

Answers to Questions not reached in Plenary 22 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

Relationship between the Assembly's Administration and the UK Government

Q13 William Graham: Will the First Minister make a statement on the relationship between the Assembly's administration and the UK Government? (OAQ11531)

The First Minister: My colleagues and I have had a productive relationship with our counterparts in London and expect to continue to do so.

The Assembly's Impact on Wales

Q14 Peter Black: Will the First Minister make an assessment of the Assembly's impact on Wales after its first two years? (OAQ11520)

The First Minister: Since the Assembly was established in May 1999, we have achieved a great deal. Without this administration's work, the people of Wales would not have had:

- the Children's Commissioner for Wales;
- free school milk for under seven-year-olds;
- free entry to eight sites of the National Museums and Galleries of Wales;
- free prescriptions for those aged under 25, and frozen prescription charges for all;
- free dental checks for those aged under 25 and over 60; or
- free bus passes.

Provision of Public Services in Wales

Q15 Kirsty Williams: What discussions has the First Minister had recently with the Chancellor of the Exchequer regarding the provision of public services in Wales? (OAQ11525)

The First Minister: I have not had any formal discussions with the Chancellor of the Exchequer since I welcomed the additional £100 million added to the Assembly's budget as a consequence of his March budget, which will benefit public services in Wales.

Forthcoming UK Government Bills

Q16 Jocelyn Davies: Will the First Minister make a statement on what scope the National Assembly has to influence forthcoming UK Government Bills? (OAQ11526) *Withdrawn.*

Sustainable Development Scheme

Q17 Helen Mary Jones: 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? (OAQ11535) *Withdrawn.*

Co-ordination of Government Policy

Q18 Ann Jones: What recent discussions has the First Minister had with the Secretary of State for Wales on the co-ordination of Government policy between Wales and the rest of the UK? (OAQ11539)

The First Minister: I meet regularly with the Secretary of State for Wales to discuss all significant issues in relation to the UK and Wales. My Cabinet colleagues meet their Westminster opposites throughout the year.

Progress Report on the Joint Ministerial Committee

Q19 Richard Edwards: Will the First Minister give a progress report on the Joint Ministerial Committee? (OAQ11523) *Withdrawn.*

Embedding Cross-cutting Issues throughout the Assembly's Policies

Q20 Gareth Jones: 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 the policies of the Assembly and its sponsored bodies? (OAQ11536)

The First Minister: I have regular discussions with my Cabinet colleagues, who have lead responsibility for our three cross-cutting Assembly themes. We are addressing those cross-cutting themes through Assembly schemes and are supporting action plans and other appropriate measures, backed by funding.

I expect Assembly sponsored bodies to carry those themes and needs throughout their work.

Reducing County Courts in Wales

Q21 Alison Halford: What discussions has the First Minister had with the UK Government on reducing county courts in Wales? (OAQ11518) *Withdrawn.*

National Assembly Performance Report 1999-2000

Q22 David Lloyd: Will there any new measures be introduced following on from the findings of the 'National Assembly for Wales Performance Report 1999-2000'? (OAQ11533) *Withdrawn.*

Social and Economic Assistance for Communities

Q23 Janet Ryder: 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? (OAQ11534) *Withdrawn.*