Yr Is-bwyllgor Datblygu Gwledig
The Rural Development Sub-committee

Dydd Iau, 27 Medi 2007
Thursday, 27 September 2007

Cynnwys
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"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

Mick Bates	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats
Alun Davies	Llafur (Cadeirydd yr Is-bwyllgor) Labour (Sub-committee Chair)
Alun Ffred Jones	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Brynle Williams	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives

Swyddogion Gwasanaeth Seneddol y Cynulliad yn bresennol
Assembly Parliamentary Service officials in attendance

Joanne Clinton	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Dr Virginia Hawkins	Clerc Clerk

Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 9.31 a.m.
The meeting began at 9.31 a.m.

Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon
Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions

Alun Davies: Bore da. Galwaf y cyfarfod i drefn.	**Alun Davies:** Good morning. I call the meeting to order.

Pwrpas y cyfarfod y bore yma yw ystyried ein hail archwiliad, sef yr archwiliad i wasanaethau yng nghefn gwlad. Mae gennym y papur cwmpasu ger ein bron, a byddwn yn trafod hwnnw y bore yma, ond, cyn dechrau, hoffwn eich hysbysu y byddaf yn cynnig ein bod yn cynnal sesiwn preifat cyflym yn syth ar ôl gorffen y trafodaethau ar y papur hwn.	The purpose of this morning's meeting is to discuss our second inquiry, which is the inquiry into rural services. We have the scoping paper before us, which we will discuss this morning, but, before we start, I want to notify you that I will be proposing that we hold a quick private session straight after we have finished discussing this paper.
Alun Ffred Jones: I drafod beth?	**Alun Ffred Jones:** To discuss what?
Alun Davies: I drafod yr archwiliad ar TB mewn gwartheg, a sut yr awn ymlaen o'r man hwn.	**Alun Davies:** To discuss the inquiry into bovine TB, and how we should proceed from this point.
Os oes larwm tân yn canu, rhaid gadael yr ystafell drwy'r allanfa, gan ddilyn cyfarwyddiadau'r staff. Nid oes prawf heddiw. Mawr obeithiaf fod pawb wedi diffodd eu ffonau symudol ac unrhyw offer arall. Hoffwn ddweud hefyd fod hawl gennym i ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg a'r Saesneg fel ei gilydd yn y cyfarfod hwn.	If a fire alarm sounds, you need to leave the room via the exit, and follow the directions of the staff. There is no test scheduled today. I hope that everyone has switched off their mobile phones and any other devices. I also want to say that we have the right to speak Welsh and English in this meeting.

9.33 a.m.

Trafod y Papur Cwmpasu a'r Cylch Gorchwyl ar gyfer Ail Ymchwiliad Craffu'r Pwyllgor
Discussion of Scoping Paper and Terms of Reference for the Committee's Second Scrutiny Inquiry

