



**Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru  
The National Assembly for Wales**

**Y Pwyllgor Cyfle Cyfartal  
The Committee on Equality of Opportunity**

**Mawrth, 5 Hydref 2010  
Tuesday, 5 October 2010**

**Cynnwys**  
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Gender Budgeting: Oral Evidence from University and College Union

Cofnodir y trafodion hyn yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynddi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal,  
cynhwysir cyfieithiad Saesneg o gyfraniadau yn y Gymraeg.

These proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee.  
In addition, an English translation of Welsh speeches is included.

**Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol**  
**Committee members in attendance**

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Mohammad Asghar | Ceidwadwyr Cymreig<br>Welsh Conservatives                 |
| Veronica German | Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru<br>Welsh Liberal Democrats |
| Ann Jones       | Llafur (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor)<br>Labour (Committee Chair) |
| Janet Ryder     | Plaid Cymru<br>The Party of Wales                         |

**Eraill yn bresennol**  
**Others in attendance**

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Adele Baumgardt | Ymgynghorydd ar ei Liwt ei Hun yn Arbenigo ar Bolisi ac Amrywiaeth<br>Freelance Consultant Specialising in Policy and Diversity |
| Dave Hagendyk   | Swyddog Cyd-gysylltu Gwleidyddol, Undeb Prifysgol a Choleg<br>Political Liaison Officer, University and College Union           |
| Bethan Thomas   | Swyddog Cymorth yng Nghymru, Undeb Prifysgol a Choleg<br>Wales Support Officer, University and College Union                    |

**Swyddogion Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru yn bresennol**  
**National Assembly for Wales officials in attendance**

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Catherine Hunt | Dirprwy Glerc<br>Deputy Clerk                              |
| Claire Morris  | Clerc<br>Clerk   |
| Denise Rogers  | Gwasanaeth Ymchwil yr Aelodau<br>Members' Research Service |

*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 9.30 a.m.*  
*The meeting began at 9.30 a.m.*

**Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon**  
**Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions**

[1] **Ann Jones:** Good morning, everyone, and welcome to this meeting of the Committee on Equality of Opportunity. We have received apologies from Joyce Watson, but there will be no substitution. I remind Members and anyone in the public gallery to switch off all mobile phones and pagers, as well as anything else that might interfere with the translation equipment. The Assembly operates bilingually. A translation of the proceedings is available through the headsets; channel 0 is the language of the floor and channel 1 is the translation. Does any Member wish to make a declaration of interest under Standing Order No. 31.6? I see that you do not. Good.

9.30 a.m.

**Cyllidebau ar Sail Rhyw: Tystiolaeth Lafar gan Adele Baumgardt  
Gender Budgeting: Oral Evidence from Adele Baumgardt**

[2] **Ann Jones:** We now move onto our short inquiry into gender budgeting, and I am delighted to welcome Adele Baumgardt to this meeting. She has stepped in at the last minute—thank you very much, Adele. You have already been working with us in the background, which we very much appreciate. Could you please introduce yourself, and tell us a little about your work, particularly on gender issues with HM Treasury and the Sports Council for Wales?

[3] **Ms Baumgardt:** Sure. I am now a freelance consultant, working on equality and diversity. My background is in the Equal Opportunities Commission, so my background has always been in sex equality expertise. While I was with the EOC, I worked with the Women's Budget Group UK, and became its co-chair for three years. We also ran a Wales gender budget group, of which I was chair for three or four years. So, I have worked on gender equality in general and gender mainstreaming in particular—the gender equality duty. As one of the tools of gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting, while I was co-chair of the Women's Budget Group UK, we worked with the Treasury, which I can unpick in more detail if you would like me to. However, my closest involvement was with the Sports Council for Wales, as was, where we did some work on spending in leisure centres. I also did a piece of discrete work on the grant funding that went through the sports council to its partners, from a gender budget perspective. Would you like some more detail on that? Would that be helpful at this point?

[4] **Ann Jones:** Perhaps you could tell us more about how you think it has impacted on those organisations, particularly HM Treasury. That would be interesting. I hope that I have not pinched anyone's questions. [*Laughter.*]

[5] **Ms Baumgardt:** HM Treasury was difficult, and our experience there illustrates some of the difficulties with gender budgeting, such as whether you pick specific small programmes to look at or try to look at the big picture. I think that both are helpful and have different outcomes. However, when you do small, discrete programmes, which we were trying to unpick with the Treasury, you run against the eternal problem of whether there are enough gender disaggregated data at beneficiary level. So, there were some issues to do with how benefits systems, namely specific spending programmes aimed at beneficiaries, benefited men and women differently. When you get down to the specific programme level, you see that many of them are designed specifically to help women. Much of the welfare system is designed to alleviate poverty, and the majority of those eligible are women. So, the Treasury found that it had problems, because the majority of single-parent benefit beneficiaries are women. You had a lobby in Treasury asking whether that meant that we need more male single parents. The trouble with gender budgeting is that you can reach this confusion around positive action and equal treatment. People get hooked on the idea that, if you spend a certain amount on women, you must also spend it on men. When you get down to discrete spending programmes, you find that there are specific sets of end beneficiaries, and quite rightly so, because positive action and equal treatment need to run hand in hand. That is the problem with discrete programmes.

[6] Sport was more interesting, if I may launch into that now. It illustrates more clearly this assumption of neutrality, and how if you do not unpick it from a gender perspective, you can end up widening gender divides, or not understanding how your money reaches people. So, there is a clear understanding in the sports world that women's participation levels are much lower than men's, but also a deep commitment to address that. That is how we got

hooked in, because the council was interested in doing something about that, and achieving a more gender-equitable outcome. However, spending is along traditional routes, which have built up over hundreds of years, and which support men's sports. Traditionally, football, rugby, cricket, golf, and so on have all the infrastructure and history. The newer sports and activities that women and girls were more interested in did not have that support network. So, if you set up a grant funding system that says that you must have membership, changing rooms, facilities, kit, and so on, girls' and women's sports will be automatically disadvantaged. It is about unpicking that sort of thing. There is a programme called Sportmatch, which is about sponsorship. If you are successful in getting private sector sponsorship, it effectively doubles the money given through grant funding. Who is going to get sponsorship? It is not going to be girls' basketball in Merthyr Tydfil; it is going to be rugby and cricket. So, in fact, we double the spending on those who already have money and widen the gender divide.

[7] **Mohammad Asghar:** Can you briefly explain to the committee what gender budgeting can achieve and how its practice has developed in recent years?

[8] **Ms Baumgardt:** This is where I get on my soapbox. Gender budgeting done properly can be quite transformative. I think that it helps people to understand and challenge the concept of rational economic man in a way that nothing else does. It can also quantify inequalities in a way that most equality tools and techniques cannot. When you do gender equality exercises, you have this never-ending debate about sex stereotyping. Is it the teachers? Is it the parents? Is it society? Is it Bob the Builder? Who makes girls do one thing and boys do something else? When you look at how money is spent, you can draw a pie chart, with a blue sliver and a big pink sliver. It can quantify things. Ultimately, the aim of it is to transform how money is allocated and the outcomes of how you spend money. It is not necessarily about saying that we need more money to be spent on women and girls or, sometimes, on men and boys, but about understanding the impact of how you currently spend your money.

