



Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru **The National Assembly for Wales**

Y Pwyllgor Amgylchedd a Chynaliadwyedd **The Environment and Sustainability Committee**

Dydd Mercher, 5 Mawrth 2014
Wednesday, 5 March 2014

Cynnwys **Contents**

Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon
Introductions, Apologies and Substitutions

Craffu ar Waith y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol a Bwyd—Sesiwn Graffu Ariannol
Scrutiny of the Minister for Natural Resources and Food—Financial Scrutiny

Craffu ar Waith y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol a Bwyd—Sesiwn Graffu Gyffredinol
Scrutiny of the Minister for Natural Resources and Food—General Scrutiny

Papurau i'w Nodi
Papers to Note

Cofnodir y trafodion hyn yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynndi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal,
cynhwysir trawsgrifiad o'r cyfieithu ar y pryd.

These proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee.
In addition, a transcription of the simultaneous interpretation is included.

Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol **Committee members in attendance**

Mick Antoniw

Llafur
Labour

Keith Davies	Llafur (yn dirprwyo ar ran Joyce Watson) Labour (substituting for Joyce Watson)
Yr Arglwydd/Lord Elis-Thomas	Plaid Cymru (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) The Party of Wales (Committee Chair)
Russell George	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Llyr Gruffydd	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Julie James	Llafur Labour
Julie Morgan	Llafur Labour
William Powell	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats
Antoinette Sandbach	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives

**Eraill yn bresennol
Others in attendance**

Alun Davies	Aelod Cynulliad, Llafur (y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol a Bwyd) Assembly Member, Labour (the Minister for Natural Resources and Food)
Dr Christianne Glossop	Y Prif Swyddog Milfeddygol Cymru Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales
Dean Medcraft	Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government
Matthew Quinn	Cyfarwyddwr yr Amgylchedd a Datblygu Cynaliadwy, Llywodraeth Cymru Director, Environment and Sustainable Development, Welsh Government
Andrew Slade	Cyfarwyddwr Amaeth, Bwyd a'r Môr, Llywodraeth Cymru Director, Agriculture, Food and Marine, Welsh Government

**Swyddogion Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru yn bresennol
National Assembly for Wales officials in attendance**

Alun Davidson	Clerc Clerk
Elfyn Henderson	Y Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service
Catherine Hunt	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Martin Jennings	Y Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service

*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 09:33.
The meeting began at 09:33.*

**Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon
Introductions, Apologies and Substitutions**

[1] Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas: Lord Elis-Thomas: I welcome Members to

Croesawaf Aelodau i'r pwyllgor y bore yma ac, wrth gwrs, y Gweinidog a'i dîm. Mae Keith Davies gyda ni, a chawsom ymddiheuriadau oddi wrth Joyce Watson. Mae Vaughan Gething yn parhau gyda ni yn yr ysbryd, fel petai, er waethaf y ffaith ei fod yn Weinidog yn y Llywodraeth. Rhyw ddiwrnod fe gawn ni fwy o Aelodau yn y Cynulliad Cenedlaethol a bydd pob pwyllgor yn llawn. Ar y nodyn hwnnw, carwn dynnu eich sylw at yr adroddiad rhagorol hwn, adroddiad y Comisiwn ar Ddatganoli yng Nghymru, ac yn arbennig at yr adrannau sy'n berthnasol inni. Mae'r argymhellion a wneir ym mhennod wyth o'r adroddiad gan y Comisiwn ar Ddatganoli yng Nghymru, o dan gadeiryddiaeth Paul Silk, yn cyfateb yn agos iawn i'r casgliadau a'r argymhellion a wnaed gan y pwyllgor hwn wrth inni ystyried datganoli pwerau cydsynio ynni. Rwyf yn falch iawn bod yr argymhellion hyn wedi cael eu gwneud. Gobeithiaf y bydd yr Ysgrifennydd Gwladol a Llywodraeth y Deyrnas Unedig yn sicrhau eu bod yn cael eu derbyn ac y bydd gweithredu arnynt mewn modd amserol. Fy mhryder i yw y caiff yr argymhellion hyn eu gohirio, fel bu bron â digwydd i'r adroddiad cyntaf, neu hyd yn oed eu hanghofio. Felly, rwy'n credu ei bod yn ddyletswydd arnom ni, fel pwyllgor sydd wedi hyrwyddo'r syniadau hyn, nid yn unig i gadw'r cynigion hyn yn fyw ond i sicrhau eu bod yn cael eu gweithredu ar y cyfle cynharaf. Gyda chytundeb y pwyllgor, felly, rwy'n dymuno ysgrifennu at yr Ysgrifennydd Gwladol presennol yn Swyddfa Cymru yn mynegi cefnogaeth y pwyllgor i argymhellion y comisiwn ar ddatganoli. Rwyf hefyd yn bwriadu ysgrifennu at Brif Weinidog Cymru i'w longyfarch ef a'i Lywodraeth ar lwyddo i berswadio'r comisiwn i ddilyn y polisi y mae wedi ei ddilyn, gyda chefnogaeth y pwyllgor hwn.

