering sustainable development in Wales as set out in 'Planning Policy Wales' (March 2002), the Assembly Government's land use planning policy document. In relation to housing this means ensuring that new housing developments are environmentally sound and that they retain and, where practical, enhance important landscape and wildlife features. Local planning authorities should promote the construction of housing with low environmental impact that especially maximises energy efficiency and minimises the use of energy from fossil fuel sources, using renewable energy technology where appropriate. In addition, in planning the provision for new housing local planning authorities must take account of the capacity of an area in terms of social, environmental and cultural factors to accommodate more housing.

### **Transport Policy**

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on the Government's transport policy? (WAQ21141)

**Sue Essex:** In consultation with stakeholders in Wales, the Welsh Assembly Government has developed a transport framework, which presents its vision of the integrated transport system wanted in Wales. The framework was launched on 23 November 2001. This vision is for public transport to be integrated, sustainable, accessible, affordable and a favoured mode of travel of the people of Wales.

We are addressing historic levels of under-investment in public transport and taking action to support local authority transport consortia in their efforts to achieve better integration across local authority boundaries, including the provision of funding support for them to develop more formal structures.

During the last two years I have announced a £430 million pound package of rail and infrastructure investment to be taken forward by local authorities over the next five years. I announced the trunk road forward programme in March 2002, which will help deliver our vision for transport and which also supports economic needs and will support work to achieve economic growth in Wales, while securing environmental improvements for many of our communities

In April this year free local bus concessionary travel was introduced for pensioners and disabled people in Wales and in April 2003 this will be extended to men over 60.

We have consulted extensively on our road safety strategy and I will be publishing a final document in January.

### **Recycling Targets**

**Owen John Thomas:** What guidance is the Minister giving to local authorities concerning the achievement of recycling targets? (WAQ21142)

**Sue Essex:** ‘Wise about Waste—the National Waste Strategy for Wales’, published June 2002, contains targets for local authorities in Wales leading up to a 40 per cent combined recycling and composting by 2010. These targets are detailed at Annex 1.

At a working level, the ‘Guidance on Municipal Waste Management Strategies in Wales’, published August 2002 and issued jointly by the Welsh Assembly Government and the Welsh Local Government Association, gives operational advice and targets. The guidance specifies a group of performance indicators that allow an objective assessment of the local authority’s progress towards meeting the targets (e.g. total tonnage of waste arisings broken down by the categories recycled, composted, used to generate energy or landfilled) or giving an indicator of future progress (e.g. percentage of the local authority population served by kerbside collection of recyclables). It also gives local authorities a comparison of the technologies for managing residual municipal waste as well as a clear set of definitions that will allow meaningful comparison of local authorities’ performance.

The Assembly Government has also published ‘Planning Policy Wales: Technical Advice Note 21: Waste’ in November 2001, which puts waste into the planning context. This gives local authorities’ planning departments advice about how the land use planning system should contribute to sustainable waste management. One of its most important features is the requirement for local authorities to formulate regional waste plans across their boundaries in south-east, south-west and north Wales within two years.

Other organisations such as the Waste and Resources Action Programme, the Community Recycling Network and Wales Environment Trust provide guidance, advice and training for local authorities on recycling and potential markets for recycled materials.

### **Annex 1**

#### **Recycling Targets**

- ◆ Local authorities to achieve targets of at least 15 per cent recycling/composting by the end of 2003/04, of which a 5 per cent minimum must be composting and a 5 per cent minimum recycling.
- ◆ Local authorities to achieve targets of at least 25 per cent recycling/composting by the end of 2003/04, of which a 10 per cent minimum must be composting and a 10 per cent minimum recycling.
- ◆ Local authorities to achieve targets of at least 40 per cent recycling/composting by the end of 2009/10, of which a 15 per cent minimum must be composting and a 15 per cent minimum recycling.

### **Road Safety in the Run-up to Christmas**

**Ann Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on the measures being taken to promote road safety in the run up to Christmas? (WAQ21143)

**Sue Essex:** Today (5 December) I launched the Assembly's Christmas and new year anti drink-drive campaign. The campaign is designed to reduce the number of deaths and injuries resulting from drink-driving, especially through the coming holiday period by stimulating media and public awareness of the message not to drink and drive. This year's drink-drive television commercial, being broadcast in English and Welsh throughout the festive period, focuses on the excuses people give for drinking and driving. These vary from 'I've only had a couple' or 'I've had a big meal', to 'I won't get stopped'.