[9] The aspiration is to build gender-sensitive budgets into the processes as you go forward, so that the way in which you spend money becomes transformative. Most gender budgeting exercises—and certainly those that I have been involved in—are retrospective, looking at where the money that we have spent has gone and the results of its. However, ultimately, what you want to do is say that, if we spend the money slightly differently, we will get a particular result. So, why are we spending money on crown green bowling rinks, which are generally used by over-55-year-old white men who can afford to pay for their own crown green bowling? I would argue that we should divert that money to black girls' netball in Merthyr Tydfil or wherever.

[10] If you talk about money and gender budgeting, you always run up against the political element, as Mr Cameron and Mr Osborne found out to their cost yesterday, did they not? When you talk about removing money or changing the way in which you spend or allocate benefits from the traditional patterns, some people will lose out. If they are your voters, you run into political problems. So, gender budgeting can be transformative. At its least helpful, it can help you to understand and unpick the gender implications of your economic strategies. So, even if you just do a gender-sensitive scrutiny of economic policy, it can help you to see, for example, who uses your buses, who populates the five industries that you are going to support through your economic strategy, and to assess whether there is anything that you can do to redress any imbalances that might come out of that.

[11] **Mohammad Asghar:** What are the main practical approaches to carrying out a gender budgeting exercise? What issues do organisations carrying out such analyses typically face?

[12] **Ms Baumgardt:** Let us be realistic and practical about this. Getting gender-disaggregated data on beneficiaries is difficult. How detailed the data are depends on what programme you are looking at. One reason why we looked at leisure centres is that they are particularly good at collecting disaggregated data. They have very technical systems that can collect data, such as turnstile figures. When you look at something big like infrastructure, taking roads as an example, and ask who the beneficiaries are of money spent on the M4 or the A470, it is difficult to unpick. So, there are always those issues. You have taken evidence, and I am sure that you have a wealth of evidence on different approaches to gender budgeting. You can do a gender-sensitive policy appraisal. The Women's Budget Group UK is quite engaged with this. So, the Government will come up with a policy or programme, or a bit of economic spending, and the women's budget group will have a look at it using its gender expertise. Last year, under the previous UK Government, a bit of money was ring-fenced for spending in the criminal justice system to support potential victims and victims of crime. We were able to do some analysis to say that unless that money was spent on a gender-specific basis, women would not be reached in the same way as men. Male and female victims of crime are different; both groups need support to overcome the issues that they face, but it needs to be gender specific.

9.40 a.m.

[13] You can do a gender policy appraisal, and you can also do an analysis of tax beneficiary incidence allowance, which is an analysis of where tax and spending hits individual beneficiaries according to their sex. It is a case of horses for courses, depending on how big or small a programme you pick. In Redcar and Cleveland, they were able to do a specific piece of work on one-stop shops and jobcentres, and the process was as simple as finding that money was being spent on jobcentres but that they were places where men go when they are unemployed, not necessarily women. Very often, women do not define themselves as unemployed because they are at home caring in some capacity. If you want to get women back in employment, you need to deploy the money differently than running what might be an expensive jobcentre in a town centre somewhere.

[14] **Veronica German:** In your paper, you wrote about some problems, for instance with the Welsh Government's Department for the Economy and Transport, and talked about the concentration on processes. Could you expand on the challenges that are faced by organisations that carry out gender-budgeting exercises?

[15] **Ms Baumgardt:** When you work on gender budgeting, you move in economic and budgetary circles that are not used to having debates on equality. It is a very different world. With all due respect to the staff in the section—and I mean that genuinely—we found that there was confusion about equal treatment and positive action, and there was a real concern about whether it meant that they would have to spend more money on certain people because they were not getting the money that was being spent at the time. The response was 'Oh, gosh, that means that we will have to find more money'. That is not what it is all about, but unpicking that is complicated.

[16] You also have a history of spending money in this way going back decades, and challenging and changing that hits against established processes and protocols. When I have worked on this matter, even with local authorities, if one wants to divert money, you have to go to this or that elected committee, everything has to be signed in triplicate, and it takes six months before you can spend sixpence in a different way. There are, quite rightly, processes and checks in place, but they can be difficult to overcome.

[17] Data are also closely guarded, and it is sometimes difficult to get to see where money went and who the end beneficiaries were. The other thing that you find—and this is not necessarily restricted to the Department for the Economy and Transport—is that there is an

institutional resistance. When you work on gender mainstreaming theory, you hear about institutional resistance, reactions and all that kind of stuff, but it is interesting to see it played out in practice. Quite a big cohort was asking what is wrong with women staying at home with their babies. That is what we want as a society. Women make those choices and bring the financial implications on themselves. There is a big powerful lobby that still feels that what we are trying to unpick should be left alone—as we have heard on today’s news, with child benefit being taken away from families in the higher income tax bracket. That means that stay-at-home mums will be penalised. So, there is a big political debate on all these issues.

[18] I was going to say something else interesting, but I cannot remember what it was. *[Laughter.]*

[19] **Ann Jones:** I am sure that it will come back to you. In the meantime, we will move on.

[20] **Veronica German:** The next question is how you can show the effectiveness of this approach, particularly the outcomes, to people.

[21] **Ms Baumgardt:** In its simplest form, there are two ways. The first is doing a gender impact assessment in parallel with economic decision making, even with something as big as the economic strategy for Wales. It is a matter of employing some kind of gender expertise that can look at that. When I say ‘gender expertise’, we are talking about gender budgeting, but this can quite often unpick a multiplicity of personality and characteristics. It might be quite different for Somali women, disabled women or black men; therefore, it does not preclude other equality strands. Actually understanding how the economic strategy or the financial decisions—the big papers that we come out with—reach men and women differently, and just making that statement, can help people to understand that there may be better ways of doing it. There may be savings that can be made by doing it differently. That is the kind of big stuff.

[22] There might also be some very small discrete projects—I say ‘small’ in a kind of generous way. It always feels as if the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills has an opportunity, and that the whole kind of education system has gender disaggregated data in a way that many other departments do not have. We know what boys’ and girls’ achievements are through the schools and the education system, and we know that girls are out achieving boys at every stage now through the education system. However, we do not have girls in science, engineering and technology, and we know that that contributes to the gender pay gap. Understanding that in terms of spend, we know that girls are more debt averse and, therefore, in terms of a grant repayment funding system, they are less likely to go on to further or higher education than boys. Of course, they will also encounter debt earlier if they go into childcaring when they still have their grants to repay. If you look at the modelling system on grant repayments, you will find that it is already programmed to expect more write-offs for girls than boys after the age of 25 because of childcaring. It is already not a million miles away from being there, and you could do something that could demonstrate that this could have a real outcome in retaining more women and girls in science, engineering and technology and the kinds of sectors that we want, if we do this differently. Doing something discrete and big would be my recommendation.

[23] **Veronica German:** In practice, what concerns do you have, in gender terms, about the impact of the comprehensive spending review and subsequent budgets at a Wales level?