Alun Davies: A oes unrhyw sylwadau ar y papur cwmpasu sydd o'n blaenau?	**Alun Davies:** Does anyone have any comments on the scoping paper before us?
Alun Ffred Jones: Credaf ei fod wedi'i nodi yma yn rhywle bod trafod gwasanaethau yng nghefn gwlad yn destun eithriadol o eang, a gallem dreulio rhai blynyddoedd yn edrych arno a chyrraedd unman, oherwydd yr ydych yn sôn am bob gwasanaeth. Nid wyf yn siŵr ai dyna "raison d'être" yr is-bwyllgor hwn. Fodd bynnag, os ydym am fynd i lawr y llwybr hwn, tybiaf fod angen inni gyfyngu arno neu ei ddiffinio rywsut.	**Alun Ffred Jones:** I think that it is noted somewhere here that talking about services in rural areas is an incredibly broad issue, and we could spend years looking at it while getting nowhere, because you are talking about every service. I am not sure whether that is the raison d'être of this sub-committee. However, if we are to go down this path, I would have thought that we need to limit or define it in some way.
Un posibilrwydd yw sôn am amddifadedd yng nghefn gwlad. Gwnaed dau ddarn o waith yn barod sy'n berthnasol inni. Un ohonynt yw'r gwaith sydd wedi'i gynnwys yn barod yn y fynegai amddifadedd lluosog, ac mae cyfeiriad ato yma, ond, mewn gwirionedd, mae wedi'i ddiystyru oherwydd nad yw'n cael unrhyw bwysau, ac felly mae'r ardaloedd sy'n cael eu hystyried yn dlawd i gyd yn ardaloedd trefol ar hyn o bryd. Felly, gellid mynd yn ôl at hwnnw. Gwnaed gwaith diddorol hefyd gan Arsyllfa Wledig Cymru, y ceir cyfeiriad ato yma hefyd, sydd heb gael dim sylw yn y Cynulliad, gan bwyllgor na chan Weinidog. Mae'r arsyllfa wledig wedi paratoi dau adroddiad, a chymeraf ei bod wrthi'n gweithio ar bethau eraill. Nid yw'n gweithio ym maes amddifadedd yn unig, ond mae dau adroddiad sy'n berthnasol i hynny ynghylch tai a chyflwr tai. Os ydym am fynd i lawr y llwybr o ystyried gwasanaethau, byddwn yn awgrymu ein bod yn ei gyfyngu i amddifadedd a gweld a oes ffordd felly ymlaen.	One possibility would be to look at deprivation in rural areas. Two pieces of work relevant for us have already been completed on it. One of them is the work that is already included in the index of multiple deprivation, and there is reference to it here, which, in reality, has been ignored because it is not given any weighting, and therefore the areas that are considered to be poor are all urban areas at present. So, we could return to that. Some interesting work has also been done by the Wales Rural Observatory, which is also referred to here, but that has not been given any attention in the Assembly, neither by any committee nor any Minister. The rural observatory has drawn up two reports, and I take it that it is also working on other things. It is not working only in the field of deprivation, but there are two reports linked to that: on housing and the condition of housing. If we want to go down this path of looking at rural services, I would suggest that we limit it to deprivation and see whether there is such a way forward.

Brynle Williams: Cytunaf â'r hyn a ddywedodd Alun. Mae wedi bod yn amlwg ers peth amser fod tlodi mewn ardaloedd gwledig ac mae'n amser i dynnu sylw at hyn.	**Brynle Williams:** I agree with what Alun has said. It has been apparent for some time that there is poverty in rural areas and it is time that we drew attention to this.

Key people cannot afford to live in these areas. We need to address the situation. I think that this is pertinent, and I support Alun in this. It needs to be considered. It is a major problem, and it is not a problem for the agricultural industry, but a community problem in its entirety.

Mick Bates: You make some valid points. The first difficulty in the scoping paper is the definition of rurality. As we know, there are various pockets of deprivation and the Communities First programme focused on the 100 most deprived wards, but there is recognition of rurality within that. In the Dyfi valley, there is an area that is a Communities First area rather than a single locality. So, the whole situation is complex. I tend to agree with Alun that deprivation is our way into the whole issue of how we improve the quality of rural services. I am certain that that is the way forward. However, I am concerned about whether it is possible to arrive at a satisfactory definition. We need to get into looking at other ways of defining this area. With the Office for National Statistics now, you can drill down into small areas to look for deprivation. I do not know who the experts in this field are, but we need further advice on how to proceed, even if we were to look at rural deprivation, because the areas have such significant differences within them.

In every area, as we all know from experience, you will find rich enclaves surrounded by absolute poverty. When you average such figures out, you will find that they are skewed towards the average. So, we have the difficulty of determining how to collect statistics within the definition of what we see as a rural area as opposed to an urban area. Therefore, deprivation may be the link to getting us there. However, I do not know how we find the data that will enable us to identify the particular deprivation connected with rural services; that is quite difficult to define. For example, look at ambulance response times. All the figures show that the performance of an ambulance in a rural area is worse than that in an urban area. So, in deprivation terms, there is an easy solution: just provide more ambulances in more locations, so that you can make whatever the specified response time is. Then you enter into the problem of resources and how you then redistribute the existing resource or raise extra resource.

Lorraine Barrett: I agree with most of what has been said, particularly with Mick's assessment of the situation, but what do we want from this inquiry? Is it that we look at deprivation in rural areas? If you just pick up on the issue of ambulances, that is not a deprivation issue; it is a pure service delivery issue. If you are having a heart attack, the fact that you are millionaire will not help you—well, unless you have a helicopter in your grounds. Do you see what I mean? Ill-health is an issue whether you are rich or not so rich. It depends on what we want to get out of this. Do we want to focus generally on public service delivery, on whether rural areas are receiving that service or on what can be done to improve it, or should we just look at the deprivation side, as Alun Ffred said earlier? I could look at these data and you might expect me to say, 'I doubt whether Monmouthshire is very deprived', but there may be pockets there that come within the definition of deprivation. So, I think that there is probably further discussion to be had about exactly what we want out of this inquiry and how we will do it. As Alun said, we could spend years talking about it. We need to decide exactly what we want out of it.

