



Comisiwn y Cynulliad Assembly Commission

NAFWC 2008 Paper 2A

Cyllideb Ddrafft Comisiwn y Cynulliad 2009-10 Assembly Commission Draft Budget 2009-10

<p>Angela Burns: Good afternoon to our new presenters. I am sorry to have delayed you with our previous investigation. Thank you for coming. I know that none of you need any introduction, but for the record, I ask you to introduce yourselves.</p>	
<p>The Presiding Officer: Thank you, Chair. I shall speak in Welsh initially, which is my practice, as you know. I will answer questions in the language in which they are asked, providing that that is an official language of the Assembly.</p>	
<p>Diolch, Gadeirydd, am eich croeso. Yr ydym yn eich cymeradwyo am roi amser caled i Weinidogion, ac yr wyf yn siŵr y byddwch yr un mor gadarn gyda ni.</p>	<p>Thank you for your words of welcome. We applaud you for giving Ministers a hard time, and I am sure that you will be just as firm with us.</p>
<p>Yr ydym o falch o gael ymddangos gerbron y pwyllgor, ac o'n perthynas gyda'r pwyllgor. Yr ydym yn ceisio ateb unrhyw geisiadau am wybodaeth sydd yn dod inni yn ystod y flwyddyn, ac yr ydym yn hynod o awyddus i gael ein gweld fel corff agored a thryloyw. Mae'n blesur gennyf gyflwyno ar gyfer y cofnod, Claire Clancy, prif weithredwr a chlerc y Cynulliad a Dianne Bevan, prif swyddog gweithredol a chyfarwyddwr cyllid y Comisiwn. Mae'n briodol i mi gyfeirio at Steve O'Donoghue, sydd yn awr yn dwyn y teitl pennaeth adnoddau'r Cynulliad ac mae yntau gyda ni yma.</p>	<p>We are pleased to appear before the committee and we are proud of our relationship with the committee. We try to respond to any requests for information in year, and we are eager to be seen as an open and transparent organisation. It is my pleasure to introduce, for the record, Claire Clancy, the chief executive and clerk to the Assembly, and Dianne Bevan, the chief operating officer and finance director of the Commission. I should also mention Steve O'Donoghue, who is now head of Assembly resources, and who is also with us today.</p>
<p>Rhof amlinelliad o'r gyllideb yn sydyn. Yr ydych yn gwybod bod cynnydd o 3.4 y cant o'i gymharu ag eleni, sydd yn is na lefelau presennol chwyddiant mewn prisiau, ac yn is na'r cynnydd o 4.8 y cant yng nghyfanswm</p>	<p>I will give you a brief outline of the budget. You will know that there has been an increase of 3.4 per cent on this year, which is below the current level of price inflation, and below the 4.8 per cent increase in the overall Welsh block. The</p>



<p>cyllid bloc Cymru. Mae'r Comisiwn wedi cymryd penderfyniad gwleidyddol, a sensitif, yr wyf yn credu, ynglŷn â hyn. Yr ydym fel comisiynwyr, a finnau fel cadeirydd, yn atebol yma heddiw am gymryd cyfrifoldeb am y penderfyniad hwnnw i addasu ein cyllideb i'r cyd-destun economaidd cyfalafol presennol. Yr ydym yn credu bod y gyllideb hon yn sicrhau'r cydbwysedd cywir rhwng rhoi sylw i anghenion y Cynulliad a'r Aelodau a bod yn synhwyrol yn yr amgylchiadau economaidd.</p>	<p>Commission has taken a political, and, I believe, sensitive decision in relation to this. We as commissioners, and I as chair, are answerable here today for taking responsibility for the decision to adapt our budget to the current economic and financial situation. I believe that this budget ensures the right balance between paying attention to the needs of the Assembly and its Members and being sensible in the current economic climate.</p>
<p>Chris Franks: As Members are probably aware, I am a commissioner, and it would be inappropriate for me to participate in this debate, so I will withdraw.</p>	
<p>Angela Burns: Thank you. Llywydd, is there any other statement that you would like to make?</p>	
<p>The Presiding Officer: No.</p>	
<p>3.00 p.m.</p>	
<p>Nick Bourne: Thank you for your introduction, Llywydd. Following your statement about the 3.4 per cent increase being below the increase in the departmental expenditure limit component, which is good, can you reassure us about the level of the service, given that it is below the 4.8 per cent? I also want to ask a few supplementary questions that relate to that. This is all built on the assumption of a 2.5 per cent price and pay inflation, which looks pretty optimistic as things currently stand. Can you give us some reassurance on that?</p>	
<p>The Presiding Officer: On the second point—and I will ask the chief executive to comment further, if she is so moved—the substantial proportion of our budget is based on salaries, both Member and staff salaries, and those are under our control, as it were. However, energy costs increases and other inflationary pressures on the services that we purchase are not under our control, but we believe that our way of monitoring our resource position and our actual spend enables us to adjust to the context. Therefore, we firmly believe that there will be no diminution in service for Members as a result of our decision.</p>	
<p>Mrs Clancy: A total of £28 million of the budget is spent on salaries and, for staff, we are in the middle of a three-year pay deal, so there is certainty about the levels of pay for the coming year. We are also confident that there is sufficient funding in key priority areas to deliver a high standard of services. For example, there is still £1 million for accommodation and maintenance, there is sufficient funding for 370 staff, which is the current level, and the information and communications technology budget is £4 million, up from £3.4 million. The crucial area of outward-facing activity on external communications is also up from £0.5 million to £0.9 million. So, we are trying to</p>	



