

Answers to Questions not reached in Plenary 20/01/2010

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

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

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Questions to the Minister for Business and Budget

The Environment, Sustainability and Housing Budget

Q9 Mark Isherwood: What consideration was given when allocating the environment, sustainability and housing budget? OAQ(3)0937(BB)

The Minister for Business and Budget (Jane Hutt): During the preparation of the Assembly Government's draft budget, discussions took place with Ministers about priorities within their portfolios. The outcome for the environment, sustainability and housing portfolio for 2010-11 is that the revenue allocation has increased by 5.4 per cent over the budget for 2009-10.

The Independent Holtham Commission

Q10 Chris Franks: Will the Minister make a statement on the independent Holtham commission? OAQ(3)0929(BB)

Jane Hutt: I have met the chair and his commission colleagues. A strong and persuasive case for reforming how we are funded and for strengthening the structures underpinning devolution has been put forward by the commission.

Priorities for 2010

Q11 Angela Burns: Will the Minister make a statement on her priorities for 2010? OAQ(3)0932(BB)

Jane Hutt: The Assembly Government's budget for 2010-11 was published in December 2009. It reflects our commitment to quality public services for people in Wales, and to helping Wales weather the economic downturn. Through our emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness, we can continue to progress the 'One Wales' agenda.

Tynnwyd cwestiwn 12, OAQ(3)0941(BB), yn ôl.

Question 12, OAQ(3)0941(BB), withdrawn.

Value for Money and Effectiveness of Spend

Q13 David Melding: How does the Minister determine the robustness and current best practice of the measures in place to ensure value for money and effectiveness of spend across

the Welsh Assembly Government's budget? OAQ(3)0924(BB)

Jane Hutt: The duty to safeguard public funds is at the heart of all Assembly Government spending. We are committed to managing all public resources responsibly in the public interest and keep our spending plans under regular review.

*Tynnwyd cwestiwn 14, OAQ(3)0934(BB), yn ôl.
Question 14, OAQ(3)0934(BB), withdrawn.*

Budgetary Pressures

Q15 Andrew R.T. Davies: What representations has the Minister received regarding budgetary pressures in the health and social services portfolio? OAQ(3)0945(BB)

Jane Hutt: I have regular discussions with the Minister for Health and Social Services and all Cabinet colleagues regarding the full range of budgetary issues.

Questions to the Minister for Heritage

Broadcasting in Wales

Q10 Nerys Evans: Will the Minister make a statement on broadcasting in Wales? OAQ(3)1012(HER)

The Minister for Heritage (Alun Ffred Jones): I hold regular discussions with the UK Government, broadcasters, producers, Ofcom and others, regarding broadcasting issues in Wales, including the implications for Wales of the 'Digital Britain' report. This year, we are also looking forward to the development of the independently funded news consortia pilot.

The Protection of Wales's Heritage

Q11 Angela Burns: Will the Minister outline his priorities for the protection of Wales's heritage? OAQ(3)1004(HER)

Alun Ffred Jones: My historic environment strategic statement contains a range of actions to protect the distinctive heritage of Wales. My priority is for an accessible, well-protected historic environment, through statutory designation and consent processes, funding programmes, advice and guidance, partnership working within and outside the Assembly Government and other initiatives and measures.

Promoting Heritage

Q12 Nick Bourne: Will the Minister make a statement on promoting heritage in Wales? OAQ(3)1029(HER)

Alun Ffred Jones: My historic environment strategic statement builds on the priority given in 'One Wales' to promoting a sense of ownership and pride in Welsh heritage. The Assembly Government and its partners have deployed many initiatives to engage our communities with their heritage for local and tourism benefit.

The Football Association of Wales

Q13 Ann Jones: What recent discussions has the Minister had with the Football Association

of Wales? OAQ(3)1001(HER)

Alun Ffred Jones: I met with representatives from the FAW last week to discuss free-to-air broadcasting issues.

Furnished Holiday Lets

Q14 Bethan Jenkins: Will the Minister give an update on what discussions he has held with the Treasury with regard to the impact of tax changes for owners of furnished holiday lets on the level of tourism within Wales? OAQ(3)1009(HER)

Alun Ffred Jones: I have written to the Treasury to express my concerns about the potential impact on Welsh tourism businesses, and the Wales Tourism Alliance is working with the industry in responding to the impact assessment currently being undertaken by the Treasury.

Tourism in North Wales

Q15 Brynle Williams: Will the Minister make a statement on the importance of tourism to the north Wales area? OAQ(3)1030(HER)

Alun Ffred Jones: North Wales is our most popular tourist destination and, to reflect this, it receives the highest level of regional tourism funding in Wales. I am sure that the world heritage site status of the Pontcysyllte aqueduct, alongside 11 miles of the Llangollen canal, will bring even more visitors to the area.