

Answers to Questions not reached in Plenary 25 June 2002

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

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

Questions to the First Minister

Lottery Funding

Q11 Gwenda Thomas: What discussions does the First Minister have with the Secretary of State for Wales concerning lottery funding in Wales? (OAQ18473)

The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan): Responsibility for lottery funding rests with Jenny Randerson, the Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language. She regularly meets with Don Touhig, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Wales, to discuss issues that are of current relevance. Where appropriate, those discussions include matters in relation to lottery funding in Wales.

Aggregates Levy Sustainability

Q12 Gareth Jones: Will the First Minister make a statement on the distribution of the aggregates levy sustainability fund in Wales? (OAQ18483)

The First Minister: The sustainability fund will be launched on 26 June, and will be distributed throughout the areas of Wales affected by aggregates extraction. An advisory panel, including representatives of the Welsh Local Government Association, the Wales Council for Voluntary Action, the Countryside Council for Wales and the Quarry Products Association, will administer the fund. The advisory panel will also have its meeting on 26 June.

Education Standards

Q13 Nick Bourne: How have the First Minister's Government policies benefited education standards in Wales? (OAQ18490)

The First Minister: Our aim is for Wales to have one of the best training and education systems in the world. Our achievements are clearly set out in 'Plan for Wales 2001' and 'The Learning Country'. The conclusion in the most recent annual report of the Chief Inspector of Schools in Wales, that standards in education and training had risen yet again, confirms that we are on-track to realise our ambition for Wales to be internationally renowned as a learning country.

Community Policing

Q14 Christine Chapman: What discussions has the First Minister had with his Westminster colleagues about community policing in Wales? (OAQ18488)

The First Minister: Crime reduction does not come up in discussions with Westminster colleagues very often, simply because it is not a devolved matter. It is safe to say that a general consensus is in favour of community policing. Designated community beat officers are not only effective in operational policing terms, they also reassure the communities that they serve and lessen people's fear of crime. I understand that in South Wales Police's B Division, covering the Cynon valley, there are designated community beat officers in each of the 52 wards. I welcome this, along with the crucial contribution that the police make to the local crime and disorder reduction partnerships, which impact upon communities across Wales.

Jobs in Socially Deprived Areas

Q15 Janet Davies: What steps is the First Minister taking to co-ordinate policy development in the National Assembly, which will contribute toward the creation of new jobs in the most socially deprived areas of Wales? (OAQ18476)

The First Minister: The Minister for Economic Development and I have set out a clear economic development strategy in 'A Winning Wales'. That provides a framework for the Welsh Assembly Government, Team Wales and for businesses in Wales concerned with socially deprived areas.