ensure that there is sufficient funding in all priority areas to maintain the current level of services but also to allow for growth.

We have also tried to look for ways of achieving efficiencies and, sometimes, that means investing. For example, there are many capital investments in pieces of software or systems, and a topical example is that for maintaining the records on AMs' allowances. That is so that we do not have to have staff grinding through the records. It has required quite a few members of staff to grind through those records in the past, but, if we spend £30,000 on the piece of software that Scotland has, it will mean that we do not need those staff numbers in future. So, we are trying to look at ways of working differently and smarter in all areas of the business. It is not about asking people to work harder or beyond their contracted hours; it is about finding better ways of doing things.

Nick Bourne: On pay inflation, if there is a three-year pay deal—for all staff, presumably—I realise that you could accommodate that fairly easily. However, the Llywydd mentioned circumstances outside your control, and, while I accept that we can only take a punt at fuel costs, and so on, we can do that and take a punt at where they are heading. Have you done that in any sense? Have you allowed for what will almost certainly be a significant increase on last year's costs, and so perhaps needs to be built in? Has it been built in? I just want to press you on that.

Mrs Clancy: For 2009-10, we have budgeted £359,000 for electricity. For gas, it is £51,000 and for other fuel it is £10,000. Steve, does that build in an increase on the current year?

Mr O'Donoghue: It does.

Mrs Clancy: Of what sort of percentage?

Mr O'Donoghue: I think that it is 2.5 per cent. [*Inaudible.*]

Nick Bourne: Could you come to the table, Steve, because Jenny cannot hear?

Jenny Randerson: Not just for me, but for the Record.

Nick Bourne: The question was whether we have enough built into the budget for the increase in fuel and energy costs. I think that the answer was that there has been an amount incorporated, of about 2.5 per cent. I suspect that that is not nearly enough. I think that that is where we were.

Mr O'Donoghue: That is right. Sorry, I will just introduce myself. I am Steve O'Donoghue, the head of Assembly resources. We have allowed 2.5 per cent across the board on goods and services, but the point that the Presiding Officer made was that we have to manage the budget as a whole and, where we can make savings to offset the increased costs, that is what we will do. On the energy front, we have a programme to target efficiency savings on energy consumption. We will be working very closely with our building management system to ensure that we reduce the energy consumption of the buildings, which will have an impact on cost.



Mrs Clancy: BDS Partnership Ltd did some work for us on energy consumption in the Senedd, which showed that, if we made a series of fairly simple changes to how we manage energy consumption in the building, we could achieve an energy reduction of about 25 per cent, which is likely to match the increase in fuel prices.

Nick Bourne: So, you are satisfied that it is a robust figure, if I press you on it.

Mrs Clancy: Yes.

Mohammad Asghar: If your budget is reduced, you will probably be compromising your services somewhere. You should be increasing your budget rather than decreasing it. I want to know why you are putting aside 2 per cent for contingency. How much contingency was used in 2007-08 and how much is expected to be used this year? What was this contingency money used for?

The Presiding Officer: I believe, Mohammad, that you asked this question of us last year.

