

Plenary

Meeting date:
Wednesday, 28 March 2012

Meeting time:
13:30

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Votes and Proceedings

(57)

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

The item started at 13.30.

The first 10 questions were asked.

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

The item started at 14.18.

The first 8 questions were asked.

3. Motions to elect Members to committees

The item started at 14:59.

NDM4956 Rosemary Butler (Newport West)

To propose that the National Assembly for Wales, in accordance with Standing Order 17.14, elects Dafydd Elis-Thomas (Plaid Cymru) as a member of the Enterprise and Business Committee in place of Leanne Wood (Plaid Cymru).

NDM4957 Rosemary Butler (Newport West)

To propose that the National Assembly for Wales, in accordance with Standing Order 17.14, elects Lindsay Whittle (Plaid Cymru) as a member of the Public Accounts Committee in place of Leanne Wood (Plaid Cymru).

The Motions were agreed, in accordance with Standing Order 12.36.

4. Debate on the Enterprise and Business Committee's report on the Regeneration of Town Centres

The item started at 15.00.

NDM4952 Nick Ramsay (Monmouth)

The National Assembly for Wales:

Notes the Report of the Enterprise and Business Committee: The Regeneration of Town Centres which was laid in the Table Office on 25 January 2012.

Note: The response of the Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage to the report was laid in the Table Office on 21 March 2012.

The Motion was agreed, in accordance with Standing Order 12.36.

5. Welsh Conservatives Debate

The item started at 15:58.

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

A vote was taken on the motion without amendment:

NDM4954 William Graham (South Wales East)

To propose that the National Assembly for Wales:

1. Calls on the Welsh Government to review its policies to ensure greater emphasis is placed on empowering local communities;
2. Acknowledges the role a Wales-wide Council Tax freeze would have played in financially empowering households;
3. Notes the role which enhancing small business rate relief would play in empowering businesses across Wales, allowing them to expand and hire new staff;
4. Encourages local government to act in a way which is transparent, open and accountable, which will motivate local communities to become more involved in local democracy;
5. Notes that funding schools directly will empower them to set their own priorities; and
6. Further notes the role decentralised planning policy can play in the empowerment of communities.

For	Abstain	Against	Total
12	0	40	52

The motion without amendment was not agreed.

The following amendments were tabled:

Amendment 1 – Peter Black (South Wales West)

Insert at end of point 1:

‘and calls for any review to include consideration of the introduction of a Community Bill of Rights to give local communities additional powers in the planning system, housing development and local environment’

A vote was taken on Amendment 1:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
17	9	27	53

Amendment 1 was not agreed.

Amendment 2 – Jane Hutt (Vale of Glamorgan)

Delete points 2, 3 and 4, replace with the following, and renumber accordingly:

Notes that the Welsh Government has provided 1.3% more funding to local authorities than England, which will empower Welsh councils to freeze council tax, if they so choose.

Notes the provisions of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, which seeks to enhance local democratic accountability and engagement in Wales.

A vote was taken on Amendment 2:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
36	0	17	53

Amendment 2 was agreed.

Amendment 3 – Peter Black (South Wales West)

Delete point 2 and replace with:

‘Believes that a sustainable approach to keeping council tax low, which could be delivered by responsible governance from local councils not top-down funding streams, would help financially empower households across Wales.’

As amendment 2 was agreed, amendment 3 was deselected.

Amendment 4 – Jocelyn Davies (South Wales East)

Delete point 2

As amendment 2 was agreed, amendment 4 was deselected.

Amendment 5 – Peter Black (South Wales West)

Insert at end of point 3:

‘but believes this must be underpinned by wider reform of business rates, including ending overly large rises each year’

As amendment 2 was agreed, amendment 5 was deselected.

Amendment 6 – Peter Black (South Wales West)

Add as new point after point 4, and renumber accordingly:

Believes that local communities would become further involved in local democracy if local government was strengthened by:

- a) introducing the Single Transferable Vote for local elections;
- b) introducing a power of general competence to empower local councils;
- c) reducing the number of top-down controls on local authorities, such as statutory duties; and
- d) auditing the best and worst examples of open and transparent government across Wales in order to spread this best practice.

A vote was taken on Amendment 6:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
14	0	39	53

Amendment 6 was not agreed.

Amendment 7 – Jocelyn Davies (South Wales East)

Delete point 5

A vote was taken on Amendment 7:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
41	0	12	53

Amendment 7 was agreed.

Amendment 8 – Peter Black (South Wales West)

Insert at end of point 5:

‘and calls for a full review of school accountability, particularly investigating local accountability and appropriate leadership for governing bodies’

As amendment 7 was agreed, amendment 8 was deselected.

Amendment 9 – Jocelyn Davies (South Wales East)

Delete point 6

A vote was taken on Amendment 9:

For	Abstain	Against	Total
36	0	17	53

Amendment 9 was agreed.

A vote was taken on the motion as amended:

NDM4954 William Graham (South Wales East)

To propose that the National Assembly for Wales:

1. Calls on the Welsh Government to review its policies to ensure greater emphasis is placed on empowering local communities.
2. Notes that the Welsh Government has provided 1.3% more funding to local authorities than England, which will empower Welsh councils to freeze council tax, if they so choose.
3. Notes the provisions of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, which seeks to enhance local democratic accountability and engagement in Wales.

For	Abstain	Against	Total
36	0	17	53

The motion as amended was agreed.

6. Plaid Cymru Debate

The item started at 16.59.

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

A vote was taken on the motion without amendment:

NDM4953 Jocelyn Davies (South Wales East)

To propose that the National Assembly for Wales:

Believes that the UK Government's proposal to introduce regional pay for the public sector is unjust for workers, damaging to the Welsh economy and detrimental to business.

For	Abstain	Against	Total
36	0	17	53

The motion without amendment was agreed.

Voting Time

Voting Time started at 17.57.

7. Short Debate

The item started at 18.01.

NDM4951 Sandy Mewies (Delyn):

Drink/Drive Rehabilitation Courses.

The continuing need to ensure that these courses are provided in Wales following the success of previous courses in reducing re-offending rates.

The meeting concluded at 18:18.

The Assembly will sit again in Plenary at 13:30, Tuesday, 24 April 2012