[24] **Ms Baumgardt:** I will not articulate anything here that you have not had access to in the main media, such as Yvette Cooper’s work and the Fawcett Society work and so on that is already taking place. There is more information that you can shake a stick at on the dangers of

the potential increase in disadvantage, not only to women, but to the majority of minority groups, that will widen the poverty gap. There is a real risk of increasing child poverty.

[25] The gender equality duty, as it currently exists, and the new single public sector equality duty give you an ideal opportunity to require gender equality impact assessments on how we implement reductions and changes in spending. That does not mean that you do not do it, but it does mean that you understand. Sometimes it might mean no more than putting up your hand and saying, 'We recognise that this is going to be more difficult for one group than another'. It gives you the opportunity to mitigate that negative impact, but the problem with mitigation is that it usually has pound signs attached to it. If you are going to make a cut and you recognise that it will have a disproportionate impact on women, you either spend more money on the women or you make the cut in any case. There are other ways of mitigating, and I think that it creates innovative spaces and different ways of thinking about things: take the money away from job centres, for example, and put mobile vans around the Valleys. There are ways to do things differently that can reach different groups appropriately. As we all know, it is a huge risk, but it has to be done in some way or another.

[26] I would like to see more accountability under the equality duties. I know that the Equality and Human Rights Commission is doing a lot of work in Wales, in particular, on asking what people are doing in terms of conducting equality impact assessments in the wake of the Fawcett review of the emergency budget. It does not have the capacity to review the quality let alone the quantity of what gets done. If you just look at one local authority's remodelling exercise in the light of the proposed cuts, you will find that they are looking at hundreds of strands of spend. Are they supposed to conduct a full equality impact assessment on each one? It cannot be done and make savings. Therefore, you have to pick the big things that will make the big difference, and be open and transparent as much as you can. Is that helpful?

[27] **Veronica German:** Yes; absolutely. I think that you have addressed the next question, in some ways, about public sector organisations in Wales and whether you think that they pay sufficient attention to the potential gender impact. I suppose that you would say, 'Yes; they might be doing so, but it might currently be almost too big a job for them to do it completely'.

9.50 a.m.

[28] **Ms Baumgardt:** It is scary and overwhelming. My experience is that gender gets lost—I would say that, would I not? Gender inequalities are quite difficult to unpick. There is a general public perception that women have got it now: they have jobs, they are being progressed, they have pensions and they have flexible, part-time working. In fact, the majority of work-life balance policies are seen as being targeted for the benefit of women—quite wrongly, they should be engaging men more. However, that is how they are still perceived and how they are used. So, there is a perception that women have it all and that they are where they need to be.

[29] So, when you are undertaking an equality impact assessment, and the majority of organisations are now trying to undertake those assessments across seven strands, or eight, if they include the Welsh language, trying to unpick sex stereotyping and the causes of the gender pay gap is much more complicated than putting in a ramp. You may have spending that discretely or explicitly benefits disabled people, and I am not saying that it is enough or that we do it right, but that it is easier to undertake such an equality impact assessment or one that says, 'We support this race equality council and we can go on doing that, because we know that the beneficiaries are black and ethnic minority people'. You will then hear, 'What do you mean by sex stereotyping? How do we unpick careers counselling or influencing parents?' So, I think that gender genuinely does lose out. The majority of impact assessment



that I have scrutinised with any rigour assume that men and women benefit equally and that there are no gender issues.

[30] **Janet Ryder:** To move away from local authorities, can you provide us with an example of another organisation in Wales or in the UK that has used gender budgeting approaches in setting its budget and tell us what impact that has had?

[31] **Ms Baumgardt:** 'No' is the answer.

[32] **Janet Ryder:** Are there not any organisations that have done so?

[33] **Ms Baumgardt:** I keep harking back to Redcar and Cleveland, but in my defence, it has been some years since I have worked explicitly and specifically on gender budgeting. The majority of my work now is around the duties and equality impact assessments, where there is some element of gender budgeting, if you look quite hard, but I have to make a strong case for gender. However, in Redcar and Cleveland, work was done on jobcentres as part of an economic strategy and spend to get people back to work. One of the things that they did was simply to provide bicycles. They devoted some of the money to give bicycles to whoever wanted them. The majority of beneficiaries were women who could cycle to where they needed to go as opposed to being dependent on a car, because we know that women are much much less likely to have access to a private car and the finance to support it. So, they diverted and changed spending in some quite revolutionary and radical ways.

[34] I am sure that there are more and better examples out there than those that I can give you. International examples are easier to unpick than GB examples. When we went to Yemen, we saw that they had an economic renewal strategy for the poorest community and what the people said that they wanted was training, skills and links with employment networks. When we divided the groups by gender and asked what the women wanted and what the men wanted, we saw that the men still wanted those economic renewal strategies whereas the women wanted wells built in the villages, because girls could not access education at a primary level because their lives were spent fetching and carrying water to and from the villages. So, there was a complete diversion of money there. Those are third world concerns and we can get our heads around them, but how do we translate that into the UK economy? That was not very helpful, I am afraid.

[35] **Janet Ryder:** If you cannot immediately bring any examples of gender budgeting to mind, can you highlight one or two barriers to rolling it out? If we make the massive assumption that, as you are not aware of them doing so, not many organisations have gone through the gender budgeting process, what is the barrier? What is stopping this from happening?

[36] **Ms Baumgardt:** Equality and economics do not readily and naturally mix, so you tend to get economists and equality experts. There is a trick to bringing them together. In terms of reaching an outcome, I return to Teresa Rees's triumvirate: you need an equality expert, a policy expert and a change management expert to bring forward innovative, different solutions. So, that is quite difficult. If you wanted to do a gender budget of the Welsh Assembly Government's economic strategy, you would probably need Diane Elson or Debbie Budlender. There are about four or five top female economists in the world who could do that for you from an economist's point of view, so there is a shortage of that level of expertise.

[37] You then get the question of whether there is sufficient beneficiary disaggregated data, and you then get institutional resistance. It is quite a difficult thing to do properly. When you decide to do it properly, you might want to change how you spend your money. I know that you said to disregard local authorities, but in local authorities you come up against an elected chamber at some point, and although you might want to change the way that money is

spent, it is the way that the money is spent that has got the chamber elected. So, if you wanted to do a proper gender budgeting exercise or, for example, analyse just the sport spend within a local authority, at some point you will have to go before a committee of elected members who will ask, 'Is this going to change the way that people vote for me and get me into the position that I am in?' So, all of those issues are barriers. When you talk to equality experts—I give them training in gender budgeting—they say, 'I don't have to have a calculator, do I? It's money, it's figures and it's terribly scary. It has lots of noughts on the end; is that thousands or millions?' So, there is that scary aspect of it, in the sense that it is money.

[38] So, for all of that, you need the right political will, the right senior management commitment, the right expertise and the right change management expertise all in one room to get it to happen to its nth degree.

[39] **Janet Ryder:** Given all those barriers and issues, when the Welsh Assembly Government assesses its overall budget—perhaps going even further than its economic development budget—should it employ gender budgeting?