Mohammad Asghar: Well, I was concerned—

The Presiding Officer: It was a good thing, because, following the discussion last year, we had a serious look at it. I was concerned and compared the situation with that in other places where I have part responsibility for significant budgets. We agreed that the level of contingency was to remain at 2 per cent, rounded to £1 million. I think I am right in saying that our outturn for 2007-08 was within 1.6 per cent of the budget, and so we are confident that we can operate effectively with 2 per cent contingency funds. Do you want to add anything on that?

Ms Bevan: I will just say that we have remained clearly within our contingency in the current year. The contingency that we spent that has turned into recurring costs will be replenished within the budget. So, we are reasonably confident.

Alun Davies: In your budget statement, you discuss the efficiency savings that you plan to make. I would be grateful if you could run through how you see those savings being made, and how realistic you believe a net saving is at the moment.

Mrs Clancy: One of the best ways to give a realistic picture is to look at what we have managed to achieve this year. So far, we have delivered £239,000 in efficiencies this year. That has been through restructuring the services in the corporate unit, for example, so altering the jobs that you have. A more recent example is that the Presiding Officer has decided to have one fewer post in the Presiding Office. We will be combining those duties with those of my secretary, and so will save a post by doing that. However, there is no diminution in service, because we have made sure that one person can deliver the dual responsibilities. One of the biggest things that we did was the internal restructuring of the fees office and putting people into HR. By combining those roles, there were efficiencies in the management chain that saved £134,000. So, we have a simple target, which is a financial figure for efficiency savings rather than some measure. Each time a post becomes vacant,



the line management chain will be required to justify why that post needs to be filled again and what the person holding that post will do. So, there is to be a rigorous examination of the continuing need for posts. We will look for ways of delivering in a more streamlined way.

3.10 p.m.

I mentioned one example of where systems can help us, but there are a couple of others on the committee side. If we introduce a new system, over time, it will help to relieve the pressure on staff. There are some other things that we can do. For example, we renegotiated the lease for the north Wales office, and we bought the bus, so we are using less space in Colwyn Bay, which has an ongoing cost saving. Those are tangible examples that show that we can do it, and we will look out for further examples like that. So, we are very confident that, over a year, we can deliver £300,000 of efficiency savings.

I have made it sound easy, but it means managing the budgets actively. One thing that you might be interested in—although someone might have a question on this—is that we have quite a well developed performance management framework. We have monthly reports on finances to the management board and to the Assembly Commission. We have a strong system of internal control that is managed by the corporate governance committee, which has independent members and an independent chair. We have brought copies of our briefing for you to take away, if you would like to. Within that, you will see an example of our performance management dashboard, which you have no hope of reading. It contains key measures and milestones to show that we are on track, not only with the money that we are spending, but also in delivering the key outputs that you all expect of us.

The Presiding Officer: If I may, I will add to that something about how the Commission functions and its interrelation with the Business Committee. Having worked for many years in an extremely inefficient parliamentary system somewhere else, I was keen for there to be an improvement on that, when I had some influence over how a parliamentary system operated. There should be an interrelation between the democratic services delivered for Members and how they function and the cost of the operation, the estates and so on. I am pleased about the strong relationship that exists, so far, between the directors, the heads of service who deliver directly, and the commissioners.

I see that Chris Franks has gone, but, to pardon his blushes, were he here, I will just say that each commissioner has taken on specific areas of responsibilities in a kind of portfolio, and each one works closely with the relevant director. I also have an overview. The Commission and the Business Committee hold a joint meeting at least twice a year and more often, if necessary—and that happened with the budgetary process—so that the business needs of Members and of the Assembly, namely how we do our work, are factored into the process. The efficient use of committee time and of Members' time on committees and so on are factors of the service or democratic needs of the institution, but those needs are also driven by the effective use of human resources, because our staff, especially committee staff, are our most important resource in our work, and by potential investment in technology.



Finally, I will just flag up the iChange project and the strategic ICT replacement, because we may come back to you on this later this year or next year, and it is clearly set out in our capital spending for 2009 onwards. They will mean that the Members who return here after the next election will have far more effective IT, and that the business systems that our Commission staff operate will be far more effective. Some of you will no doubt have met our enthusiastic consultant, who is leading us through this. That is very much part of the Commission's way of operating.