9.40 a.m.	

Alun Ffred Jones: Nid oes gennyf agenda penodol ynghylch yr hyn yr wyf am ei weld yn digwydd, ond gan fod tlodi, neu amddifadedd, wedi'i ddiffinio mewn ffordd arbennig, teimlaf ei fod wedi'i gyfyngu i bob pwrpas i ardaloedd trefol erbyn hyn, ar wahân i rai ardaloedd gwledig. Rhaglen Cymunedau yn Gyntaf sy'n ceisio mynd i'r afael ag amddifadedd. Mae nifer ohonom yn teimlo bod amddifadedd o wahanol fath mewn ardaloedd eraill, ond nid ydyw mor ddwys, wrth gwrs. Cyfeiriais at Arsyllfa Wledig Cymru, ac at y gwaith a wnaed fel rhan o'r fynegai amddifadedd lluosog, a gallem edrych ar rai agweddau o'r gwaith hwnnw. Credaf fod pellter oddi wrth wasanaethau yn rhan o'r amddifadedd, am ei fod yn cael ei gynnwys yn y fynegai amddifadedd lluosog, er ei fod wedi cael sgôr isel. Credaf y dylem weld i ba raddau y mae ardaloedd gwledig wedi'u hamddifadu—ac nid oes rhaid i ni boeni am yr hyn sy'n wledig a'r hyn sydd ddim; mae diffiniadau cyffredinol yn ddigon da i ni—i weld a oes gwirionedd yn y cwynion hynny nad yw ardaloedd cymharol dlawd yn cael y gwasanaethau priodol, ac a oes unrhyw beth y gall rhaglen y Llywodraeth ei wneud i ymateb i hynny. Ni wn a yw hynny'n rhoi rhyw fath o arweiniad ai peidio.	**Alun Ffred Jones:** I do not have a specific agenda regarding the outcome that I wish to see, but given that poverty, or deprivation, has been defined in a particular way, I feel that it has by now been restricted to urban areas, to all intents and purposes, apart from some rural areas. It is the Communities First programme that is trying to deal with deprivation. Many of us feel that there is deprivation of a different kind in other areas, but it is not as concentrated, of course. I referred to the Wales Rural Observatory, and to the work done as part of the index of multiple deprivation, and we could look at certain aspects of that work. I believe that distance from services is part of that deprivation, because it is included in the index of multiple deprivation, though it was given a low score there. I believe that we should look at the extent to which rural areas are deprived—and we do not have to be too concerned about what is and what is not rural; general definitions will be good enough—to see whether there is truth in the complaints that relatively poor areas are not receiving appropriate services, and whether there is anything that the Government's programme could do to respond to that. I am not sure whether that gives you any sort of guidance.
Alun Davies: Yr ydych yn awgrymu, Alun, ein bod yn craffu ar bolisi gwrthdlodi'r Llywodraeth a sut y caiff ei weithredu mewn ardaloedd gwledig.	**Alun Davies:** You are suggesting, Alun, that we scrutinise the Government's anti-poverty strategy and how it is operated in rural areas.
Alun Ffred Jones: Ydwyf. Gallwch ddiffinio amddifadedd mewn gwahanol ffyrdd, ac yr wyf yn siŵr y deuwn ar draws gwahanol enghreifftiau, er nad oes rhaid i ni gytuno â'r rheiny. Efallai bod hynny'n rhy niwlog i ni gasglu tystiolaeth. Haerir fod rhai ardaloedd gwledig yn dioddef amddifadedd ond, gan nad ydyw'n ddigon ddwys, nid yw'n ymddangos yn y fynegai. Felly, gadewch i ni weld y dystiolaeth, ac, os oes tystiolaeth, i ba raddau y mae'r gwasanaethau hynny yn ddiffygiol. Nid wyf wedi dod i'r cyfarfod i ddweud, 'Dyma yr wyf am ei wneud', ond, gan ein bod yn y maes hwn, gallem wneud ychydig o waith ar hwn.	**Alun Ffred Jones:** I am. You could define deprivation in different ways, and I am sure that we will come across different examples, though we do not have to agree with those. Perhaps that is too vague to enable us to gather evidence. Some have claimed that rural areas suffer from deprivation but, given that it is not concentrated enough, it does not show up in the index. Therefore, let us see the evidence, and, if there is evidence, we can consider the extent to which those services are defective. I have not come to the meeting to say, 'This is what I want to do', but, given that we are in this area, we could do a little work on this.
Brynle Williams: Fel y bu i Alun ei ddweud wrth agor y drafodaeth, mae hwn yn faes mor fawr a chymhleth, yr unig ffordd y gallwn fynd ymlaen yw drwy grafu'r top. Mae'n effeithio ar ardaloedd gwledig yn ogystal ag ardaloedd trefol. Mae trafferthion, ac ni fedrwn ddweud yn bendant ein bod am wneud hwn mewn ffordd arbennig. Mae nifer o bethau i'w hystyried. Mae hwn yn haeddu ein sylw, fel ein bod yn gweld beth sydd ei angen ac yn cydnabod y trafferthion. Mae'n rhaid bod ffigurau ar gael er mwyn i ni weld beth sy'n mynd ymlaen. Nid ydym yn gallu gweld tlodi yng nghefn gwlad Cymru gan ein bod yn gweld yr amgylchedd hyfryd o'n cwmpas ac wedyn mae pawb yn meddwl bod popeth yn wych. Fodd bynnag, mae teuluoedd mewn angen, a thrafferthion mewn teuluoedd. Mae problemau hefyd gyda swyddfeydd post; ni allwch brynu eich trwydded deledu mewn swyddfa post bellach. Ni all nifer o bobl fynd i ganol y dref. Pethau syml ydynt, ond mae angen i ni edrych arnynt.	**Brynle Williams:** As Alun said in opening the discussion, this is such a vast and complicated area, the only way for us to progress is by just scratching the surface. It affects rural areas as well as urban areas. There are difficulties, and I cannot say for certain that we wish to do it in a particular way. There are a number of things to consider. This deserves our attention, so that we can see what is needed and can acknowledge the difficulties. There must be figures available for us to see what is going on. We do not see poverty in rural areas, because we see the wonderful environment around us and everyone then thinks that everything is fine. However, there are families in need, and difficulties within families. There are also difficulties with regard to post offices; you can no longer get your television licence in a post office. Many people cannot get into town centres anymore. Those are just some simple things, but we need to look into these areas.