[40] **Ms Baumgardt:** Absolutely, it should.

[41] **Janet Ryder:** What would it need to do to that?

[42] **Ms Baumgardt:** It depends on how you do it. Going back to the issues of discrete and big, you could employ—although you may have the expertise in-house—some kind of gender analysis expert that can produce tandem statements with spend strategies, whether that be economic strategies or spending strategies, in order to say, 'This is what this means for men and women'. In some cases, that might mean being explicit about saying that we recognise that this is mainly for the benefit of men, or mainly for the benefit of women. That can help you to unpick and use gender budgeting as a transparency accountability tool. You can then do discrete exercises, such as looking at a particular programme within transport, the 'Climbing Higher' strategy, or a DCELLS programme in terms of grant funding and grant beneficiaries, and analyse where the money ends up. If you could just get one programme where someone said, 'We tweaked the spending a little bit so that there was a more gender-equitable outcome', you would create a momentum. One of the great things about being here today is that there is the political will here to do these things and to understand gender equality in the economy. However, that in itself is not enough; you need the expertise and you need the staff not to resist it, but to enable it to happen. So, there needs to be an element of accountability and responsibility to transfer it down.

[43] **Janet Ryder:** If the committee came up with a recommendation that the Government should look at this, we would need to have something in the report that conned it—well, not conned it—that would convince it that this was the route to go down.

[44] **Ms Baumgardt:** I liked the first one. [*Laughter.*]

[45] **Janet Ryder:** To do that, you have to put forward the cost to Government, and you have highlighted what that might be, and the benefit to Government. Could you quantify that in any way for us, or could you give us some indicators of where those costs and benefits might come?

[46] **Ms Baumgardt:** Your biggest cost in the initial phase is the expertise—you are either upskilling or employing parallel expertise, which might not cost very much, to do some discrete gender analysis work. On the benefits, the world is your oyster. We are spending money in a way that increases gender inequality and decreases gross domestic product. It does not recognise innovation and the skills of women in particular, but also men in some instances. We know that many women post childcare end up in jobs that are well below their

potential and occupation, and they cost us a lot in their old age because we have to support them as they do not have pensions or sufficient income. You need to take a longitudinal attitude towards saving, which is difficult to do and requires upfront investment over a long period of time. In Wales, we have a great history of doing that; most Governments think in four-year cycles, which is a very short window to achieve a longitudinal saving over a lifetime from a gender budgeting exercise.

10.00 a.m.

[47] If you have undertaken business cases in the past, you can quantify anything in any way and cut the cake anyway that you like. It could be one person's salary for a year, plus on costs, to work within the staff on a discrete and specific piece of work, and to stick at it and keep it going. You could budget that at £50,000 and the savings might be £500 million in terms of GDP. That may not be a discreet answer, but your pump-priming will be expertise, and I suggest that you need external expertise to run parallel with it. I am not suggesting that you run a training programme for 1,500 staff within the Welsh Assembly Government, because we have been there and done that and it does not make any difference. It needs to be built into the process.

[48] **Janet Ryder:** What impact would gender budgeting have on alleviating child poverty?

[49] **Ms Baumgardt:** If you do not take a gender budgeting approach, you will not end child poverty. Child poverty and gender poverty are inextricably linked. I did some work recently with a local authority on equal pay for the Equalities and Human Rights Commission. We interviewed many women who are in in-work poverty and who are working very short-hour contracts. Quite understandably, the local authority was trying to keep the hours that they worked under the threshold. There was an assumption that women who were choosing to work like that would want to work part-time for their own work-life balance. The women whom we interviewed said that they were having to do three or four jobs to keep their families out of poverty. They were all on the minimum wage, or less in childcare instances. There was an example of a woman whose daughter had got divorced and had kids, and had come home to live, and so on.

[50] I have my own personal concerns about withdrawing child benefit, because we know that, for a lot of women, child benefit is the only discrete money over which they have control—that is what buys the children's shoes—even in higher income households. It may be the only income that that woman has going into her bank account. There is this assumption that, because the family has an income of £50,000 per year, the woman has equal access to that money. Very often, she does not. The things that make a difference in lifting children out of poverty, I suggest, need to go through the purse, not through the wallet. Unless we understand how those things are inextricably linked, and that we need to help women manage their finances, you will not tackle child poverty in a meaningful way.

[51] **Ann Jones:** How might this committee use an understanding of gender budgeting to scrutinise the Welsh Assembly Government?

[52] **Ms Baumgardt:** Sometimes, it is about asking the question. I would ask for a gender equality impact assessment on the big things that will make a difference, rather than on everything: do not make this too scary for everybody. When I am doing work with clients on gender equality impact assessments, I ask them: what are the big things that will make a big difference? We know that sex stereotyping is an entrenched issue that underpins the gender pay gap. It is very difficult to do anything about it, but there are opportunities, for instance, to ask how the money that we spend on careers, support and advice can have a positive impact on challenging sex stereotyping. How many men end up in childcare and how many women

end up in the construction industry? You need to ask those big scrutiny questions and, should you choose to do so, do a gender aware appraisal statement in parallel with those things that you wish to scrutinise. I think that you can do a helpful gender-sensitive analysis alongside anything that you want to scrutinise, whether it is recycling, or whatever—I get terribly excited about this.

[53] **Ann Jones:** Thank you, once more, Adele, for coming in at short notice. We do appreciate it.

10.04 a.m.

### **Cyllidebau ar Sail Rhyw: Tystiolaeth Lafar gan Undeb Prifysgol a Choleg Gender Budgeting: Oral Evidence from University and College Union**

[54] **Ann Jones:** It is my pleasure to welcome the University and College Union to give evidence. I welcome Dave Hagendyk, who is the political liaison officer, and Beth Thomas, who is the Wales support officer for UCU. Thank you for your paper; it made for some very interesting reading. If it is okay with you, we will go straight into questions.

[55] **Ms Thomas:** Yes, certainly.

[56] **Ann Jones:** Can you briefly explain what gender budgeting is and why its use should be considered?

[57] **Ms Thomas:** The main focus of our evidence today is to highlight the need for effective equality impact assessments and other process mechanisms, such as gender budgeting, to identify the gender dimensions of any kind of spending cuts across the public sector and across education in particular. It is imperative that any kind of budget allocation or spending addresses these differentials moving forward in order to stem the damage that could be done to public services as a whole and to education.

[58] Gender budgeting focuses on the analysis of public spending and of revenue raising from a gender perspective, so it is not about having separate budgets for men and women. Gender budgeting looks at budgets and revenue in a way that considers the implications for women and girls and for men and boys, and then aims to reprioritise spending in a way that would be less disproportionate. Diane Elson puts it superbly by saying that

[59] ‘Government budgets are important mediators of gender inequality. The way that governments raise and spend money has the potential to reduce the inequalities that occur in families, communities, markets and businesses; or to amplify them.’

[60] We are here today essentially to highlight the need to scrutinise spending plans over the difficult times ahead.

[61] **Ann Jones:** Can you give an example of where gender budgeting has contributed towards improving the position of women or men with regard to the impact of a specific policy?