Mrs Clancy: May I add one other thing about the Commission's way of operating? I strongly believe, as does the Commission, that it would have been easier to build in more money and give ourselves some expansion room, but, in the current economic climate, that would have been the wrong thing to do. I am confident that we can deliver. If ever I sit in front of you and need to say, 'You are asking for a cut too far; this will compromise services.' I will tell you that. We will ask for the budget that we believe we need to deliver the services that the Assembly requires. We will do our level best to ensure that it is no more and no less than that.

Alun Davies: I would like to come back on that point.

Angela Burns: I think that both you and Jenny want to do so.

Jenny Randerson: I wanted to come back on the ICT issue.

Alun Davies: May I just pick up on one of the answers? The Presiding Officer, as ever, anticipated my supplementary question. You gave us very good examples of the ways in which you have been able to cut costs and achieve savings during this financial year. However, they were non-recurrent savings in many ways. You can reorganise a department only once, unless you live in a state of permanent revolution. How do you intend to repeat this time and again? The Commission is not a large organisation where these substantial savings can be achieved simply through staff and management reorganisations year on year without cutting back—and this is where the Presiding Officer anticipated my question—on the quality of the services to the democracy.

Mrs Clancy: You are right to say that they cannot be repeated year on year, but I do not believe that we have yet reached the point where they cannot be repeated. Some areas have taken a more rigorous look at how they do their work than others. I am sorry to repeat myself, but we have two or three systems changes that we can make that will, in the coming year, make that difference. We have 370 staff. That is not a large organisation, but it is still one within which you are able to look for such efficiencies.

Alun Davies: Do you see this as being a two, three or four-year programme?

Mrs Clancy: Of cost reductions?

Alun Davies: In staffing terms.



Mrs Clancy: It depends how much you do at any one time. The furthest I would want to go is to say that we are confident that we can deliver the £300,000 in 2009-10; when we come back to talk about 2010-11, whether we can take more costs out depends on the demands on the services that the Assembly needs and on how effectively we have been able to make the changes we have planned for next year. I am not sure that I can predict that far ahead and give you the optimum size, because the demands and the services are changing, as are the ways in which we can deliver those services.

Technology is also changing. Another way that we have been able to reduce the budget has been by phasing some of the work that we need to do at some point, such as archiving the audiovisual streams. We do not have to do that in the coming year, but we will have to do it at some point. Technology is improving all the time. It may well be that, although the cost of doing that in 2009-10 is £300,000, if you do it when the technology is more mature, the cost could be a fraction of that. So, it is not just about doing things with people; it is about finding the right systems and technology to do the job.

The Presiding Officer: I would like to add to that. The key driver for me is the multi-skilling of our staff and the ability of our staff to undertake their work—the Record and interpretation is one field; Member support and committee support are others. As we become a more effective legislature, one of the things that really works well here is the way that some of our more experienced committee support people—whom we still call clerks, although I am desperately looking for a better name—are able to take business all the way through from its initial stages, as we did this week. We were led by a team of people who have the skills to do that. That is what streamlining the organisation is about. It is not about reducing the number of jobs or cutting back; it is about maintaining the increase within control when there is a demand, but enabling us to do our work and support Members more effectively through the increasing skills levels of our own staff. I pay tribute to the way in which they have responded.

3.20 p.m.

I think that we have moved seamlessly from constitution 1 to constitution 2 with the implementation of the Government of Wales Act 2006. That is not us; we have done it at the management level and at a commissioner level, but it is our staff that have done it. We have a number of intelligent people who are able to adapt to new contexts working for us now, many of whom were recruited internally; whenever we have an important appointment, it is internally advertised and we have been able to recruit good people with significant experience, which adds to our skills. Therefore, we try to be a lean and mean, flexible parliamentary body.

Angela Burns: Thank you very much.

Jenny Randerson: I am rather concerned at the lack of a figure put on the potential ICT developments and the possibility of the supplementary budget. Claire said earlier that she was confident that she could produce a figure and work to that figure in terms of the savings. Why is it not possible to produce a figure to put into the budget at this stage so that you have the confidence



that that money is there if it is needed for ICT development?

The Presiding Officer: If you let me answer the general point, I can say that we have an absolutely clear understanding of what the cost is of maintaining the present performance of the present contract.

Jenny Randerson: I meant further development.