Mick Bates: It is data that we need first. Extensive work has been undertaken through the indices of multiple deprivation and, if possible, I think that the first stage should be to get evidence so that we can look at the data. There are figures available on sparsity. I do not think that we can decide, at this moment in time, where we are going with this study until we have seen the data. The data would help us to decide which way to go. Adjustments to Government formulae are crucial, and Alun highlighted earlier the reduction in the weighting given to sparsity, which will have a massive impact on local government. I presume that the WLGA holds most of the data that we need to collect to help us to see the specific issues to go for.

Alun Ffred Jones: The rural observatory highlighted the fact that housing conditions in south-west Wales are worse than those in the Valleys, according to its definition. In itself, that tells a story, but it does not show up in the index of multiple deprivation, as that used another set of criteria. That is the kind of thing that it may be interesting to explore.

Alun Davies: Y teimlad a gaf gan y pwyllgor yw ein bod am newid ffocws yr ymchwiliad hwn o ystyried gwasanaethau yn unig a sut y cânt eu cyflenwi i ystyried polisïau gwrthdlodi yn y Gymru wledig, sut y cânt eu gweithredu a'u heffaith ar bobl a chymunedau cefn gwlad. A yw hynny'n crynhoi'r drafodaeth?	**Alun Davies:** The feeling that I get from the committee is that we want to change the focus of this inquiry from considering services and how they are delivered, to considering anti-poverty policies in rural Wales, how they are implemented and their impact on people and communities in rural Wales. Does that summarise the discussion?

Lorraine Barrett: I still think that there is an issue in relation to what I said earlier. Sparsity does not always equal poverty. For example, you can have 10 houses in wonderful countryside that are all worth more than £2 million; however, it could still be difficult to get the emergency services there. That is one side of the equation.

