

Answers to Questions not reached in Plenary 24 October 2000

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

Questions to the First Minister

Role of the National Assembly in Future Legislation

Q11 Peter Black: What discussions has the First Minister had with the Secretary of State for Wales about the National Assembly's role in future legislation? (OAQ7252)

The First Minister: I have had frequent discussions with the Secretary of State and his colleagues on a range of issues including the National Assembly's role in future legislation.

Discussions with the Crime Reduction Director for Wales

Q12 Jane Davidson: What discussions has the First Minister had with the Crime Reduction Director for Wales about youth crime in Wales? (OAQ7257) *Withdrawn.*

'Betterwales.com' Targets

Q13 Janet Ryder: What consultations has The First Minister had with the general public to discuss the targets outlined in 'Betterwales.com'? (OAQ7270) *Withdrawn.*

Discussions on Promoting Debt Relief for Developing Countries

Q14 John Griffiths: Has the First Minister had an opportunity to discuss with the Secretary of State for Wales how the Assembly might promote debt relief for developing countries? (OAQ7253)

The First Minister: I meet the Secretary of State regularly to discuss a number of issues. Officials have been assured that the Government is committed to keeping up the momentum following the G8 Summit in Okinawa

Policy Development since the adoption of 'Betterwales.com'

Q15 David Melding: Will the First Minister make a statement on the overall policy development of the Assembly since the adoption of the 'Betterwales.com'? (OAQ7259) *Withdrawn.*

Promoting Wales as an Ideal Place for Business

Q16 David Davies: Will the First Minister give details of the latest initiatives to promote Wales as an ideal place to establish a business? (OAQ7248)

The First Minister: The Welsh Development Agency continues to take the lead on promoting Wales as a country with a robust industrial infrastructure; good communication links; an excellent, adaptable workforce; and a positive business climate. Team Wales is able to provide prospective investors with the seamless delivery of a range of services from initial contact, advice on the availability of property, location and workforce issues through to advising prospective investors of the availability of grant to assist with start-up costs.

For its part, the National Assembly has a range of grants, which are available to assist developments by indigenous business and overseas companies wishing to invest in Wales. With Objective 1 status for

much of Wales and with a National Assembly committed to furthering economic development, there has never been a better time to undertake investment in Wales.

The National Assembly's European Policy

Q17 Elin Jones: Will the First Minister make a brief statement on his involvement with the development of the National Assembly's European policy? (OAQ7273) *Withdrawn.*

Government Departments (Functions in Wales)

Q18 David Lloyd: What discussions has the First Minister had with the Secretary of State for Wales about the functions currently carried out in Wales by other Government Departments? (OAQ7264) *Withdrawn.*

The European Task Force for Wales

Q19 Richard Edwards: Will the First Minister make a statement on the work of the European Task Force for Wales? (OAQ7255)

The First Minister: The European Task Force for Wales, established in November 1998 by Peter Hain MP, followed a central initiative by HM Treasury and the Department for Trade and Industry to establish regional fora which would help businesses to take forward business preparations locally. The Taskforce is now supported by the Assembly and includes representatives of the business community in Wales among other members. The Taskforce's remit is to assist Welsh businesses to address the practical implications for them of the adoption of the euro in most of the European Union, with which we have extensive trading relations; it is not concerned with the question of whether the United Kingdom should adopt the euro.

Since the Task Force first met in 1998, it has been very active at providing advice on euro issues and raising awareness. This has been done through a variety of measures including conferences, exhibitions, a telephone helpline with access to an expert panel, an information web-site and leaflet distribution.

The current Chairman is Peter Graham-Woollard, Director of Manufacturing Operations UK at Rizla UK Ltd. Mr Graham-Woollard is to make a presentation about the Task Force's work at the next meeting of the Committee on European Affairs.

Promoting the Role of the Welsh Language

Q20 Gareth Jones: How does the First Minister intend to promote the role of the Welsh language over the next 12 months? (OAQ7269) *Withdrawn.*

The Co-ordination of Policy Development

Q21 Peter Rogers: Does the First Minister have plans to review the mechanisms by which policy development is co-ordinated in light of the publication of 'Putting Wales First'? (OAQ7251)

The First Minister: No

Representing the National Assembly's Views in Published UK Government Bills

Q22 Rhodri Glyn Thomas: When the First Minister last met with the Secretary of State for Wales did he discuss how the views of the National Assembly could be better represented in published UK Government Bills? (OAQ7267) *Withdrawn.*

Developing Policy to Ensure that Cross-cutting Needs are Met

Q23 Brian Hancock: What steps is the First Minister undertaking to ensure that Assembly policy is developed to ensure that cross-cutting needs are met? (OAQ7260) *Withdrawn.*

The Assembly Cabinet (Exercise of Functions)

Q24 Ieuan Wyn Jones: Will the First Minister make a brief statement on the overall exercise of functions by the Assembly Cabinet? (OAQ7265) *Withdrawn.*