

## Answers to Questions not reached in Plenary 28 April 2004

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

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

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### Questions on Finance to the Finance Minister

#### The Recent UK Budget

**Q8 Sandy Mewies:** Would the Minister make a statement on the recent UK budget and the consequential for Wales? (OAQ34301)

**The Finance Minister (Sue Essex):** The recent UK budget added £119.9 million in 2006-07, and £248.6 million in 2007-08, to the Assembly's departmental expenditure limit. It also provided an extra £8.2 million in annually managed expenditure in 2005-06 to fund the education maintenance allowance scheme recently announced by Jane Davidson.

#### Gwerth yr Ewro

**C9 Alun Ffred Jones:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog egluro a yw cynnydd yng ngwerth yr ewro yn fantais neu'n anfantais i gyfanswm cyllidol Cymru? (OAQ34385) [W]

**Sue Essex:** Mae cryfder yr ewro ar hyn o bryd yn golygu bod gwerth y cronfeydd strwythurol sy'n weddill, mewn sterling, wedi cynyddu tua 12 y cant. Bydd hyn yn ein galluogi i adeiladu ar lwyddiant sylweddol y rhaglenni hyd yn hyn.

#### The Value of the Euro

**Q9 Alun Ffred Jones:** Will the Minister clarify whether an increase in the value of the euro is an advantage or a disadvantage to Wales's total budget? (OAQ34385) [W]

**Sue Essex:** The current strength of the euro means that the sterling value of the remaining structural funds has increased by some 12 per cent. This will enable us to build on the considerable success of the programmes so far.

#### Underspend in the Current Budget

**Q10 David Lloyd:** Will the Minister make a statement on the expected underspend in the current budget? (OAQ34374)

**Sue Essex:** It is far too soon to estimate, with any degree of accuracy, what the underspend on the Assembly's departmental expenditure limit will be at the end of this financial year.

*Question 11 (OAQ34302) withdrawn.*

### **Supplementary Budget**

**Q12 Denise Idris Jones:** Would the Minister make a statement on the revisions to her spending plans for 2005-06 in March's supplementary budget? (OAQ34303)

**Sue Essex:** The revisions to our spending plans made in the supplementary budget will ensure further progress towards the Assembly Government's key priorities set out in 'Wales: A Better Country'. The allocations will help to achieve better health, helping people into more and better jobs, and stronger and safer communities.

### **Funding Allocated to the Local Government Portfolio Budget**

**Q13 Irene James:** Will the Minister make a statement on the overall funding she has allocated to the local government portfolio budget in 2004-05? (OAQ34305)

**Sue Essex:** The final settlement for 2004-05 provided an average local authority increase in unhypothecated funding of 5.2 per cent after adjusting for transfers, which was well above inflation. This responded to the work that had been undertaken in consultation with the Welsh Local Government Association in identifying the expenditure needs of local government.

### **The Health and Social Services Budget**

**Q14 Owen John Thomas:** What percentage of the total budget for 1999-2000 was allocated to the budget for health and social services? (OAQ34367)

**Sue Essex:** The allocation for the health and social services main expenditure group in 1999-2000 was 36 per cent of the total Assembly budget.

### **The Total Assembly Budget**

**Q15 Mick Bates:** Will the Minister make a statement on the contribution of European Union funding to the total Assembly budget? (OAQ34310)

**Sue Essex:** European funding accounts for £417.8 million of our total managed expenditure in 2004-05.

## **Questions to the Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside**

### **Bovine TB**

**Q8 Nick Bourne:** What action is the Assembly Government taking to deal with bovine tuberculosis? (OAQ34336)

**The Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside (Carwyn Jones):** The Assembly Government issued a consultation paper in February 2004, 'Preparing for a New GB Strategy on Bovine Tuberculosis'. My officials will consider the responses to this consultation exercise over the coming months and will also consider the report of the Environment, Planning and Countryside Committee's inquiry into bovine TB. They will then advise me on what further actions we should be taking in Wales to tackle the disease.

## **The Planning System**

**Q9 Rosemary Butler:** How is the Minister helping local authorities to improve the planning system in Wales? (OAQ34335)

**Carwyn Jones:** Specific resources have been allocated in the Assembly's budget to support local planning authorities in implementing the 'Planning: Delivering for Wales' change programme. There are many strands to the improvement programme, on which good progress is being made.

