

## Answers to Questions not reached in Plenary 24 January 2002

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

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

### Contents

- 1 Questions to the Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language
- 2 Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs
- 4 Questions to the Minister for Assembly Business

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

*Question 8 (OAQ15136) withdrawn.*

#### Industrial Heritage of Wales

**Q9 Brian Gibbons:** What plans does the Minister have to promote the industrial heritage of Wales? (OAQ15131)

**The Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language (Jenny Randerson):** The Wales Tourist Board draws extensive attention to our industrial heritage in its promotional work. The National Museum and Galleries of Wales also does substantial promotional work. It has recently completed new developments at the slate museum in Llanberis; has major plans for Big Pit, Blaenavon, and the Museum of the Welsh Woollen Industry in Dre-fach; and will build a major waterfront museum at Swansea in co-operation with Swansea City and County Council.

#### Promoting Cardiff as Cultural Capital of Europe 2008

**Q10 Jonathan Morgan:** Will the Minister make a statement on what progress has been made in promoting Cardiff as Cultural Capital of Europe 2008? (OAQ15191)

**Jenny Randerson:** Cardiff County Council has established a team to develop its bid for Cultural Capital of Europe status in 2008 and the National Assembly is providing £500,000 to support the development of that bid.

The team has launched a website to publicise the benefits that a successful bid would bring to the whole of Wales, and consulted widely, seeking ideas about projects that could be developed to strengthen links outside Cardiff.

#### Progress of the Wales Millennium Centre

**Q11 Tom Middlehurst:** Will the Minister report on the progress of the Wales Millennium Centre? (OAQ15144)

**Jenny Randerson:** As you now know from the Plenary debate on Tuesday 22 January, discussions on this have now reached a conclusion and I welcome the imminent signing of the contract.

#### State of the Wales Millennium Centre Project

**Q12 Alison Halford:** Will the Minister provide an update on the state of the Wales Millennium Centre project? (OAQ15128)

**Jenny Randerson:** As you now know from the Plenary debate on Tuesday 22 January, discussions on this have now reached a conclusion and I welcome the imminent signing of the contract.

### **Cardiff City and Leeds United Football Match**

**Q13 William Graham:** Will the Minister make a statement on discussions held with football and police authorities following the events of the Cardiff City and Leeds United match on 6 January 2002? (OAQ15199)

**Jenny Randerson:** I have not been engaged in any discussions with the football and police authorities following the events of the Cardiff City and Leeds United football match.

Following the inquiry undertaken by the Football Association of Wales and the Football Association, Cardiff City Football Club has now been charged with misconduct and, under the rules of the Football Association of Wales, has 10 days to formally reply to that charge. After receiving Cardiff City's response, the Football Association will appoint a commission to formally hear the matter.

### **Violence Witnessed after Cardiff City Victory over Leeds United**

**Q14 Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on the violence witnessed after the Cardiff City victory over Leeds United? (OAQ15122)

**Jenny Randerson:** Following the inquiry undertaken by the Football Association of Wales and the Football Association, Cardiff City Football Club has now been charged with misconduct and, under the rules of the Football Association of Wales, has 10 days to formally reply to this charge. Following their response, the Football Association of Wales will appoint a commission to formally hear the matter.

Any scenes of violence at football matches, or any other sporting event, are unacceptable. I am sure that Cardiff City and Leeds United football clubs will do everything within their control to prevent any repetition of such incidents.

*Question 15 (OAQ15137) withdrawn.*

## **Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs**

### **Woodland Forum**

**Q8 Richard Edwards:** Will the Minister give a report on the first meeting of the woodland forum? (OAQ15159)

**The Minister for Rural Affairs (Carwyn Jones):** The first meeting of the woodland forum was held on 10 January. The forum's purpose and scope were agreed, as well as the establishment of five working groups to implement each of the strategic objectives outlined in the strategy document 'Woodlands for Wales'.

At the meeting, I gave a commitment to provide feedback on progress to the Assembly, which I intend to do through my reports to the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee.

### **Entrepreneurship in Rural Wales**

**Q9 Richard Edwards:** How is the Minister encouraging entrepreneurship in rural Wales? (OAQ15158)

**Carwyn Jones:** The rural economy is an integral part of the wider economy of Wales. ‘A Winning Wales’, our national economic development strategy; the ‘Plan for Wales 2001’; and the entrepreneurship action plan all underline our commitment to supporting enterprise throughout Wales in a co-ordinated way.

In addition, we have published plans for Objectives 1, 2 and 3, and LEADER+, and the rural development plan, to ensure that the facilitation of enterprise and entrepreneurship is mainstreamed throughout Wales, including the rural communities.

### **Biomass Strategy**

**Q10 Peter Black:** When will the Minister publish a biomass strategy? (OAQ15157)

**Carwyn Jones:** I have asked the Forestry Commission to take lead responsibility for the woodland and biomass strategy group. The group, which has already held its first meetings, has been asked to publish an action plan for the sector by the end of May 2002.