[62] **Ms Thomas:** Some really interesting research has been done, as I am sure that Adele outlined. Gender budgeting is not a quirky new topic that has just come about as a result of the gender equality duties. It started in Australia in 1984, so it has been around for a very long time now. There is a particular study of interest in Switzerland, which is highlighted in the Wales Women’s National Coalition paper, ‘Gender Budgeting: Inclusive Policy Making for the Citizens of Wales’, dated February 2010. The study in Switzerland was called ‘Saving on Women’, and was commissioned at a time of comprehensive measures to cut public spending.

That study aimed to investigate whether or not there was a disproportionate impact on women, and it revealed that higher than average funding cuts did have a disproportionate impact on women, particularly in the unpaid economy area, such as childcare. Things have been done in the UK with regard to the benefits system, as Adele outlined, and there has been an analysis in Scotland of public health and sport, which ended in a gender budgeting analysis that highlighted the differences and the gender dimensions between funding different programmes with regard to health promotion. At the end of that process, NHS Health Scotland targeted its spending more effectively on adolescent girls as part of its smoking cessation campaign.

[63] Internationally, Australia also produces a gender budget analysis of its budget, in which it includes a statement indicating where the gender dimensions are within the budget to justify any mitigating attempts. So, there are many examples from around the world and a few examples from Scotland and the rest of the UK.

[64] **Janet Ryder:** In your written evidence to committee, you state that

[65] ‘within post-16 education, women (both as educators and as learners) will be disproportionately vulnerable to the impact of the cuts’.

[66] Can you please explain that statement to us?

[67] **Mr Hagendyk:** There are probably three reasons why we say that. If you look, for example, at further education, you will see that 60 per cent of all staff are women, and around 60 per cent of all learners are women—that is just in further education—so any cuts to FE will have a disproportionate impact on women as service users and as employees. Drilling down on the data, based on our experience of where we think the cuts will fall, we think that the impact will be even harder on women. Based on what we see in England, and what we know about Assembly Government policy—for example, the need to protect 16-18 provision, and the emphasis on a transformation process—we think that the cuts will fall hardest on provision for adult learners, of whom women make up 64 per cent, which is a significant proportion of the spend.

10.10 a.m.

[68] There is also potential for the spending cuts to change the academic profiles of institutions, both in further and higher education. For example, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales corporate strategy and the ‘All our futures’ strategy both emphasise STEM subjects—science, technology, engineering and mathematics—which are traditionally dominated by men in terms of learners. If you ring-fence or protect STEM subjects at a time of massively contracting spending, it will obviously have an impact. We also expect significant cuts to courses that lead to public sector employment, and again, they are predominantly taught and studied by women. It is those three reasons—the raw data, the impact on adult learning and the potential changes to the academic profiles of institutions—that give us cause for concern.

[69] **Janet Ryder:** You have clearly highlighted the disproportionate impact on women. Are there other examples of colleges and universities failing to focus adequately on the potentially disproportionate impact of policy changes or spending cuts?

[70] **Mr Hagendyk:** Yes, sadly. I have been with the UCU for about two years now, and we went through some significant cuts to the further education budget last year. Thanks to our campaign, and the support of Assembly Members, we managed to mitigate some of those cuts, but the impact on women was nevertheless profound. One good example from FE in the South Wales East region was the closure of the Stepping Stones nursery at Coleg Gwent in

Ebbw Vale. It is one of the most deprived parts of Wales, and probably the most deprived community, and all this money is being poured in by the Assembly Government around regeneration, yet the college decided to close the nursery. It had been a fantastic resource, offering affordable, flexible and accessible childcare, almost exclusively for women learners. It enabled them to come back into education after having childcare responsibilities, but it was closed. On a cost-benefit, balance-sheet analysis you would probably say that it was expensive, and difficult to maintain, but if you used a gender budgeting analysis, you would probably conclude that the impact for women learners in that locality was important. We certainly do not think that it should have been closed.

[71] I will give you another example from higher education. At around the same time last year, there was a high-profile campaign by our staff and members at Cardiff University on its decision to cut around 250 courses for adult learners in humanities subjects. It became clear early on that the university had not done a proper assessment of the impact on women. The learners and staff were predominantly women—including a lot of part-time, hourly-paid lecturers, so very insecure employment—yet the university had done no real work on that, and it was only when we kicked and screamed that it did. Of course, it did not make much difference, unfortunately. So, those are tangible examples from around Wales. There are probably other examples—perhaps Gorseinon college and the cuts to adult learning there.

[72] **Janet Ryder:** Could you offer any reason why college authorities failed to give this adequate—

[73] **Ms Thomas:** It is about a lack of understanding, first of all, about the impact and the wider consequences of decisions. There is also a problem around disaggregated data. The information is not collected to enable them to make those kinds of assumptions. There is a lack of expertise within the sector in looking at decisions from a gender perspective or, indeed, an equalities perspective. The thing with gender budgeting is that it can pick up other equality strands as well. What you tend to find is that, with the more complex cases such as women with disabilities and women from black and minority ethnic communities, it picks up those inequalities as well, and can separate the strands. Some institutions focus on the number of employees who are affected.

[74] For example, in some of the equality impact assessments that I have seen as part of my role in looking at redundancies across the sector, it might be suggested that, as 49 women and 51 men were affected, the redundancies were therefore gender neutral, when in fact the impact of the rationalisation of a department in moving to strategic research principles and objectives is fundamentally disproportionate for women in terms of published research. I know of equality impact assessments in which it has been said that, because there are no data, they are gender neutral because there is no evidence to suggest one way or the other, instead of somebody suggesting that they should go and find the information and speak to those who are affected. I find that institutions and HR managers say that the new posts have objective criteria, so it is okay. They say, 'We've looked at the new posts and assessed the equality impact, and the criteria are objective; what more do you want?' You have to tell them that they may be objective, but they mask the gender inequalities that are there. They do not look at some of the contributions that women can make in terms of pastoral care and tutoring. The suggestion from institutions is that research is as important as pastoral care and looking after students, but the evidence from members on the ground is that when you move to a research-focused objective, you wonder how true that statement really is.

[75] Self-nomination for the posts is another thing. They say, 'Well, it's self-nomination; women can apply', but that shows no understanding of the fact that women find it incredibly difficult to self-nominate, to sell themselves, and to do those kinds of things. Through negotiations, we have managed to get measures in place in certain institutions so that women will be coached, supported and mentored through the process to encourage them to submit

applications for new posts. However, what was particularly interesting about the case study that I am explaining now is that there were no female professors in the department; there were no female heads of division; there were no female heads of school. So, the decisions being made and the policy being followed were essentially made by men without consultation with anybody else in the department. I do not think that there is a general will to be unequal in terms of treatment, because you could go to anybody and they would say, ‘Oh, no; we believe in equality’. It is just a lack of understanding and thinking through the process, and I think that it is also about the fact that our current equality impact assessment process is treated as an afterthought—after the policy has been decided. If you have a process mechanism such as gender budgeting coming at the beginning to highlight those issues and to really drill down to what you are trying to achieve and the impact of it, that would inform an equality impact assessment process. It would increase participation in decision making on a local level and on a national level. I am not going to say that it is going to stop the disproportionate impact, but it would certainly go a long way towards addressing it.

