

Plenary

Meeting date:
Wednesday, 17 April 2013

Meeting time:
13:00

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Votes and Proceedings

(124)

1. Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

The item started at 13.00

Questions 1 – 3 and 5 – 10 were asked. Questions 4 and 13 were withdrawn. Question 8 was answered by the Deputy Minister for Social Services.

2. Questions to the Counsel General

No questions were tabled.

3. Questions to the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty

The item started at 13.51

Questions 1 – 3 and 5 – 8 were asked. Question 4 was transferred for written answer by the Minister for Local Government and Government Business. Question 15 was withdrawn.

4. Debate on the Environment and Sustainability Committee's Report on the Inquiry into marine policy in Wales

The item started at 14.40

NDM5206 Dafydd Elis-Thomas (Dwyfor Meirionnydd)

The National Assembly for Wales:

Notes the report of the Environment and Sustainability Committee on its inquiry into marine policy in Wales which was laid in the Table Office on 22 January 2013.

The motion was agreed in accordance with Standing Order 12.36.

5. Welsh Conservatives Debate

The item started at 15.30

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

A vote was taken on the motion without amendment:

NDM5205 William Graham (South Wales East)

The National Assembly for Wales:

1. Notes that the UK Government has made support available to local authorities in England to freeze council tax for a third successive year.
2. Further notes that the Scottish Government has made support available to local authorities in Scotland to freeze council tax for 2013/2014; and that such a freeze has been in place since 2008/2009.
3. Believes local authorities have a moral imperative to spend public money with care and prudence; ensuring council tax rates are as low as possible for residents.
4. Regrets the persistent refusal of the Welsh Government to utilise consequential funding to support local authorities to deliver a Wales-wide council tax freeze; placing communities at a disadvantage in comparison to those in England and Scotland.
5. Further regrets that, since 1997/1998, council tax bills in Wales have increased by 148 per cent and believes such crippling rises have placed undue pressure on hard-pressed households.

For	Abstain	Against	Total
12	0	42	54

The motion without amendment was not agreed.

The following amendments were tabled:

Amendment 1 – Aled Roberts (North Wales)

Delete point 4 and replace with:

Believes that council tax and local authority expenditure levels should be decided by local authorities, as part of a comprehensive localism agenda.

A vote was taken on Amendment 1:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
42	0	12	54

Amendment 1 was agreed.

Amendment 2 – Aled Roberts (North Wales)

Add as new point at end of motion:

Believes that council tax is not a progressive system of taxation and calls on the Welsh Government to examine whether new powers proposed by the Silk Commission could allow it to develop a fairer system of taxation to fund local authority expenditure.

A vote was taken on Amendment 2:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
15	0	39	54

Amendment 2 was not agreed.

A vote was taken on the motion as amended:

NDM5205 William Graham (South Wales East)

The National Assembly for Wales:

1. Notes that the UK Government has made support available to local authorities in England to freeze council tax for a third successive year.
2. Further notes that the Scottish Government has made support available to local authorities in Scotland to freeze council tax for 2013/2014; and that such a freeze has been in place since 2008/2009.
3. Believes local authorities have a moral imperative to spend public money with care and prudence; ensuring council tax rates are as low as possible for residents.
4. Believes that council tax and local authority expenditure levels should be decided by local authorities, as part of a comprehensive localism agenda.
5. Further regrets that, since 1997/1998, council tax bills in Wales have increased by 148 per cent and believes such crippling rises have placed undue pressure on hard-pressed households.

For	Abstain	Against	Total
27	0	28	55

As required by Standing Order 6.20 the Deputy Presiding Officer exercised his casting vote by voting against the motion, as amended. Therefore, the motion, as amended was not agreed.