### **Animal Health Issues**

**Q11 Elin Jones:** Will the Minister give an update on the attempts to devolve animal health issues to the National Assembly? (OAQ15182)

**Carwyn Jones:** Discussions on the transfer of further animal health matters to the National Assembly are underway with the UK Government. It will consider the outcome of the current review of veterinary and related professional advice to the Assembly, as well as timing, resourcing and relationships with other agriculture departments and the EU.

### **Devolved Responsibilities on Marine Issues**

**Q12 Cynog Dafis:** Will the Minister make a statement clarifying the devolved responsibilities in relation to marine issues? (OAQ15178)

**Carwyn Jones:** The Assembly Government has devolved powers for a range of marine issues. I have responsibility for fisheries out to 12 miles from the coast. Responsibility beyond 12 miles, out to 200 miles—that is, the UK’s fisheries limits—rests with the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Additionally the Environment Agency has powers to introduce bye-laws for the management of salmonids (salmon and sea trout) out to six miles, and local authority sea fisheries committees may make bye-laws for the management of sea fish, and for certain environmental purposes, also out to six miles. In both cases, bye-laws made by these groups have to be considered and, as appropriate, confirmed by Ministers.

Other ministerial colleagues also have responsibility for marine issues within their portfolios.

### **Health and Safety in Farming**

**Q13 Brian Gibbons:** Will the Minister make a statement about what is being done to promote health and safety in farming? (OAQ15155)

**Carwyn Jones:** The Health and Safety Executive and Assembly officials continue to maintain close contact on matters relating to health and safety. For example, they held a productive meeting last week to discuss how Farming Connect demonstration farms will operate safely when receiving visitors, and how the farms will promote positive messages on health and safety to visiting farmers.

### **Compensatory Scheme Deadlines (Appeals Procedure)**

**Q14 David Davies:** Will the Minister make a statement on the appeal procedure for farmers who have been unable to meet compensatory scheme deadlines through hospitalisation? (OAQ15152)

**Carwyn Jones:** Foot and mouth disease compensatory payments are a matter for the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

### **Rural Development Plan**

**Q15 Mick Bates:** Will the Minister consider individual environmental schemes, such as hedging and fencing, other than whole-farm schemes as part of the mid-term review of the rural development plan? (OAQ15211) [R]

**Carwyn Jones:** As part of the implementation process of 'Farming for the Future', I have established a working group to advise on the approach that the Assembly should take to the mid-term review of the common agricultural policy. Its work will include consideration of agri-environmental issues.

## **Questions to the Minister for Assembly Business**

### **Information and Communications Technology Strategy**

**Q7 Jonathan Morgan:** Will the Minister make a statement on the Government of Wales's ICT strategy and its impact in South Wales Central? (OAQ15197)

**The Minister for Assembly Business (Andrew Davies):** South Wales Central will benefit directly from the implementation of 'Cymru Ar-lein—Online for a Better Wales' through a variety of mechanisms. These will include the provision of free ICT support to local businesses through the Business Connect centres in Cardiff and Abercynon and low-cost internet access through local learn direct centres. To ensure that ICT is used to promote social inclusion and sustainable development, a number of wards in South Wales Central, such as Splott and Treherbert, have been included in the Communities First programme. In addition, South Wales Central will receive a share of the £9.9 million Assembly funding to provide interactive digital whiteboards and multimedia equipment for schools throughout Cardiff, Rhondda Cynon Taff and Vale of Glamorgan.

*Question 8 (OAQ15170) withdrawn.*

### **Transmitting Masts**

**Q9 David Lloyd:** How many extra transmitting masts will be required to provide wireless broadband connectivity at 28 and 40 gigahertz in those areas of Wales where fibre optic connectivity is not available? (OAQ15218)

**Andrew Davies:** Broadband connectivity can be provided by a number of different technologies and fixed wireless access is just one of these. There are many variables to take into consideration when estimating the number of masts that may be required, including which wireless technology is used and the extent to which FWA operators can locate their transmitters on existing masts. It is therefore impossible to predict how many extra masts will be needed to provide connectivity at 28 and 40 GHz where fibre optic is not a solution.

### **Providing the Assembly with Broadband or Asynchronous Digital Subscriber Lines**

**Q10 Alison Halford:** What consideration has the Minister given to providing the Assembly with broadband or ADSL? (OAQ15165)

**Andrew Davies:** The information technology sub-group of the House Committee is currently considering the potential for ADSL connections to constituency offices. The Assembly Government will consider any recommendation on ADSL from the House Committee in due course.

In the longer term, it is intended that the replacement contract for OSIRIS will provide an integrated voice and data network for all parts of the Assembly, operating at significantly higher speeds than it is presently possible to provide. Improving the speed of connection at affordable cost to Members' constituency offices and, where appropriate, their homes, is one of the main drivers for this aspect of the new procurement. The replacement contract will be in place in January 2004. How quickly it can be used to improve communication links is not yet known.

