

Answers to Questions not reached in Plenary 18 May 2004

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

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

Questions to the First Minister

Ystadegau Marchnad Llafur

C10 Elin Jones: A wnaiff y Prif Weinidog ddatganiad ynglŷn â ffigyrau diweddaraf ystadegau marchnad llafur? (OAQ35076) [W] *Trosglwyddwyd i'w ateb yn ysgrifenedig.*

Y Prif Weinidog (Rhodri Morgan): Mae ffigurau diweddaraf yr Arolwg Gweithlu, ar gyfer y tri mis a ddaeth i ben ym mis Mawrth, yn dangos cynnydd o 26,000 mewn cyflogaeth o'i gymharu â'r un cyfnod y llynedd. Yn fwy na hynny, cafwyd cynnydd o 12,000 mewn cyflogaeth yn y tri mis a ddaeth i ben ym mis Rhagfyr. Mae'r gyfradd gyflogaeth ar gyfer oedran gweithio yn gyffredinol ar ei uchaf yn hanesyddol, sef 72.6 y cant, llai na thri phwynt canran yn is na ffigur y DU, sef 74.9 y cant, ac mae diweithdra yng Nghymru yn is na chyfartaledd y DU.

Labour Market Statistics

Q10 Elin Jones: Will the First Minister make a statement regarding the recent labour market statistics? (OAQ35076) [W] *Transferred for written answer.*

The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan): The latest Labour Force Survey figures, for the three months ending March, show employment up on the same period a year ago by 26,000. Moreover, employment is up by 12,000 for the three months ending in December. The overall working-age employment rate is at a historically high rate of 72.6 per cent, less than three percentage points short of the UK figure of 74.9 per cent, and unemployment in Wales is below the UK average.

Question 11 (OAQ35077) was answered in Plenary.

PFI in the National Health Service

Q12 David Melding: What measures is the Government taking to increase the use of private finance initiative in the national health service? (OAQ35080)

The First Minister: NHS Wales trusts are required to follow the process laid down within the 'Capital Investment Manual'. This requires that schemes are tested for PFI.

Symud Swyddi Gweinyddol yn y Gwasanaeth Iechyd

C13 Alun Ffred Jones: A wnaiff y Prif Weinidog ddatganiad ar y bwriad i symud swyddi gweinyddol yn y gwasanaeth iechyd o Gaernarfon i'r Wyddgrug? (OAQ35099) [W]

Y Prif Weinidog: Bydd y cynnig arfaethedig i gau canolfan gwasanaethau busnes GIG Caernarfon yn destun cyfnod ymgynghori o dri mis, y bwriedir iddo ddechrau ar 27 Mai 2004, ar ôl i Fwrdd Iechyd Lleol Powys ystyried y mater gan mai hwy sy'n rhedeg y ganolfan gwasanaethau busnes ar ran yr holl fyrddau iechyd lleol.

Bydd y ddogfen ymgynghori yn cael ei dosbarthu ymysg ystod eang o gyrff perthnasol a chyryff rhanddeiliaid, a bydd penderfyniad yn cael ei wneud ar ganlyniad y broses 90 diwrnod ar ôl i Fwrdd Iechyd Lleol Powys ystyried a gwerthuso ymatebion mewn cysylltiad â'r ymgynghori yn ei gyfarfod bwrdd ar 15 Medi 2004.

Transfer of Administrative Health Jobs

Q13 Alun Ffred Jones: Will the First Minister make a statement on the intention to move administrative jobs in the health service from Caernarfon to Mold? (OAQ35099) [W]

The First Minister: The proposed closure of the Caernarfon NHS business services centre is the subject of a three-month period of consultation, planned to commence on 27 May 2004, following consideration by Powys Local Health Board which runs the business services centre on behalf of all LHBs.

The consultation document will be issued to a wide range of related and stakeholder bodies, with the outcome of the 90-day process being determined following consideration and evaluation of the responses from the consultation by Powys LHB at its board meeting on 15 September 2004.

Reintroduction of the Pension Book

Q14 Peter Black: What discussions has the First Minister had with his colleagues in London in regard to the reintroduction of the pension book? (OAQ35103)

The First Minister: I have not had any discussions regarding the re-introduction of the pension book. However, the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration and I receive the fortnightly briefings issued by the Department of Work and Pensions about the payment of pensions and benefits, and we will continue to monitor the situation closely.

Local Authority Funding

Q15 Sandy Mewies: Will the First Minister make a statement on diverse sources of funding that enable local authorities to improve their communities? (OAQ35093)

The First Minister: In 2004-05, local government will receive £3.1 billion in unhypothecated support to spend as it wishes to deliver frontline services and improve its communities. In addition, it will receive over £500 million in grants for a wide range of specific purposes that will also help to improve communities.