The Presiding Officer: Yes; that is the whole point. The further development was undertaken through commissioning a very clever consultant to deal with this for us. He will report to the Commission in December and at that stage we will have to begin to take difficult decisions about where we invest. I will want to see what the gains are in the reduction of use of paper, in more effective business systems, and in more effective working for Members so that we have a much more effective system than the present laptop computers and BlackBerrys and so forth. Therefore, whatever the technology will be, the Commission needs to be an intelligent customer that can know what the most appropriate technology is, not just for Members but for interactivity with the public. That is why we, as a Commission, decided to take the iChange budget out of the normal budgeting process so that the process could be undertaken to assess our needs. We will then come back for capital investment in the refreshing of the ICT system but also looking at new opportunities for working smarter.

Mrs Clancy: There are broadly three types of IT spends, one of which is to maintain the systems that we have. There is just under £4 million in the budget for this project to do that. Another type is an ongoing strategic replacement programme where, on a regular basis, we know that we have to replace or upgrade particular equipment. We can plan that; we know what it is and we know that there are peaks around the time of an election, for example, when we are doing that. Therefore, we have a line of spend for that that is relatively modest in 2009-10 at around £0.5 million and then approximately £1.3 million in 2010-11 and so forth.

The third area that the Presiding Officer has been talking about is a completely new piece of work that we have had to look at: the long-term technology requirements of the Assembly. That project started in the early summer. There has been a piece of scoping work—and we can give you the scoping document—which is ongoing. There will be discussions with Assembly Members about their views on the long-term future requirements of ICT. It is almost literally impossible to cost that accurately before you have finished the work that says, 'This is what our aspirations are and what we want to deliver for the Assembly in the longer term.' If we gave a figure it would be so arbitrary that it just would not be useful. Therefore, we thought that it was in the interests of transparency to say, 'We cannot do that accurately, and it is meaningless to have a stab in the dark.' I have been there before and done that; it is not a good practice. Therefore, we will come back once the consultant has finished the work, we have the design of the programme and we can have a supplementary budget. At that point the Assembly can choose whether it wants to spend this amount of money over three to five years to change the way that we do technology.

Angela Burns: Thank you. I was very interested in what you said about service levels. It ties in



very well with your strategic goal to ensure that the Assembly has the best service provided in the most effective way, and I can see that. I wish to seek clarification on the £6.5 million to promote and widen engagement in devolution. Given that the All-Wales Convention is standing, what is the 'promote' element? Although we would all support the aim of widening engagement in devolution, may I have clarification on that?

The Presiding Officer: First of all, it is a statutory obligation under the Government of Wales Act 2006. We have powers to promote devolution, which means parts 3 and 4 of the Government of Wales Act 2006, and we take this responsibility seriously. One of the first things that we did was to invest substantially in a programme of work to establish the level of public interest and potential public participation in Wales. This work is about to be published—it might even be published during the coming week. The Assembly Commission has had a presentation from Professor Roger Scully of Aberystwyth University. Some of you may have seen the data—although I cannot imagine how—but it was a very interesting study. For the first time, it gives us a snapshot; in fact, it is much more than a snapshot because it is an in-depth study from a sample of 2,500. We know what Welsh public opinion is, and it is much more positive than you might imagine, especially about the Welsh Conservatives, but I will not go into that; looking at you both sitting there, I had to say that.

Nick Bourne: I am not surprised.

The Presiding Officer: Following on from that is a whole programme of engagement, which has been written by Dr Non Gwilym, our new head of external communications, and Iwan Williams, who is responsible for our media strategy. As a strong strand arising out of the research work, we are also developing direct communication with local media in particular. We think that regional newspapers and local radio are extremely important sources. This includes developing a system; we have a consultant who was formerly the head of news at the BBC, Garfield Lloyd Lewis, who is now an independent consultant, and he is producing a programme through which we will be able to e-mail an attachment of video clips and sound clips for use by local radio stations and so on. So, we see ourselves in the communication arm of the Assembly as an essential part of the process.

What we are trying to get away from is the idea that, if we have done our democratic work in a committee, in the process of committee work or parliamentary work, we have done the job. In our view, we have not; communication with the electorate and the invitation for it to participate is central to the democratic process and not an add-on, and this is something that we and our staff have preached to sister parliamentary bodies. In particular, Adrian Crompton preached this gospel to clerks at table—as they still call themselves—from other parliamentary institutions in the UK and beyond the other week. So, we are seen as a leader in this field because of our emphasis through this budget on communication.