Additionally, in a joint exercise with the Welsh Development Agency, work is underway to identify options to extend the network being established as a result of the Assembly's broadband lifelong learning initiative beyond its original remit of local authorities, schools and other learning centres.

### Promotion of E-government

**Q11 Peter Black:** How is the Minister promoting e-government across the public sector in Wales? (OAQ15167) [R]

**Andrew Davies:** The Assembly Government is co-ordinating these activities under the umbrella of 'Cymru Ar-lein'. The Partnership Council has agreed a programme of awareness and promotion. A task and finish group is currently exploring the best way of joining up electronic service delivery provided by local government, Assembly sponsored bodies, other Government departments, such as the Inland Revenue and Benefits Agency, and the Assembly.

*Question 12 (OAQ15169) withdrawn.*

### Progress of the Information and Communications Technology Strategy

**Q13 Jonathan Morgan:** Will the Minister make a statement on what progress has been made on the National Assembly's ICT strategy? (OAQ15174)

**Andrew Davies:** Following adoption in Plenary last July, 'Cymru Ar-lein' was formally launched at Whitchurch High School in November. Implementation groups are currently being established, the first of which, namely ICT skills and e-learning, has met. The initiative to install broadband links into local authorities is currently at the procurement phase, with an encouragingly high level of interest being shown by suppliers. The process of creating a unifying identity for the Assembly and Assembly sponsored bodies has begun, in preparation for the development of an all-Wales portal. Further details are available from the 'Cymru Ar-lein' website at [www.cymru-arlein.cymru.gov.uk](http://www.cymru-arlein.cymru.gov.uk).

### Defnyddio Technoleg Gwybodaeth yng Nghymoedd y De

**C14 Geraint Davies:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad ar ba fentrau sydd wedi eu sefydlu i hyrwyddo defnyddio technoleg gwybodaeth yng nghymoedd y De? (OAQ15172) [W]

**Andrew Davies:** Fel y gwnaeth mewn manau eraill o Gymru, mae 'Cymru Ar-lein' wedi sefydlu amrywiaeth o fentrau yng nghymoedd y De. Mae'r rhain yn cynnwys darparu cefnogaeth technoleg gwybodaeth a chyfathrebu yn rhad ac am ddim i fusnesau lleol drwy'r ganolfan Cyswllt Busnes yn Abercynon a mynediad i'r rhyngwyd ar gost isel drwy ganolfannau cyswllt dysgu lleol ym Mhontypridd ac Aberdâr. Er mwyn sicrhau y defnyddir TGCh i hyrwyddo cynhwysiant cymdeithasol a datblygu cynaliadwy, mae nifer o wardiau, fel Pen-y-waun a Threherbert, wedi'u cynnwys yn rhaglen Rhoi Cymunedau'n Gyntaf. Yn ogystal, mae'r Cynulliad wedi darparu £9.9 miliwn ar gyfer cael byrddau gwyn

digidol rhyngweithiol ac offer amlgyfrwng i ysgolion ledled Cymru. Mae awdurdod addysg lleol Rhondda Cynon Taf wedi rhoi cynnig am y cyllid hwn.

### **Use of Information Technology in the South Wales Valleys**

**Q14 Geraint Davies:** Will the Minister make a statement on which initiatives have been established to promote the use of information technology in the south Wales valleys? (OAQ15172) [W]

**Andrew Davies:** As elsewhere in Wales, 'Cymru Ar-lein' has established a variety of initiatives within the south Wales valleys. These include the provision of free information and communications technology support to local businesses through the Business Connect centre in Abercynon and low-cost internet access through local learn direct centres at Pontypridd and Aberdare. To ensure that ICT is used to promote social inclusion and sustainable development, a number of wards, such as Pen-y-waun and Treherbert, have been included in the Communities First programme. In addition, the Assembly has provided £9.9 million funding to provide for interactive digital whiteboards and multimedia equipment for schools throughout Wales. Rhondda Cynon Taff local education authority has made a bid for this funding.

### **Broadband Connectivity**

**Q15 Cynog Dafis:** What steps is the Minister taking so that Wales can match the broadband connectivity already achieved in South Korea? (OAQ15219)

**Andrew Davies:** I am aware that the take-up of broadband in South Korea is the best in the world. This is due to a variety of factors, including its demographics and housing policies. I would very much like the figures for the take-up of broadband in Wales to match those in South Korea as quickly as possible. That is the reason why broadband connectivity is one of the main strands of 'Cymru Ar-lein'.

To progress this issue, a joint Assembly/Welsh Development Agency study was commissioned to consider ways of taking this forward. This study was endorsed in principle by the Assembly Cabinet last year. A costed implementation plan is being presented to me later month. I expect the plan to cover a range of options that will help stimulate the supply and demand for broadband connectivity.