[76] **Mr Hagendyk:** I was going to talk about governance, which is quite an important issue. Within HE and FE, it is the board of governors or the council that actually makes the decision. We have carried out an analysis of governors, and they look remarkably like vice-chancellors. I would question whether governing bodies have the expertise to take the duties that institutions have placed on them seriously and to understand them, to take a look at this and say that it is not just about the raw data of how many people are being made redundant. It is about what the disproportionate impact will be. We think that there is scope in the two ongoing reviews that the Minister commissioned—into FE governance and HE governance—to make significant improvements in the governance of individual institutions, to ensure that there is expertise and focus in these committees, especially as we go into a period of quite savage cuts to both sectors. It would have been great to have done this in a period of expansion. This period of cuts makes it more urgent now—we have to deal with it quickly and urgently.

[77] **Janet Ryder:** You have mentioned in your evidence a proportionality test that might possibly be undermining the use of equality impact assessments. Can you just explain for the record what a proportionality test is, and why you are concerned about its use?

10.20 a.m.

[78] **Mr Hagendyk:** What we say in our evidence is that it is not so much about the proportionality test as it applies now, it is potentially how the principle of being proportionate will apply from the new public sector equality duties. The consultation that was published the week before last notes that the two principles are that it should be flexible and that it should be proportionate. We have to be realistic about what public bodies can do and what they can achieve. We are concerned that, if you say to an employer that they have this principle, which they can use if they are doing an equality impact assessment, as long as it is proportionate, an employer might interpret that quite liberally, and say, ‘Fantastic, we will not use them as far as possible.’ The presumption must be in favour of carrying out an equality impact assessment for any significant changes. That is our concern. It is not so much that we have concerns about how it is operating now; essentially, we are trying to flag up our concerns to you that this is how it might be interpreted by some employers.

[79] **Janet Ryder:** Would it therefore raise the question that, without a good gender budgeting assessment being made of the impacts—really looking at it for its gender impact—it would be hard to apply a proportionality test, because you would be applying it to the initial presenting cuts? You practically have a gender-balanced workforce, so you can cut proportionally, but—

[80] **Ms Thomas:** I believe that it would be more a case of someone saying, ‘This

redundancy will affect only 20 individuals in this department. Therefore, is it proportionate for us to do a full equality impact assessment for 20 people, when we have redundancies in a different department that will affect 60 people? It is not that it does not matter, but if the 20 people are in learning, for example, at Cardiff University, and it is adult education, then there is a greater need for an equality impact assessment than there would be somewhere else. However, we would always want an equality impact assessment, because every decision has an impact somewhere along the line in terms of family life, and the other impacts that redundancies have. Therefore, our concern is that institutions will determine when equality impact assessments are necessary on the basis of proportionality, without understanding the disproportionate impact on equality groups as a whole to inform that decision-making process. It is almost a circular argument.

[81] **Ann Jones:** Your evidence asserts that there should be a stronger regulatory framework, to ensure the greater efficiency and effectiveness of equality impact assessments. Do you have any ideas about what this framework would look like, and how would it support the introduction of gender budgeting?

[82] **Ms Thomas:** I will explain the current framework, because that is an important factor. If a public authority does not comply with a general duty, then a person or a group of people with an interest—that is a legal term—or the Equality and Human Rights Commission can ask the High Court for a judicial review. As I am sure you will know, judicial tribunals are expensive; they are not run of the mill, and they require a lot of expertise. There are many issues around who is ‘a person with an interest’ in terms of constitutional and administrative law. Therefore, that is what is available for the individuals involved. If a public authority does not comply with a specific duty, again the commission can serve a compliance notice, and can subsequently apply to the county court for an order requiring compliance with that duty. If the court makes an order, the authority may be in contempt of court if it does not obey it. Therefore, that is the current process for looking at these duties.

[83] **Mr Hagendyk:** I will mention what we would like to see. We do not have any hard and fast ideas; we are not saying to you, ‘This is the regulatory framework that we would like instead’. The point that Bethan made is key. It is difficult for individuals, and even for us as a union, to challenge these. You almost have the nuclear option or you have nothing—you can either take strike action or go for a judicial review, but it is difficult to challenge. Even when you challenge, it is done quite late in the process, and you have already gone down the road of making significant redundancies. Therefore, what we are asking for is some kind of mechanism that allows earlier interventions to be made, and where other public bodies are held to account for how they carry out equality impact assessments.

[84] Adele mentioned the role of the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the fact that it perhaps does not have the capacity we would like it to have to challenge this. We would like to see it playing a far more proactive role in this area. We would like to see that with other organisations within the individual sectors, such as the Higher Education and Funding Council for Wales. It has a pretty good record on equality. It has some very good people working in its equality unit. We would like them to be making statements on the quality of the EIAs. It would be quite powerful if the Equality and Human Rights Commission or HEFCW were to make a statement in the case of redundancies. If an institution making people redundant or making cuts was aware that a powerful public body—either the EHRC or HEFCW—was prepared to say, ‘Actually, no, you have not done this right; we are watching you and we are prepared to intervene’, potentially, the standard would be raised significantly.

[85] There is a potential role for this committee as well—not in a statutory sense, but in an informal way—either to review in detail the quality of the EIAs in the public sector or to carry out spot checks on public authorities and the way that they are carrying out these



assessments. If a health authority is making significant redundancies, bring them in. It would be quite a powerful, but informal pressure.

[86] **Ann Jones:** I can just see us going in making spot checks.

[87] **Mr Hagendyk:** You would love that, would you not? [*Laughter.*]

[88] **Ann Jones:** I quite like that. I know where I would start. Janet and I have quite a few that we would like to look at. Be very afraid if we get that power.

[89] Obviously, you have just been discussing that and those are your thoughts. Talk of a stronger regulatory framework often leads to people talking about increased costs. Do you have a view on whether that would cost more?

[90] **Mr Hagendyk:** I do not think I have much more to add to what Adele has said. It is partly about expertise and bringing in people who have the expertise to do that work. Our concern is that you do not look at it as a simple cost-benefit analysis: 'Here is your balance sheet; how much is it going to cost you?' Obviously, this is a difficult time for the public sector with regard to expenditure. However, we view delivering equality as part of a core function of any public authority. We would probably argue that the cost would be far outweighed by the benefits. If you are a public authority and you are not delivering for a large section of your community and the people you are supposed to serve—whether they are learners, patients or pupils—you probably have to consider it a cost worth bearing.

[91] **Ann Jones:** Are there any lessons we could learn from the experience of further or higher education in carrying out equality impact assessments?