I would be very interested in the data, and the Office for National Statistics must have it all. We could look at the criteria that are used to measure deprivation, such as free school meals and pensions, and at the demographics of these areas to see how they have been changing over the past five or 10 years. Younger people of working age may have been moving out and there may be an ageing population that has greater needs. You could go on forever, could you not? So, I am quite happy for you to come up with some sort of definition or ideas from the general discussion that we have had to try to tighten it up a bit.

Mick Bates: The point is that we need the data so that we can scrutinise the Government's policies. I bring you back to what this committee is meant to be doing. If we get the data, we can then take evidence on the basis of that, on the different data sets and methods of collection. We will then be in a position to move onto the next stage, which would be to scrutinise other bodies and the Government on the delivery of services to meet the needs that were identified from the data. I think that that is the whole process.

Alun Ffred Jones: Cytunaf fod rhaid cael yr wybodaeth, ond rhaid inni wybod beth y ceisiwn ei wneud â'r wybodaeth, felly yr wyf yn parhau i ddod yn ôl at y ffaith bod angen i ni edrych ar hwn o safbwynt amddifadedd yng nghefn gwlad. Nid oes rhaid dweud bod cefn gwlad i gyd yn dioddef o dlodi, ond gallem ddiffinio amddifadedd, esbonio sut y mae'n effeithio ar gefn gwlad, a gweld a yw'r polisïau yn ymateb iddo. Deallaf ei fod yn faes mawr.	**Alun Ffred Jones:** I agree that we need to get the information, but we also need to know what it is we want to do with that information, so I keep coming back to the fact that we need to look at this from the perspective of deprivation in rural areas. We do not have to say that all rural areas are poor, but we could define deprivation, explain how it affects rural areas and examine whether policies are responding to that. I understand that it is a big field.
Adroddiad diddorol arall oedd 'Age-Balanced Communities in Rural Wales' na chafodd ddim sylw. Cafodd ei gomisiynu a gwnaed llawer o waith arno. Mae pawb sydd wedi'i ddarllen yn dweud ei fod yn eithriadol o ddiddorol, gan ei fod yn astudiaeth fanwl o nifer o gymunedau yng Nghymru. Pan ofynnais beth oedd wedi digwydd iddo, yr ateb a gefais unwaith eto oedd ei fod wedi ei ddisodli gan gynllun gofodol Cymru. Nonsens yw hynny, gan nad oes cyfeiriad yn y cynllun gofodol at yr adroddiad. Dyna'r math o dystiolaeth sydd gennym eisoes, gan fod yr adroddiad ar gael, ac efallai y gallem glywed cyflwyniad arno gan y sawl a oedd yn gyfrifol am ei lunio. Enghraifft yw honno.	'Age-balanced Communities in Rural Wales' is another interesting report, but it did not get any attention. It was commissioned and a lot of work went into it. Everyone who has read it says that it is extremely interesting, because it is a detailed study of many different communities in Wales. When I asked what had happened to the report, the answer I got once again was that it had been superseded by the Wales spatial plan. That is stuff and nonsense because there is not one reference to the report in the spatial plan. That is the kind of evidence that we already have, as the report is available, and perhaps we could have a presentation on it by those who were responsible for drafting it. That is an example.

9.50 a.m.
Mick Bates: That report was done by the Development Board for Rural Wales, of course.
Alun Davies: Point made, Mick.
Mick Bates: We will end up going there, do not worry.
Alun Davies: Thank you for that discussion. We will take this paper back and refocus it on the issues that have been raised at our meeting this morning and, at our next meeting, we will discuss a work plan going forward on that basis. I will ensure that an amended paper is circulated to you as soon as possible.

A ydych yn hapus â hynny? Gwelaf eich bod. Dyna'r cyfan y mae'n rhaid inni ei drafod y bore yma, felly symudwn yn awr at y sesiwn breifat er mwyn trafod yr archwiliad ar TB mewn gwartheg.	Are you happy with that? I see that you are. That is all that we need to discuss this morning. Therefore, we will now go into private session to discuss the inquiry into bovine TB.

"Daeth rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod i ben am 9.50 a.m.
The public part of the meeting ended at 9.50 a.m."