

Plenary

Meeting date:
Wednesday, 13 November 2013

Meeting time:
13:30

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Votes and Proceedings

(162)

1 Questions to the Minister for Natural Resources and Food

The item started at 13.30

Questions 1, 3 – 9, 11 and 12 were asked. Questions 2 and 10 were withdrawn.

2 Questions to the Minister for Housing and Regeneration

The item started at 14.16

Questions 1 – 5 and 7 – 15 were asked. Questions 11 and 12 were grouped together for answer. Question 6 was withdrawn.

3 Debate on the Children and Young People Committee's Report on the Inquiry into Attendance and Behaviour

The item started at 14.58

NDM5351 Ann Jones (Vale of Clwyd)

To propose that the National Assembly for Wales:

Notes the report of the Children and Young People Committee on the inquiry into Attendance and Behaviour, which was laid in the Table Office on 8 August 2013.

The motion was agreed in accordance with Standing Order 12.36.

4 Welsh Conservatives Debate

The item started at 15.45

NDM5353 William Graham (South Wales East)

To propose that the National Assembly for Wales:

1. Welcomes the UK Government's recent announcement on the recommendations contained within Silk Part 1 'Empowerment and Responsibility: Financial Powers to Strengthen Wales';
2. Notes that the introduction of Borrowing Powers for the Welsh Government should assist in the delivery of key infrastructure projects across Wales;
3. Further welcomes the statement that the NATO summit will be held at the Celtic Manor in 2014 and recognises the high economic benefit that hosting such an event should have on the Welsh economy;
4. Looks forward to hearing how the Welsh Government will use these opportunities to best effect for Wales.

The motion was agreed in accordance with Standing Order 12.36.

5 Welsh Liberal Democrats Debate

The item started at 16.47

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

A vote was taken on the motion without amendment:

NDM5354 Aled Roberts (North Wales)

To propose that the National Assembly for Wales:

1. Recognises that the SME sector accounts for 73% of all employment in rural areas and that small and medium sized enterprises play a vital role in the sustainable economic growth of rural areas, in stimulating innovation and advancement and helping to address the key challenges of unemployment, rural to urban migration and poverty.
2. Notes that lack of access to finance impedes the potential role of SMEs in rural economic development.
3. Notes the particular challenges in the uptake of apprenticeships in SMEs.

4. Notes that the digital divide in broadband and mobile coverage hinders the competitiveness and accessibility of businesses in rural areas.

5. Calls on the Welsh Government to:

a) examine a community bank structure to sustain the presence of local banks in rural communities, and to work with credit unions to increase lending to businesses;

b) work with businesses in the agricultural, renewable energy and tourism sectors to identify ways to overcome barriers to increasing the supply of rural apprenticeships;

c) make universal access to broadband an obligation for providers and to work with Ofcom and network operators to investigate the shared provision of infrastructure in rural areas to maximise coverage.

For	Abstain	Against	Total
5	0	49	54

The motion without amendment was not agreed.

The following amendments were tabled:

Amendment 1 – Elin Jones (Ceredigion)

Insert at end of point 2:

'and notes the inability of Finance Wales to offer finance to SMEs at competitive rates'

A vote was taken on Amendment 1:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
26	0	28	54

Amendment 1 was not agreed.

Amendment 2 – Elin Jones (Ceredigion)

Insert at end of point 3:

'and recognises the positive steps taken through the 2013/14 budget agreement on apprenticeships between Plaid Cymru and the Welsh Government.'

A vote was taken on Amendment 2:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
37	5	12	54

Amendment 2 was agreed.

Amendment 3 – Elin Jones (Ceredigion)

Add as new point 4 and renumber accordingly:

Regrets the negative impact on the rural economy of the mis-selling of interest rate hedging products by high street banks.

A vote was taken on Amendment 3:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
54	0	0	54

Amendment 3 was agreed.

Amendment 4 – William Graham (South Wales East)

Insert as new point 4 and renumber accordingly:

Further notes the points detailed in the Enterprise and Business Committee report on apprenticeships in rural areas.