6. Plaid Cymru Debate

The item started at 16.31

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

A vote was taken on the motion without amendment:

NDM5202 Jocelyn Davies (South Wales East)

To propose that the National Assembly for Wales:

Calls on the Welsh Government to:

- a) review the rules on local government procurement to make it easier for local firms and businesses to bid for work and services and to provide training courses for procurement officers in local authorities;
- b) work with local authorities to attract new employment opportunities and to maximise local employment when large infrastructure projects are planned; and
- c) provide greater resources for local authorities to maintain their road network in good condition.

For	Abstain	Against	Total
49	0	5	54

The motion without amendment was agreed.

7. Welsh Liberal Democrats Debate

The item started at: 17.27

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

A vote was taken on the motion without amendment:

NDM5204 Aled Roberts (North Wales)

To propose that the National Assembly for Wales:

1. Believes that for too long the funding system for long-term care in the UK has been inadequate, unfair and unsustainable and welcomes the UK Government's plans for reform.

2. Recognises that the need to secure a sustainable system for paying for care in Wales has never been more urgent, noting with concern that:

a) more than eight out of ten people aged 65 or over will need some care and support in their later lives and that the number of people in Wales aged 65 and over is projected to double by 2035;

b) there are currently estimated to be over 17,000 people with dementia in Wales and this figure is predicted to rise by 31% over the next 20 years;

c) according to consumer research by the Association of British Insurers, one in three people believe that 'care is free like the NHS' and that there is no point in planning for future long term care costs;

d) one in ten families will be hit with care costs of £100,000 or more in their lifetime, as highlighted by the Dilnot Commission.

3. Calls on the Welsh Government to outline the key principles that will underpin a new care funding system in Wales and to clarify the Barnett consequential that will result from the announcement on social care funding within the 2013 Spending Review.

4. Calls on the Welsh Government to use the Dilnot Commission recommendations as a basis for implementing urgent reform of funding for social care in Wales, including to:

a) ensure that people are protected from the high costs of their social care;

b) introduce a capped cost scheme and extend the means testing threshold;

c) extend the deferred payment scheme to all those who are required to pay for residential care;

d) introduce a National Eligibility Framework to improve consistency of support;

e) ensure that those entering adulthood with an existing care and support need are eligible for free state support to meet their care needs;

f) improve the availability and accessibility of information and support for people to understand their options and prepare and plan for care costs.

For	Abstain	Against	Total
16	0	37	53

The motion without amendment was not agreed.

The following amendments were tabled:

Amendment 1 – William Graham (South Wales East)

Insert as new point 1, and re-number accordingly:

‘Acknowledges the failure of successive Assembly Governments to deliver equitable and affordable support for vulnerable people with social care needs.’

A vote was taken on Amendment 1:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
12	0	42	54

Amendment 1 was not agreed.

Amendment 2 – Jocelyn Davies (South Wales East)

In point 1, delete all after ‘unsustainable’.

A vote was taken on Amendment 2:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
10	0	44	54

Amendment 2 was not agreed.

Amendment 3 – Jocelyn Davies (South Wales East)

Delete point 4 and replace with:

‘Calls on the Welsh Government to:

- a) Establish a fairer interim solution to charges in social care that reflects the needs of Wales within the current resources available.
- b) Ensure that the Social Services and Well-being Bill makes adequate financial provision for the long term support of family and other informal carers.
- c) Ensure that social care can be sustainably funded, and believes that securing a funding formula with the UK Government that reflects the needs of Wales will help provide the resources required to achieve this.’

A vote was taken on Amendment 3:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
10	0	44	54

Amendment 3 was not agreed.

As the Assembly did not agree the motion without amendment, and did not agree the amendments tabled to the motion, the motion was therefore not agreed.

Voting Time

The item started at 18.12

8. Short Debate

The item started at 18.17

NDM5203 Simon Thomas (Mid and West Wales):

Why not Dilnot? Paying for social care for the elderly in Wales.

The meeting concluded at 18:40

The Assembly will sit again in Plenary at 13:30, Tuesday, 23 April 2013