The campaign also provides a focus for co-ordinated complementary activity by police forces, local authorities and others in the public and private sectors.

### **Free Bus Travel for Senior Citizens and Disabled People**

**Ann Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on the impact of the Assembly's provision of free bus travel for senior citizens and disabled people? (WAQ21144)

**Sue Essex:** Almost 390,000 pensioners and disabled people are enjoying the benefits of the Welsh Assembly Government's free travel scheme. Local bus services are being revitalised as passenger numbers rise. As more people become aware of the opportunities that local buses provide, that can only help to safeguard services, and encourage operators to explore the scope for new and extended service opportunities with more modern vehicles.

### **Free Bus Pass Scheme**

**Owen John Thomas:** Will the Minister make a statement on the impact of the free bus pass scheme on local bus services? (WAQ21145)

**Sue Essex:** With almost 390,000 passes in circulation, the Welsh Assembly Government's free travel scheme for pensioners and disabled people has kick-started a turnaround in the number of bus journeys being made. On average, the number of bus passengers has increased since the introduction of the free travel scheme by 16 per cent in south-east Wales and by 10 per cent elsewhere. Local bus services are becoming more frequent, more accessible, and routes are being extended, demonstrating a clear commitment from the bus operators to invest and improve their services.

### **Trade and Investment Offices**

**Nick Bourne:** When did the Minister first become aware of the plan to open trade and investment offices in New York, San Francisco, Hong Kong, Brussels, Tokyo and Sydney? (WAQ21158)

**Sue Essex:** I refer you to the answer given by the First Minister to WAQ21151.



## Questions to the Finance Minister

### Monitoring the Performance of Local Authorities

**Owen John Thomas:** What machinery exists for monitoring the performance of local authorities in delivering public services? (WAQ21147)

**The Finance Minister (Edwina Hart):** The Welsh Assembly Government has made policy agreements with each local authority and has developed the Wales programme for improvement. These are allied with service specific assessment, review and inspection regimes.

### Local Government Bill

**Ann Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on the aspects of the Local Government Bill that will apply in Wales? (WAQ21148)

**Edwina Hart:** The Local Government Bill was introduced in Parliament on 25 November. I believe we have achieved our aim of obtaining maximum flexibility for applying the principles of the Bill in Wales. It will allow us to drive forward significantly the policy agenda set out in 'Freedom and Responsibility in Local Government'.

### Denbighshire Council

**Ann Jones:** What assessment has the Minister made of Denbighshire Council's progress in respect of its policy agreement with the Assembly? (WAQ21149)

**Edwina Hart:** My officials are monitoring the progress of all local authorities on their policy agreements with the Assembly.

### Trade and Investment Offices

**Nick Bourne:** When did the Minister first become aware of the plan to open trade and investment offices in New York, San Francisco, Hong Kong, Brussels, Tokyo and Sydney? (WAQ21159)

**Edwina Hart:** I refer you to the answer given by the First Minister to WAQ21151.

### Rent Officer Service

**Dafydd Wigley:** In her consideration of possible locations for the north Wales office for the Rent Officer Service, will the Minister bear in mind the desirability of locating public sector jobs, whenever possible, within the Objective 1 areas of Wales? (WAQ21225)

**Edwina Hart:** The location of the north Wales office for the Rent Officer Service will be taken into consideration as part of the wider location strategy for Assembly offices across Wales.

### Budget Reserves

**Dafydd Wigley:** Will the Minister make a statement on the objective bases on which she calculates the figure for 'reserves' within her budget? (WAQ21338)

**Edwina Hart:** In setting the level of reserves that are held within the budget I have to take into account the need to operate a system of prudent financial management. The reserves need to be able to accommodate:

- i) the likely demand for resources due to unforeseen pressures within a financial year;

- ii) allocations to budget heads that have to fund unforeseen pressures in future budget planning rounds; and
- iii) known spending commitments and pressures that have yet to be fully worked up before allocating resources to the necessary budgets.

#### **Private Finance Initiative**

**Dafydd Wigley:** Will the Minister make a statement on the future use of private finance initiatives to provide public services in Wales? (WAQ21339)

**Edwina Hart:** PFI will be used in Wales where it delivers value for money and where there is a clear and demonstrable advantage for the public benefit.