A vote was taken on Amendment 4:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
54	0	0	54

Amendment 4 was agreed.

Amendment 5 – Elin Jones (Ceredigion)

Add as new point 5 and renumber accordingly:

Believes that the cost of fuel in rural areas has a negative impact on the rural economy, and regrets that the UK Government's application for an extension to the Rural Fuel Rebate did not include any Welsh areas.

A vote was taken on Amendment 5:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
37	17	0	54

Amendment 5 was agreed.

Amendment 6 – William Graham (South Wales East)

Insert as new point 5 and renumber accordingly:

Notes that effective rural transport infrastructure is a lifeline for rural communities and essential for stimulating economic development and tackling rural isolation.

A vote was taken on Amendment 6:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
54	0	0	54

Amendment 6 was agreed.

Amendment 7 – William Graham (South Wales East)

Insert as new point 5 and renumber accordingly:

Recognises the burden of business rates on rural SMEs and calls on the Welsh Government to introduce further business rate relief for small businesses across Wales.

A vote was taken on Amendment 7:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
26	0	28	54

Amendment 7 was not agreed.

Amendment 8 – Elin Jones (Ceredigion)

Insert as new sub-point 5b) and renumber accordingly:

‘examine the benefits to rural SMEs of establishing a publicly owned, arm's length, not-for dividend business bank, to offer finance at competitive rates to Welsh SMEs.’

A vote was taken on Amendment 8:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
37	5	12	54

Amendment 8 was agreed.

Amendment 9 – Lesley Griffiths (Wrexham)

Delete sub-point 5c.

A vote was taken on Amendment 9:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
28	0	26	54

Amendment 9 was agreed.

As amendment 9 was agreed, amendment 10 was deselected.

A vote was taken on the motion as amended:

NDM5354 Aled Roberts (North Wales)

To propose that the National Assembly for Wales:

1. Recognises that the SME sector accounts for 73% of all employment in rural areas and that small and medium sized enterprises play a vital role in the sustainable economic growth of rural areas, in stimulating innovation and advancement and helping to address the key challenges of unemployment, rural to urban migration and poverty.
2. Notes that lack of access to finance impedes the potential role of SMEs in rural economic development.
3. Notes the particular challenges in the uptake of apprenticeships in SMEs and recognises the positive steps taken through the 2013/14 budget agreement on apprenticeships between Plaid Cymru and the Welsh Government.
4. Regrets the negative impact on the rural economy of the mis-selling of interest rate hedging products by high street banks.
5. Further notes the points detailed in the Enterprise and Business Committee report on apprenticeships in rural areas
6. Believes that the cost of fuel in rural areas has a negative impact on the rural economy, and regrets that the UK Government's application for an extension to the Rural Fuel Rebate did not include any Welsh areas.
7. Notes that effective rural transport infrastructure is a lifeline for rural communities and essential for stimulating economic development and tackling rural isolation.
8. Notes that the digital divide in broadband and mobile coverage hinders the competitiveness and accessibility of businesses in rural areas.
9. Calls on the Welsh Government to:
 - a) examine a community bank structure to sustain the presence of local banks in rural communities, and to work with credit unions to increase lending to businesses;
 - b) examine the benefits to rural SMEs of establishing a publicly owned, arm's length, not-for dividend business bank, to offer finance at competitive rates to Welsh SMEs.
 - c) work with businesses in the agricultural, renewable energy and tourism sectors to identify ways to overcome barriers to increasing the supply of rural apprenticeships;

For	Abstain	Against	Total
42	0	12	54

The motion as amended was agreed.

Voting Time

The item started at 17.49

6 Short Debate

The item started at 17.53

NDM5352 Kirsty Williams (Brecon and Radnorshire): A Public Inconvenience – Why Public Toilets are important

The meeting concluded at 18:16

The Assembly will sit again in Plenary at 13:30, Tuesday, 19 November 2013