Ms Bevan: The £6.5 million figure that you mentioned is not all new money—it is what we have ascribed to that particular function. There will be elements of new money in there, and we are putting approximately £365,000 towards particular initiatives on the communication front.



Mohammad Asghar: The indicative budget for 2010 has increased in excess of 100 per cent from 2009-10. Is it only for the information technology department or does it contain other objectives? Is there a sufficient increase in this capital budget?

Mrs Clancy: The capital budget varies from year to year, depending on the particular commitments, and it tends to be cyclical, particularly around the times of elections.

Mohammad Ashgar: The Presiding Officer mentioned that the new Members in 2012 will see the development in the IT system, but in this case we will probably see the developments at the end of our last year.

3.30 p.m.

The Presiding Officer: It is not just about ICT. Promotion and widening engagement in devolution includes Assembly Focus, which is a programme of external communications activities throughout the year. We are not celebrating our tenth birthday, but we will celebrate our work. We will not have any street parties or visits or anything of that kind. We will kitemark everything that we do as being 10 years of effective democracy.

Outreach services are part of the Pierhead programme and on the e-democracy programme, we are again seen as a leader among the European assemblies. Operation Black Vote, in which you participated, is part of the same programme.

Mrs Clancy: You were asking in particular about the capital spend, which in 2010-11 and 2011-12 relates to ICT costs. It relates to the strategic replacement programme, which I mentioned earlier, rather than the iChange programme. So, in the first year, we will be replacing hardware and software in the Senedd and, in the second year, we will replace Members' ICT equipment after the election.

Joyce Watson: There are two parts to the budget in terms of communicating your message to the electorate: the central part that the Assembly plays and, equally important, the part played by Assembly Members in terms of getting their message out and engaging with the public. Some of us know that that is often fraught with difficulty. How have you tackled that element in your budget, enabling us to function at that level, individually? We know that other administrations have tackled that, have put budgets aside and devolved them to individuals in a clear fashion that works. I am interested to hear how you, as the Commission, have tackled it on behalf of Members.

The Presiding Officer: The role of the Commission is to promote the institution, not to promote individual Members. The promotion of individual Members is their responsibility, and most of us do it rather well. However, as you know, we have established a totally independent panel, chaired by Sir Roger Jones, which will consider all aspects of individual Member support. That includes everything that is currently funded by the so-called Members' allowance system. We inherited a system based on the Westminster system, which is reprehensible, in my view, and must go. How it



is to go is to be decided by that independent panel. I have told that panel clearly that neither I nor the other commissioners intend to get involved in its deliberations, but I look forward to the outcome. I hope that we will be in a position to accept its conclusions. What is the point of establishing an independent committee if you do not listen to what it says?

Nick Bourne: You would not want to pre-judge it.

The Presiding Officer: Absolutely not. It is key that this body is free. My friends in Westminster and Scotland say that they have failed to deal with this issue. We are in the difficult, but challenging, position, democratically, where the decision is for commissioners. Clearly, Assembly Members could gather together and decide to issue instructions to commissioners, or even sack us, but the important constitutional principle here is that the decision about Member support will be made by the Commission in terms of its budget. Therefore, it will be based on the outcome of the independent panel.

Nick Bourne: Do we know the date by which it is due to report?

The Presiding Officer: I have indicated to the panel that it is not under time pressure. The clear goal that I have in mind is that we have this in place by 2011.

Angela Burns: Are there any further questions? I see that there are not. I understand that you have additional information for us.

Mrs Clancy: It is our own briefing, but last year, there were many points of detail about what was in particular budgets. Any Member who has an interest can see the detailed make-up of the budgets in here. You might also get a bit more insight into some of the questions that have been asked. So, you are welcome to have our briefing if you would like it.

Angela Burns: Thank you. If we have questions on that briefing, may we pass them on to you?

Mrs Clancy: Yes.

The Presiding Officer: I do not think that you make enough use of us during the year. We are an open book. If you want further information, we are able to share information with you as soon as the Commission has come to a decision, and our proceedings are published. There may be situations where we might benefit from your views in reporting on what we do in much the same way as we might sometimes want to use the Audit Committee or the Auditor General for Wales for the purposes of assessing the cost-effectiveness of our decisions. Certainly when it comes to ICT we would value your critical study.

Angela Burns: I thank you for your time. I am sorry that we have overrun, but the session has been most useful for the committee.