#### **Public Sector Pay Increases**

**William Graham:** Will the Minister make a statement concerning the budget provision for meeting public sector pay increases? (WAQ21352)

**Edwina Hart:** My starting point is that the Assembly will meet any public sector pay increases from within its existing budget. However, where pay settlements result in increased resource allocations to UK departments' expenditure limits and/or increased burdens on the Assembly's budget, I shall seek an appropriate level of additional resources for Wales.

#### **International Terrorism on Wales**

**William Graham:** Will the Minister make a statement concerning the provisions within the Assembly budget to counter the effects of international terrorism on Wales? (WAQ21354)

**Edwina Hart:** Responsibility for general emergency planning issues has not been devolved to the Assembly. Funding arrangements are a matter for Cabinet Office, which issues annual grants to local authorities in England and Wales to meet their civil defence needs. This has been broadened to also cover preparations for peacetime disasters. Some local authorities supplement this grant to finance their emergency planning departments.

In health, where the Assembly has direct responsibility, appropriate provisions are being made to enhance the resilience of this service to respond to the new threat posed by international terrorism.

#### **Increases in Public Sector Wages**

**Ieuan Wyn Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on the effect any increases in public sector wages will have on the overall Assembly budget? (WAQ21356)

**Edwina Hart:** My starting point is that the Assembly will meet any public sector pay increases from within its existing budget. However, where pay settlements result in increased resource allocations to UK departments' expenditure limits and/or increased burdens on the Assembly's budget, I shall seek an appropriate level of additional resources for Wales.

#### **Private Finance Initiative Projects**

**Peter Black:** How many private finance initiative projects have been approved by the Assembly since May 1999? (WAQ21357)

**Edwina Hart:** Details regarding approved PFI projects in Wales are contained on the private finance unit website (<http://www.pfu.wales.gov.uk>). Schemes undertaken by local authorities without the support of PFI credits are a matter for the individual authority and are therefore omitted.

### Private Finance Initiative Schemes (Business Plans)

**Peter Black:** Will the Minister publish the business plans for all approved private finance initiative schemes since May 1999 where contracts have been signed? (WAQ21358)

**Edwina Hart:** The publication of the full business case is the responsibility of the procuring authority not the Welsh Assembly Government. I am, however, comfortable with the wider circulation of such documentation once contracts have been signed and authorities have reviewed, with their private sector partners, any limited information which may still remain confidential.

### Rent Officer Service (Job Losses)

**Nick Bourne:** Which of the current locations in which the Rent Officer Service is based will close when it is brought into the Welsh Assembly Government, and how many jobs will be lost in each location? (WAQ21377)

**Edwina Hart:** When the Rent Officer Service is transferred into the Assembly, there will be offices in three new locations, as I have already announced—one in north Wales, one in south Wales and one in west Wales. These will be located in new premises, with all of the current offices closing. I do not yet know how many staff will wish to transfer to the new locations.

### Rent Officer Service Offices in Mold and Pontypool

**Nick Bourne:** Can the Minister give any assurance that the new Rent Officer Service offices in Mold and Pontypool will be ready by 1 April 2003? (WAQ21390)

**Edwina Hart:** I have not yet announced the specific locations of the new offices for the Rent Officer Service. I hope to do so in the near future. The target date for the transfer is 1 April 2003.

## Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

### Medical Students in Wales

**David Lloyd:** With regard to the last five years, will the Minister make a statement on the number of medical students in Wales who have not completed their undergraduate training? (WAQ19613) [R]

*Substantive answer following holding reply issued on 21 October.*

**The Minister for Health and Social Services (Jane Hutt):** In my holding reply to WAQ19613, I promised to write to you with the information you requested about the number of medical students in Wales who have not completed their undergraduate training over the last five years. I am now able to give you this information. I am sorry for the delay in making this available to you.

