

Answers to Questions not reached in Plenary 9 November 2004

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

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

Questions to the First Minister

The Auditor General's Report for Wales on Waste Management

Q12 Helen Mary Jones: Will the First Minister make a statement on the recent report by the Auditor General for Wales regarding waste management? (OAQ39052)

The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan): It would not be appropriate for me to comment on the detail of the report until the Audit Committee has concluded its consideration of this matter.

The Children Bill

Q13 Christine Chapman: What discussions has the First Minister had with Westminster colleagues about the Children Bill? (OAQ39037)

The First Minister: I have discussed the Bill with the Secretary of State for Education and Skills and the UK Government Minister of State for Children and with the Secretary of State for Wales on many occasions. Jane Hutt and Jane Davidson have exchanged letters and held discussions with Ministers in the Department for Education and Skills and the Wales Office.

Economic Growth

Q14 Mark Isherwood: Will the First Minister make a statement on economic growth in Wales? (OAQ39039)

The First Minister: Economic growth in Wales, as reflected in gross value added per head, kept pace with the UK average between 1999 and 2002, following a period of relative decline during the 1990s. The Office for National Statistics are due to publish 2003 GVA estimates in December this year.

Potential Redeployment of Welsh Soldiers in Central Iraq

Q15 Alun Ffred Jones: Has the First Minister made any representations to his colleagues at Westminster regarding the potential redeployment of Welsh soldiers in central Iraq? (OAQ39044)

The First Minister: I have had no specific discussions on this matter with Westminster colleagues. Assembly Members will be aware that the Black Watch battle group now deployed in central Iraq includes a squadron of the Queen's Dragoon Guards, which recruits very strongly in Wales. Our fond wishes go to them and to all other Welsh soldiers, both in that battle group and in their deployments in Iraq in their important task.