[92] **Ms Thomas:** It all comes down to the need for segregated and adequate data. It needs to be built into the process. It needs to be at the beginning of any process rather than a tick-box exercise at the end when you have already put people on notice, siphoned the money off and started recruiting for the new posts. If you do an equality impact assessment then, it does not exactly bode well. It is also about looking at the end beneficiary and getting institutions to look at who the end beneficiary is—whether it is the student or the community they serve or a mixture of the two. There needs to be commitment and political will. It has to come from the top. It cannot just be that the equality officer in human resources says that you need to look at equality issues; it needs to come from the top of the organisation—the figurehead pushing it forward and monitoring compliance. You need the expertise, which means you need the tools to enable you to do it at the local level or you need training. It needs to be monitored, because, at the moment, it is almost a free-for-all. The consequences of an institution carrying out a very poor equality impact assessment are negligible in comparison with what it considers to be the true financial savings to be made by following a certain policy or procedure. The crux of it is that it needs to be the first thought rather than the last. You need the data and the evidence to back it up, and you need the tools to undertake that work.

[93] **Ann Jones:** Do the processes of equality impact assessments and gender budgeting analyses intertwine? Is that how you see them?

10.30 a.m.

[94] **Ms Thomas:** Gender budgeting dovetails with the equality impact assessment. I was looking at some information that has come out of the Northern Ireland Executive on what its gender budgeting and equality impact assessment guidance looks like. They have a four-step approach: steps one to three are a gender budgeting analysis of a decision, while step four is the equality impact assessment. They argue that any gender-budgeting process informs an equality impact assessment, and that is what we have seen; they complement each other, so it

would not be a duplication of work. We also have to acknowledge that the equality impact assessment process is not embedded in processes and decision making at the moment; it is still a relatively new concept and there is quite a lot of work to do in mainstreaming equality.

[95] **Mohammad Asghar:** Based on your knowledge of gender budgeting, could you take this committee through the steps that a college should take when considering the impact of its funding decisions in any one particular area?

[96] **Ms Thomas:** The key thing to recognise is that there is no universal model of gender budgeting. When you look at a gender budgeting analysis, you have to look at the priorities and the politics that are involved in your existing budgetary processes. An analysis needs to be based on the way that you work and what you want to see. I can suggest an approach that is commonly used, but there are, ultimately, people out there who are much more experienced in the world of gender budgeting than I am and they would be able to adopt and tailor an approach, if the decision is made to do that. If people want information or advice, they can contact those organisations to get it.

[97] Broadly speaking, I suppose that there are five principles to any kind of gender budget analysis. The first is to analyse the impact of any spend on the family and to consider the long-term consequences of any kind of decision. That analysis is then extended to the unpaid economy, so not just looking at people who work, but those who undertake unpaid work such as informal childcare, looking after individuals who have disabilities and other caring responsibilities. Women tend to do a lot more work in caring for their elderly relatives compared to men, so we need to look at those kinds of dimensions. We would then need to understand those gender differentials when it comes to economic initiatives, look at the stereotypes that surround them, and consider the impact on gender norms and roles. There are, essentially, three stages of gender budgeting, which are looking at the budget from a gender perspective—looking through it with a gender lens—then restructuring that budget as a result of the analysis, and mainstreaming gender as a category of analysis in the process, that is, making it one of the first things that you think about rather than the last.

[98] Before any kind of gender budget analysis takes place—I hate to bang on about it—you need disaggregated statistics and information from those who would be affected by the action that you are seeking to take. You also need to consult effectively, and this should be separate to any kind of redundancy procedure. We are told that you are consulting us, but you are consulting us over redundancies, for example, as part of your statutory obligation; you are not consulting us because of an equality impact assessment, and you are also not consulting community groups, your local Women's Institute or the local Alzheimer's group. Effective consultation at an early stage, before decisions are made, is key in preparing an analysis of how to move forward.

[99] **Mohammad Asghar:** On another point, you mentioned Australia and Switzerland in your earlier remarks, and the Australian Prime Minister and the President of the Swiss Federal Council are women. You also said that there are different approaches to getting a gender balance in budgeting. I think that we have a lot to learn from those countries that can be implemented here; there has to be a gender balance, because you cannot run the cart until the wheels are balanced.

[100] **Ann Jones:** Some women behave more fiercely than men. I do not know whether that is necessarily the case. I think that the person at the top must have that political will, whether it is a man or a woman.

[101] **Ms Thomas:** It is about political will.

[102] **Mohammad Asghar:** I am coming to that. Do you think that there is the political

will in relation to gender balance?

[103] **Ms Thomas:** I think that Wales, and particularly the Welsh Assembly, has demonstrated a commitment to gender equality. Gender budgeting has a part to play in terms of increasing participation by women in decision-making processes. When you increase participation in decision-making processes and make those more transparent, you encourage women to become involved in politics, whether it is on a local level, because the centre where their children's playgroup is held is being closed and they want to challenge that decision, or whether it is nationally because their child benefit is being cut. Participation by women at every level can only be a good thing in increasing women's involvement in politics. It is an issue. You just need to look at the recently elected Westminster Government to see the gender balance there.

[104] In terms of gender budgeting generally across Europe and in Australia and it being led by women, there are a number of other countries that adopt gender-budgeting approaches. In Europe, we have Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Russia, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom; therefore, it is not specifically a women's agenda being pushed by women, but it is an equality agenda that is being pushed by those striving for equality and mainstreaming it across the board, particularly in line with commitments and policies that come out of Europe, the Council of Europe and its impact on this process. Many countries and developing countries are using gender budgeting as a way of ensuring that aid and development funds from the United Nations and so on are being channelled to those people to whom they should be channelled. Participation is a huge thing and it has a great impact on decision making.

[105] **Mohammad Asghar:** Thank you for that answer. There have been several references this morning to child benefit being cut, but 85 per cent of people, those who are in poverty or below a certain level, will not lose their child benefit, so I do not know why we are making a fuss.

[106] **Ann Jones:** Fifteen per cent of people are going to suffer, but let us not get into that because we are—

[107] **Mohammad Asghar:** Those are the rich people. It has just been mentioned, so I think that, because of the circumstances, I should comment. Given the financial position of this country, they have to take these steps and I praise the Chancellor on that.

[108] In your evidence, you propose that the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills should carry out a pilot exercise in gender budgeting. Can you provide the committee with some more details about this and what it would aim to achieve?

[109] **Mr Hagedyk:** We think that we recognise that. We want the Assembly Government to adopt gender budgeting. We recognise that it could not be done overnight and if you were to drop it on officials tomorrow, there would be a panic. We are looking to say, 'Let us start somewhere in this process. Let us learn the lessons that we need to learn to mainstream it, and let us pick up any pitfalls'.

[110] As a union representing members in post-16 education, we would obviously like the Assembly Government to start there, but there may well be different views on that. It would depend on the Minister or your perspective. It would depend on which Minister is prepared to say, 'Let us take a gamble on this. Let us see how it works'. We would certainly like to see it as part of the budget planning round and also potentially around the development of new policies. There are two or three very good examples within post-16 education. What gender budgeting and quality impact assessments were undertaken for the development of the foundation degree policy? On paper, it looks very good in terms of offering part-time study

within higher education, either at college or university, for those in work. On the face of it, this could offer a far more flexible way of studying that could benefit women who work and have childcare responsibilities. The question is whether our colleges and universities really have the childcare facilities and support mechanisms in place to make it a realistic prospect for women to go back into study. It is very difficult.