Since 1997, the numbers of medical students in Wales who have completed, or are projected to complete, their undergraduate medical training (excluding the pre-registration house officer year) are as follows:

Year of Entry/ Year of Study	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
1	198	195	225	230	289
2	187	190	216	220	278
3	185	188	214	229*	275
4	183	186	189	227	272

<b>5 (i.e. students who qualified/ are expected to qualify)</b>	<i>182</i>	<i>184</i>	<i>187</i>	<i>225</i>	<i>269</i>
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The actual figures appear in normal case with estimated figures given in italics when the year of study is after 2002-03. The estimated figures are based on drop-out rates determined following a review of historical data and are agreed between the University of Wales College of Medicine, Cardiff University and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales/Education and Learning Wales to be:

During year 1	0.98 per cent
Year 1 to year 2	0.98 per cent
Year 2 to year 3	0.99 per cent
Year 3 to year 4	0.99 per cent
Year 4 to year 5	0.99 per cent

The figures will, however, vary if the number of students repeating their year of study or inter-calculating continues to increase over the next few years. The years indicated with \* highlights this trend.

An academic progress committee, comprising senior academic staff, meets regularly throughout the year to monitor the progress of students. Students who seek to leave the medical undergraduate programme will normally meet with a senior member of academic staff (usually the dean, vice-dean or sub-dean) in order that the reason for their withdrawal from the programme may be discussed. Generally, students will leave for academic (i.e. following exam failure or because the course does not suit them) or health reasons.

I hope that this information is helpful to you.

### **Diabetes National Strategic Framework**

**David Lloyd:** How much money has been spent thus far as part of the diabetes national strategic framework? (WAQ20986)

**Jane Hutt:** NHS spending plans included £1 million a year towards the delivery of the diabetes national strategic framework in Wales over a three-year period. The £1 million was split as follows: £750,000 to health authorities to address local priorities, £250,000 to be retained by the National Assembly for Wales centrally to fund projects that emerge from the diabetes national strategic framework implementation group. The £250,000 retained by the NAW has been used to date for:

- ◆ Market Research Wales, completing work with focus groups;
- ◆ The Audit Commission, currently undertaking a baseline service review;
- ◆ The Assembly to employ a NSF co-ordinator and clerical support to work with Diabetes UK Cymru.

### **Trade and Investment Offices**

**Nick Bourne:** When did the Minister first become aware of the plan to open trade and investment offices in New York, San Francisco, Hong Kong, Brussels, Tokyo and Sydney? (WAQ21155)

**Jane Hutt:** I refer you to the answer given by the First Minister to WAQ21151.

### **Severance Payments**

**David Lloyd:** Will the Minister state the costs of severance payments for those employed within the health authorities as a result of the proposed NHS reform? (WAQ21182)

**Jane Hutt:** As we are still in the process of making appointments to the new structures within NHS Wales, there is as yet no firm indication of the cost of severance payments. We do not anticipate large numbers of people being without a post in the new structures. We are aiming to ensure that the skills and experience available within NHS Wales are retained and that those skills are utilised effectively through the continued development of staff who have a valuable contribution to make to the new structures.

### **Epilepsy Wales**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Will the Minister make a statement on how local groups of Epilepsy Wales can access funding? (WAQ21183)

**Jane Hutt:** The funding of services is at present the responsibility of health authorities. They must assess the needs of their local area and, working with NHS trusts, local health groups, the voluntary sector and others, plan and prioritise their health services through the health improvement programmes to meet that need within the resources available.

The Health Act established a new system in the NHS based on partnership and co-operation and opened up opportunities to voluntary organisations like Epilepsy Wales for further involvement in the planning and provision of services for local areas. We encourage voluntary organisations, patients, carers and their families to use the opportunities we have put in place and make the responsible bodies aware of the issues affecting people with epilepsy.

### **Diabetes National Service Framework for Wales (Delivery Strategy)**

**David Ian Jones:** Would the Minister make a statement on the projected publication date of the delivery strategy for diabetes national service framework for Wales? (WAQ21226)

**Jane Hutt:** The 'NSF Diabetes (Wales): Standards' document, which I announced in April 2002, sets out the aims, standards, rationales and key interventions, together with the implications for planning services. The delivery strategy document is due to be published in March 2003 and will combine the information from the standards document on the steps to be taken by local health, social care and voluntary organisations to achieve delivery of the standards. It will also set out the actions to be taken regarding milestones, performance management arrangements and the underpinning programmes to support local delivery.

### **Residential and Nursing Care**

**Alun Cairns:** What analysis has been made and any conclusions reached involving the various research papers that have been commissioned by local authorities establishing a fair rate for residential and nursing care? (WAQ21228)

**Jane Hutt:** No analysis has been made by the Welsh Assembly Government. However, the Welsh Local Government Association is taking the lead in commissioning consultants to draw on and build upon the work which has been done to date so as to produce a framework for costs which can assist and inform local fees negotiations.

