

# Plenary

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Meeting date:  
**Wednesday, 20 February 2013**

Meeting time:  
**13:30**

Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales



## Votes and Proceedings

(114)

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### **1. Questions to the Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development**

The item started at 13.30

The first 11 questions were asked. Question 12 was withdrawn. Question 13 was transferred for written answer.

### **2. Questions to the Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage**

The item started at 14.12

The first 9 questions were asked.

### **3. Debate on the Health & Social Care Committee's Inquiry into Residential care for older people in Wales**

The item started at 15.00

#### **NDM5165 Mark Drakeford (Cardiff West)**

The National Assembly for Wales:

Notes the report of the Health and Social Care Committee on its inquiry into residential care for older people in Wales, which was laid in the Table Office on 13 December 2012.

Note: The Welsh Government's response to the report was laid in the Table Office on 13 February 2013.

**The motion was agreed in accordance with Standing Order 12.36.**

#### **4. Debate on the Finance Committee's report 'The Effectiveness of European Structural Funds in Wales'**

The item started at 15.45

**NDM5166 Jocelyn Davies (South Wales East)**

To propose that the National Assembly for Wales:

Notes the Finance Committee's report on Effectiveness of European Structural Funds in Wales which was laid in the Table Office on 17 December 2012.

**The motion was agreed in accordance with Standing Order 12.36.**

#### **5. Welsh Liberal Democrats Debate**

The item started at 16.36

**Voting on the motion and amendments under this item was deferred until Voting Time.**

A vote was taken on the motion without amendment:

**NDM5167 Aled Roberts (North Wales)**

To propose that the National Assembly for Wales:

1. Notes that, according to Stats Wales, there are an estimated 31,644 empty homes in Wales, with 23,287 classed as long-term empty dwellings.

2. Welcomes the intention of the Welsh Government's 'Houses into Homes' initiative, including the additional £5million invested into the scheme as a result of the budget deal with the Welsh Liberal Democrats in 2012-13.

3. Welcomes the progress in reducing the number of empty homes in Wales by 2,000, but believes that more must be done to develop a cohesive empty homes strategy which includes:

a) establishing a Welsh Empty Homes website to share advice and guidance and raise the profile of the empty homes initiative;

b) a full time equivalent Empty Homes Officer in each local authority to drive forward the initiative;

c) simplifying the legislation and procedures surrounding Empty Dwelling Management Orders and Compulsory Purchase Orders;

d) updating empty homes good practice guidance to local authorities'

e) allowing councils greater flexibility to impose punitive council tax rates on long term empty homes;

f) encouraging the sharing of best practice examples and facilitating partnership working between local authorities; and

g) looking at an incentive scheme for local councils for every long term private sector home brought back into use, similar to the UK Government's 'New Homes Bonus Scheme'.

For	Abstain	Against	Total
29	0	17	46

**The motion without amendment was agreed.**

### **Voting Time**

The item started at 17.36

### **6. Short Debate**

The item started at 17.38

**NDM5168 Lynne Neagle (Torfaen):**

Softening the Blow

Mitigating the Impact of the Bedroom Tax in Wales.

The meeting concluded at 18:02

**The Assembly will sit again in Plenary at 13:30, Tuesday, 26 February 2013**