10.40 a.m.

[111] Another example is change around the transformation agenda within reconfiguration or collaboration. It is women who are predominantly the carers of children. If your childcare provider is over there and your workplace is also over there, and, under transformation, you are asked to work somewhere else, perhaps on the other side of the city, you will need to look at all those details. Has DCELLS done this detailed work on new policy development?

[112] We would suggest that one area in which gender budgeting and an equality impact assessment could be looked at is the development of the Assembly Government's policy in response to the Browne review into tuition fees. What will its impact be on women students? I know that it is the elephant in the room that no-one wants to talk about, because everyone is praying that it will not report before the election, but, I am sorry, it will. These are significant issues. What will be the impact on part-time students or mature students? If DCELLS wants to pick up some of this, we would say that that would be one place to start. We want some kind of framework and toolkit to come from that that could be rolled out across the rest of the Assembly Government and which could be used in other departments.

[113] Our argument is that it is now more important than ever to undertake this analysis. As I said before, perhaps it would be best to have done this when spending was rising, but it is more important than ever, now that spending will contract and budgets will be cut, that we look at these issues and ensure that gender and the other equality strands are not ignored or forgotten.

[114] **Veronica German:** We are all aware of the costs that could occur if we went down this route. Can you comment on what the potential benefits would be to the FE and HE sectors, in which you are particularly interested? You have explained what the benefits would be to the people concerned, but I am thinking of the hard sell to the Government so that we can say that this is what it should be doing and what the benefits would be.

[115] **Ms Thomas:** Himmelweit said it much better in 2002 than I could possibly do, so I will steal that. It was explained that gender budgeting can benefit society by reducing socioeconomic gender inequalities. By ensuring that public money is better targeted and spent more efficiently, which therefore improves policy outcomes, collection and analysis of gender disaggregated data and enhancing the ability to determine the real value of resources targeted towards women and men, gender budget initiatives can provide a better understanding of how resources are being spent and increase the efficiency of policy.

[116] I think that there are several benefits that can come from gender-budgeting analysis, not only effectively targeting resources at a time when they are strained, but also in participation by, not just women, but equality strands in general, in that decision-making process. The wider social impact of that participation agenda and mainstreaming equality would far outweigh any costs involved in adopting a new process. We appreciate that it is a new concept and that it will need a lot of upfront work, but, in the long term, it has the potential to make a great difference to Miss Smith down the road who wants to study to be a nurse or Mrs Jones who is working but suffering from in-work poverty and struggling to make ends meet. It can make a difference on the ground and also at a national level.

[117] We cannot lose sight of that in all the talk about the effective use of resources. We are

talking about people's lives and decisions to make them redundant, which will impact on their family or their caring responsibilities. That cannot be allowed to be lost in this process. When we talk about needing to make budget cuts, we are talking about people losing their jobs, restricting their budgets, or reducing the services that they receive, such as day care centres for disabled individuals. We are talking about people on the ground. Speaking to them and getting them involved in the process is key and so is looking at the consequences of these decisions.

[118] **Veronica German:** In your evidence, you state that:

[119] 'further and higher education institutions should be brought directly within the scope of the recently passed children and families measure.'

[120] How do you see that working in practice?

[121] **Mr Hagendyk:** The Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010 includes pan-Wales organisations, such as Sports Wales and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales. What it does not do is place a direct duty on individual institutions to produce a child poverty scheme, to report on it and to be accountable for it. So, bizarrely, HEFCW is responsible for it in the higher education sector, even though institutions are autonomous and HEFCW cannot direct them to do anything. It is even more perverse within the further education sector, because Ministers are the direct funders, so they are the ones who are accountable for decisions taken within the sector. As you will know from previous campaigns, you cannot direct an FE institution to do anything. So, we would like to see that duty placed directly on individual institutions, rather than on the pan-Wales organisations.

[122] There is an inconsistency here. When we lobbied for this approach to be taken during the process of passing the Measure, we were told that it would be restrictive, complicated and difficult to do, but the Equality Act 2010 places a direct duty on individual universities, colleges and HEFCW, so there is a precedent for it. It is easily fixed. I am not a legal expert, but I think that Ministers have the ability to say that they will extend the list of public authorities covered by it, so it is possible to do.

[123] As Adele said before, there is a link between child poverty and gender equality. If you want to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty, which is passed down by parents to children and grandchildren, you have to address the issue now. If you are meeting the needs of women as mothers in particular, you will potentially have a huge impact on child poverty further down the line. So, we think that it is possible to do it quite quickly and easily. We think that institutions can handle it, as well, as they have expertise in dealing with the Equality Act 2010 and the new duties under that, so there is no reason why they cannot do it.

[124] **Veronica German:** We can see the benefit of that. Will it be a huge burden for these institutions?

[125] **Mr Hagendyk:** I do not think so, not if it is done right. I gave the example of Coleg Gwent earlier. If the Act had been in place last year, when the college was pressing ahead with the closure of Stepping Stones Nursery, it could have given the college pause for thought or it may have meant that governors would have said at the outset, 'Hang on a second; we have this duty just as we have equality duties, so let us make sure that we are meeting these obligations'. It need not be an onerous task. The danger with many equality regulations is that they are left to sit on the shelf, but that is not what we want; we want them to be very focused on clear actions, and we want them to give the institution pause for thought. They have a legal duty and, as a governing body, it is the governors who have a legal responsibility to fulfil that legal duty. If they do not, they can be held to account by this body, and that is exactly how it should be. It should not be an onerous task. We hope that it will be relatively simple to do. If

it is onerous, it can often be counter-productive.

[126] **Veronica German:** We do not want it to be a tick-box exercise either, because that is the danger, is it not?

[127] **Ms Thomas:** It is already part of the widening participation agenda. I was in a meeting yesterday—and I will not say at which university—and the vice-chancellor talked about the changes that the sector will face. He said that he was disappointed with all the cuts, because despite the cuts, he has to try to widen participation. He said that that means that he has to get people from the Valleys into the university at the expense of other people. I was sitting there thinking, ‘Right’. The widening participation agenda is the key to reducing child poverty, both out-of-work poverty and in-work poverty, because a number of female learners access courses at a further education level or by doing a short course to upskill themselves, which would enable them to move up the career ladder. A number of our courses on women into management are run through the Cardiff University Centre for Lifelong Learning. The work that universities, and FE colleges in some respects, do to serve the community contributes to the widening participation agenda and tackling child poverty. However, there is an assumption that widening participation means getting someone on a train from the Valleys at the expense of a fee-paying international student. That is what we are fighting against, unfortunately.

10.50 a.m.

[128] **Ann Jones:** Does anyone else wish to ask a question? I see that you do not. Thank you both for coming in and giving us your evidence—it has been very helpful. You will get a copy of the draft transcript, which you can check for accuracy. The next committee meeting will be on 19 October, when Jane Hutt, the Minister for Business and Budget, and Carl Sargeant, the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government, will join us to discuss gender budgeting. We will also be considering our report on the accessibility of railway stations. I declare the meeting closed.

*Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 10.50 a.m.*  
*The meeting ended at 10.50 a.m.*