

Answers to Questions not reached in Plenary 27 February 2001

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

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

Questions to the First Minister

Representing the Full Needs of Wales

Q12 Janet Ryder: Will the First Minister make a statement regarding the increased importance of an Assembly Cabinet which represents the full needs of Wales, socially and geographically? (OAQ9889)

The First Minister: The Cabinet's role is not to represent the needs of Wales, but to address them. The most important thing is that it contains those who are best able to do that job.

Achieving Policy Targets

Q13 Ieuan Wyn Jones: Will the First Minister make a statement on the mechanisms and resources used to ensure that stated policy targets are being achieved? (OAQ9879) *Withdrawn.*

Policy Development within the Assembly

Q14 David Lloyd: How will the First Minister continue to balance the competing demands of social inclusion with health policy and economic development in the development of policies within the Assembly? (OAQ9882) *Withdrawn.*

The Assembly's Policies on Enlargement of the EU

Q15 Val Feld: Will the First Minister make a statement on the extent of the Assembly's policy on enlargement of the European Union? (OAQ9873) *Withdrawn.*

Y Berthynas rhwng Adrannau'r Cynulliad a San Steffan

C16 Owen John Thomas: A wnaiff Prif Weinidog Cymru ddatganiad pellach ynghylch y berthynas rhwng adrannau'r Cynulliad Cenedlaethol a'r adrannau cyfatebol yn Llywodraeth San Steffan, a'r modd y gweithredir y concordatau rhwng y ddau sefydliad? (OAQ9857) [W]

Prif Weinidog Cymru: Mae fy nghydweithwyr a'm swyddogion yn ymdrechu'n gyson i feithrin perthnasau gwaith agos gyda'u cydweithwyr yn Whitehall. Mae'r concordatau a gytunodd y Cabinet ag adrannau Whitehall yn adlewyrchu'r egwyddorion sydd yn angenrheidiol i atgyfnerthu'r perthnasau hyn a'r arfer gweinyddol gorau y dylai swyddogion lynu ato.

The Relationship between Assembly and Westminster Departments

Q16 Owen John Thomas: Will the First Minister make a further statement on the relationship between National Assembly departments and corresponding Government departments in Westminster, and how the concordats between these establishments are implemented? (OAQ9857) [W]

The First Minister: My colleagues and officials continually aim to foster close working relationships with their counterparts in Whitehall. The concordats that the Cabinet has agreed with Whitehall departments reflect the principles that are necessary to underpin these relationships and the administrative best practice to which officials should adhere.

A Holistic Approach to all Welsh Policy Matters

Q17 Janet Davies: In his role as policy development co-ordinator, what actions has the First Minister taken to ensure the Assembly is taking a holistic approach to all Welsh policy matters? (OAQ9877)

The First Minister: My Cabinet colleagues and I ensure that our major themes and main priorities are properly integrated. The Assembly's three overarching themes—sustainable development, equality and social inclusion—mean that plans and actions must be considered in a wider context across all our policy areas and must be supportive of each other.

Meetings with Corus

Q18 David Davies: What meetings has the First Minister had with Corus to discuss the impact of any redundancies from its plants on the communities in Wales? (OAQ9856)

The First Minister: Following Corus's acknowledgement of the need to work closely with the unions and Government here and at Whitehall, now is not the time to talk about redundancies as the emphasis must be on maintaining steel capacity and retaining jobs. All those most directly involved in the Cabinet are working flat out with Corus, the unions and departments across Whitehall to maintain jobs.

The Annual Government Business Programme

Q19 David Melding: Will the First Minister make a statement on progress towards achieving the goals set out in his annual Government business programme made to the Assembly on 21 November 2000? (OAQ9875) *Withdrawn.*

The Future of a Welsh Assembly with Primary Legislation Powers

Q20 Brian Hancock: Will the First Minister make a statement on discussions between himself and the Secretary of State for Wales regarding the future of a Welsh Assembly with primary legislation powers? (OAQ9886)

The First Minister: I have frequent discussions with the Secretary of State for Wales on all aspects of the devolution settlement.

Promoting the Image of Wales

Q21 Jonathan Morgan: What steps is the First Minister's administration taking to promote the image of Wales? (OAQ9892) *Withdrawn.*

The Potential Implications to Wales of the Euro

Q22 Christine Gwyther: What discussions has the First Minister had with his ministerial colleagues at Westminster about the potential implications to Wales of the euro when it becomes fully operational in 2002? (OAQ9858) *Withdrawn.*

The First Minister's Role as Policy Development Co-ordinator

Q23 Richard Edwards: Will the First Minister make a statement on his role as policy development co-ordinator? (OAQ9859) *Withdrawn.*

Discussions with Corus

Q24 John Griffiths: What discussions has the First Minister had with Corus on the impact that its decision to streamline production in its plants will have on Welsh communities? (OAQ9894)

The First Minister: Following Corus's acknowledgement of the need to work closely with the unions and Government here and at Whitehall, the emphasis must be on maintaining steel capacity and retaining jobs. All those most directly involved in the Cabinet are working flat out with Corus, the unions and departments across Whitehall to maintain jobs. In this respect I can confirm that I have held meetings with Corus to try to find a way forward.

Discussions between the Assembly and the Business Partnership Council

Q25 Phil Williams: Can the First Minister make a statement on recent discussions between the Assembly and the Business Partnership Council regarding a rise in minimum wage? (OAQ9880)

The First Minister: The Business Partnership Council has not held any discussions regarding minimum wage levels.

Addressing the Needs of Social Groups in Wales

Q26 Elin Jones: Can the First Minister make a statement on the Assembly's progress in addressing the needs of all social groups in Wales? (OAQ9887)

The First Minister: The National Assembly supports a participative approach to making innovative policies that are responsive to the needs of all social groups in Wales. In addressing these needs we have made a commitment to consultation and participation that was outlined in the 'Engaging Wales' report, which was recently debated in this Chamber.

Several practical tools are being developed to enable the involvement of more organisations and individuals in making policies that meet identified needs.