

## Answers to Questions not reached in Plenary 15 May 2001

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

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

### Questions to the First Minister

#### Rural Post Offices

**Q11 Mick Bates:** What representations has the First Minister made to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry regarding measures to aid the survival of rural post offices in Wales? (OAQ11346)

**The First Minister:** While I have had no discussions with the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, I have raised our concerns with the Secretary of State for Wales, Paul Murphy. I am pleased to note that two dedicated posts have been set up for north and south Wales to search out successors to retiring sub-postmasters or sub-postmistresses who are finding difficulties in securing a long-term future for their sub-post offices.

#### Co-ordination of Policy in North Wales

**Q12 Ann Jones:** Will the First Minister make a statement about the co-ordination of policy in north Wales? (OAQ 11329) *Withdrawn.*

#### Rural Post Offices

**Q13 Kirsty Williams:** What recent discussions has the First Minister had with the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry regarding the survival of the post office network in rural Wales? (OAQ11348)

**The First Minister:** I have had no discussions with the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, but I have raised our concerns with the Secretary of State for Wales, Paul Murphy, and with Graham Cater, chairman of Consignia's advisory board in Wales.

#### National Assembly Performance Report (Policy Development)

**Q14 Elin Jones:** How will the First Minister co-ordinate policy development to address the findings of 'The National Assembly for Wales Performance Report 1999-2000'? (OAQ11343)

**The First Minister:** The performance report records the outputs achieved by the Assembly's main programmes and activities against plans and targets. It does not set out conclusions or recommendations. It provides a benchmark for me, my Cabinet colleagues and Committees to scrutinise individual programmes. It will contribute, alongside other tools, to strengthening our assessment of the results achieved by the Assembly's policies.

#### Policy Development (Creation of New Jobs)

**Q15 Ieuan Wyn Jones:** What steps can the First Minister take to co-ordinate policy development in the National Assembly which will contribute towards the creation of new jobs in the most socially deprived areas of Wales? (OAQ11344)

**The First Minister:** The rollout of the European structural funds will be a major contributing factor in assisting job creation in the most deprived areas of Wales. Our groundbreaking Communities First programme is aimed at tackling the root causes of social exclusion, social disadvantage and unemployment in the most deprived areas of Wales. It is a community-driven approach and will involve

all relevant partners, including statutory, voluntary and private sector organisations, including small businesses. The national economic development strategy, which is out to consultation at present, will provide an overarching strategy aimed at community regeneration and job creation.

### **Developing an Employment Strategy**

**Q16 Cynog Dafis:** In his capacity as policy co-ordinator, how is the First Minister attempting to ensure the development of an employment strategy that meets the social and economic needs of Wales? (OAQ11336) *Withdrawn.*

### **National Assembly Performance Report (New Measures)**

**Q17 David Lloyd:** Will any new measures be introduced following on from the findings of 'The National Assembly for Wales Performance Report 1999-2000'? (OAQ11345) *Withdrawn.*

### **North Wales Regional Committee Meeting**

**Q18 Peter Rogers:** Will the First Minister attend the next meeting of the North Wales Regional Committee? (OAQ11350)

**The First Minister:** My present intention is to attend the meeting.

### **Role of Assembly Deputy Ministers**

**Q19 Alun Cairns:** Will the First Minister make a statement on the role of Assembly Deputy Ministers? (OAQ11333) *Withdrawn.*

### **Cross-cutting Issues in Assembly Policies**

**Q20 Janet Ryder:** In his capacity as policy development co-ordinator, how does the First Minister assess the Government of Wales's success in embedding cross-cutting issues throughout National Assembly policies? (OAQ11341) *Withdrawn.*

### **Social and Economic Assistance to Communities**

**Q21 Dafydd Wigley:** In his role as policy development co-ordinator, what steps can the First Minister take to ensure that the communities that most need social and economic assistance are receiving it? (OAQ11335) *Withdrawn.*

### **Visits to Tourist Attractions**

**Q22 Peter Black:** Will the First Minister make a statement on any recent visits that he has made to tourist attractions around Wales in his capacity as First Minister? (OAQ11334)

**The First Minister:** I have recently visited Anglesey Sea Zoo, Llanberis, the National Botanic Garden of Wales at Middleton Hall, the Museum of Welsh Life at St Fagans and Rhossili in my official capacity. I discussed the tourist industry's problems on recent visits to Castell Carreg Cennen, Aberglasney, the Pembrokeshire coastal footpath, Bosherton pools, Gwernan lake and Mawddach estuary.

The Deputy First Minister has been to Machynlleth, Portmeirion, Dan yr Ogof showcaves, Oakwood, Carreg Cennen, Kilgetty and Newtown to visit tourist attractions and meet tourism operators.

### **Budget Measures to Help Vulnerable People**

**Q23 Christine Gwyther:** What discussions has the First Minister had with his Westminster colleagues regarding recent budget measures aimed to help vulnerable people in Wales? (OAQ11331) *Withdrawn.*

**Sustainable Development Scheme (Providing an Overarching Framework)**

**Q24 Pauline Jarman:** What steps can the First Minister take to ensure that the sustainable development scheme provides the overarching framework for all policy development within the Assembly? (OAQ11342) *Withdrawn.*