The Wales care strategy group has supported the need for this work to take place and I have agreed to provide financial assistance to the association to take this piece of work forward.

### **'Golden Hellos' paid to General Practitioners**

**Alun Cairns:** How many 'golden hellos' have been paid to GPs in seeking to attract them to some of the deprived areas in Wales? (WAQ21234)

**Jane Hutt:** In Wales the deprived areas as determined by the index of multiple deprivation are spread over the five health authorities. The golden hello initiative, aimed at recruiting GPs to Wales, has also been evenly distributed over these health authorities. The uptake of the golden hello until the end of September is as follows.

Health Authority	No. of Grants	Cost (£'000s)
Bro Taf	19	95
Dyfed Powys	22	113
Gwent	20	100
Iechyd Morgannwg	21	102.5
North Wales	20	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>510.5</b>

#### **‘Golden Hellos’ per GP Practice**

**Alun Cairns:** Would the Minister list all the ‘golden hellos’ per GP practice that have been paid to seek to attract them to some of the deprived areas in Wales? (WAQ21235)

**Jane Hutt:** There have been over 100 grants awarded for the golden hello scheme across Wales. It is not possible to name the practices that have benefited from this scheme because the small size of some practices would mean that some individual doctors could be identified. This would amount to ‘personal data’ for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998.

The Data Protection Act prohibits the disclosure of personal data save in excepted circumstances or where certain conditions are met which cannot be applied to this question.

#### **Original Budget for ‘Golden Hellos’**

**Alun Cairns:** What was the original budget for the number of ‘golden hellos’ to be paid in order to seek to attract GPs to some of the deprived areas in Wales? (WAQ21236)

**Jane Hutt:** The golden hello initiative is a non-discretionary grant and is non-cash limited expenditure. Therefore there was no original budget allocated to the health authorities. However, for all GP recruitment and retention schemes it was estimated that £1 million was required for the whole of Wales.

#### **Bilingual Speech Therapists in Wales**

**Alun Pugh:** What steps is the Welsh Assembly Government taking to increase the number of bilingual speech therapists in Wales? (WAQ21340)

**Jane Hutt:** There is a national shortage of speech and language therapists across Wales (and in the UK) and training numbers are being increased to try to address this problem. We are aware that there is an additional need in some parts of Wales for speech and language therapists who can deliver their service in the Welsh language. Discussions are taking place with the speech and language therapy education providers at the University of Wales Institute Cardiff to identify ways of making available the phonetic training and resource material that will enable students to work through the medium of Welsh.

#### **The National Health Service (Optical Charges and Payments) (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2003**

**Pauline Jarman:** Can the Minister confirm when the National Health Service (Optical Charges and Payments) (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2003 will come into force? (WAQ21342)

**Jane Hutt:** Subject to the procedures contained in Assembly Standing Order No. 22, it is intended that these regulations will come into force on 1 March 2003.

### **Adverse Reactions to the Flu Jab**

**Alison Halford:** Would the Minister state if she has had any reports of patients in Wales having adverse reactions (both expected and unexpected) after receiving the flu jab? (WAQ21382)

**Jane Hutt:** The Committee on Safety of Medicines Wales has received four reports of adverse reactions possibly associated with the administration of influenza vaccine during the period 1.1.02 to 8.12.02.

### **Adverse Reactions to the Flu Jab**

**Alison Halford:** What steps has the Minister taken to ensure that all adverse reactions to the flu jab in Wales are reported to the Assembly's relevant body? (WAQ21383)

**Jane Hutt:** Adverse reactions to medicines are reported via the yellow card scheme to the Committee on Safety of Medicines Wales. Healthcare professionals are encouraged to use the scheme and blank reporting forms are included in every copy of the British National Formulary.

## **Questions to the Business Minister**

### **Trade and Investment Offices**

**Nick Bourne:** When did the Minister first become aware of the plan to open trade and investment offices in New York, San Francisco, Hong Kong, Brussels, Tokyo and Sydney? (WAQ21156)

**The Business Minister (Carwyn Jones):** I refer you to the answer given by the First Minister to WAQ21151.