## **The Agricultural Education Lead Centre**

**Q10 Mark Isherwood:** Will the Minister make a statement on the agricultural education lead centre in north Wales? (OAQ34343)

**Carwyn Jones:** Education and Learning Wales's choice of Coleg Llysfasi as the lead provider of full-time level 3 agricultural provision in north Wales was made after rigorous consideration. It builds on Llysfasi's proven expertise as a provider of education and training in agricultural subjects and its status as the major provider of such full-time training in north Wales.

## **The Effects of Fly-tipping on Quality of Life**

**Q11 Sandy Mewies:** What action is the Minister taking to crack down on problems, such as fly-tipping, which damage the quality of life in our communities? (OAQ34329)

**Carwyn Jones:** Under its sustainable waste management strategy, the Assembly Government is committed to tackling fly-tipping in Wales. The Assembly Government has taken additional powers to deal with fly-tipping in Wales in the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. It has assisted in the establishment of a national fly-tipping database. Local authorities can utilise Assembly waste strategy grant, in addition to dedicated Environment Agency resources, to address this problem.

## **Incidents of Bovine TB**

**Q12 William Graham:** Will the Minister make a statement concerning the incidents of bovine TB in Wales? (OAQ34403)

**Carwyn Jones:** We recognise that tackling bovine TB in Wales represents a major challenge for Government, the farming industry, the veterinary profession and other interested organisations, including those representing wildlife interests. The Assembly Government issued the consultation paper 'Preparing for a New GB Strategy on Bovine Tuberculosis' in February 2004. This document seeks the views of stakeholders on the principles on which a new 10-year strategy should be based to achieve a sustainable control policy for bovine TB in Wales, and detailed proposals for new short-term measures to seek to control the geographic spread of bovine TB. The consultation period has been extended to 4 June 2004.

## **Ailgylchu yn y Gymuned**

**C13 Owen John Thomas:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad ar sut mae'r Llywodraeth yn annog llywodraethau lleol i gynyddu'r ddarpariaeth ailgylchu yn y gymuned? (OAQ34339) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** Mae strategaeth wastraff Cymru y Cynulliad yn gosod targedau cynyddol ar gyfer awdurdodau lleol, fel y bydd o leiaf 40 y cant o wastraff trefol yn cael ei ailgylchu erbyn 2009-10. Mae arian ychwanegol gan y Cynulliad yn annog awdurdodau lleol i gyflwyno cynlluniau casglu ar ymyl palmentydd ar gyfer deunyddiau y gellir eu hailgylchu, gwella'r cyfleusterau ailgylchu ar safleoedd mwynderau dinesig a datblygu cynlluniau compostio newydd.

## **Recycling in the Community**

**Q13 Owen John Thomas:** Will the Minister make a statement on how the Government encourages local government to increase provision for recycling in the community? (OAQ34339) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** The Assembly waste strategy for Wales sets local authorities escalating targets so that, by 2009-10, at least 40 per cent of municipal waste will be recycled. Additional funding by the Assembly encourages local authorities to introduce new kerbside collections for recyclables, improve recycling facilities at civic amenity sites and develop new composting schemes.

## **The Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development Conference**

**Q14 Irene James:** Will the Minister make a statement on the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development conference held in Cardiff last month? (OAQ34402)

**Carwyn Jones:** The regional Government's conference was an important first for Wales. Over 300 delegates attended, with official representatives from 32 regional bodies, international organisations and the United Nations. A series of workshops and policy preparation sessions was held, culminating in a political-level declaration. The work is being taken forward to the UN commission for sustainable development in April and the Bonn renewable energy summit in June. Wales helped to found the network of regional governments for sustainable development at the Johannesburg summit and is a co-chair to steer the network towards its first general assembly to be held in February 2005.

## **The Organic Sector**

**Q15 Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** What measure does the Minister plan to introduce this year to strengthen the organic sector in Wales? (OAQ34351)

**Carwyn Jones:** I have already introduced a new organic maintenance scheme this year. This is in addition to continuing financial support for organic conversion through the organic farming scheme, free on-farm organic advice through Farming Connect, continued funding for the Organic Centre Wales, setting up a network of organic demonstration farms across Wales and establishing an organic steering group.