[2] Mae agweddau eraill ar bennod 8 sydd hefyd yn cyd-fynd â'r hyn rydym wedi ei glywed gan randdeiliaid yn ystod ein gwaith a'n hymchwiliadau. Hoffwn pe baem yn gallu trafod y materion hyn ymhellach â chi fel cydweithwyr ar y pwyllgor â chyda rhanddeiliaid eraill, o bosibl, gan wneud peth gwaith ychwanegol yn y meysydd hyn yn ystod tymor yr haf. A ydych chi'n cytuno â'r awgrym hwnnw, fy mod yn ysgrifennu cwpl o lythyrau caredig a chwrtais, yn ôl fy arfer?

the committee this morning and, of course, the Minister and his team. Keith Davies has joined us this morning, and we have received apologies from Joyce Watson. Vaughan Gething is still with us in spirit, as it were, despite the fact that he is now a Minister within the Government. Someday, we will have more Members of the National Assembly and every committee will have a full membership. On that note, I would like to draw your attention to this excellent report, the report of the Commission on Devolution in Wales, and in particular to the sections that are pertinent to our work. The recommendations made in chapter eight of the report by the Commission on Devolution in Wales, chaired by Paul Silk, resemble closely the conclusions and recommendations made by this committee in considering the devolution of energy consenting powers. I am delighted that these recommendations have been made. I hope that the Secretary of State and the UK Government will ensure that they are accepted and that they will be implemented in a timely manner. My concern is that these recommendations may be delayed, as was almost the case with the first report, or even forgotten entirely. Therefore, I believe that it is incumbent upon us, as a committee that has promoted these ideas, not only to keep a spotlight on these recommendations, but to ensure that they are implemented at the earliest possible opportunity. With the committee's agreement, therefore, I wish to write to the current Secretary of State in the Wales Office, voicing the committee's support for the commission on devolution's recommendations. I also intend to write to the First Minister, congratulating him and his Government on persuading the commission to adopt the policy, with the encouragement of this committee.

There are other aspects of chapter 8 that also resonate with what we have heard from stakeholders during our inquiries and work. I would like to be able to discuss these issues further with you, as committee colleagues, and with other stakeholders, doing further work in these areas during the summer term. Are you in agreement with the suggestion that I write a few kind and courteous letters, as is my want?

[3] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I am afraid that it would not be with the unanimous agreement of the committee. The report was only published this week. I have not had an opportunity to consider all of its recommendations in full. I am aware that certain caveats were expressed on the devolution of energy consenting in relation to the report, and I was one of the people who expressed concerns over that. So, I would welcome an opportunity to be able to consider the report in more detail before an official committee response is published.

[4] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** It was not my intention to turn the letter into an official committee response to the report, but I think that it would be appropriate, given that the report is more or less word for word what was in our original agreed report on energy policy and consent. However, you have made your point, and we will certainly discuss this. I have not noticed any caveats in this report, and, certainly, that was not the impression that was given to me when I discussed these matters with a member of the said commission who is associated with me in another place, and who was formerly very closely associated with the most excellent Welsh Conservative Party in this institution. I think that I better stop now, as I do not want to delay the Minister any further.

09:38

Craffu ar Waith y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol a Bwyd—Sesiwn Graffu Ariannol

Scrutiny of the Minister for Natural Resources and Food—Financial Scrutiny

[5] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Mae'n bleser gennyf graffu ar waith y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol a Bwyd y bore yma, gan gychwyn â sesiwn graffu ariannol. Pwrpas y sesiwn hon yw craffu ar faterion ariannol mewn-flwyddyn o fewn portffolio'r Gweinidog. Rydym wedi derbyn papur briffio ac awgrymiadau pellach gan y staff ymchwil sydd yma heddiw; croeso arbennig i Martin, sy'n ymuno â ni.

Lord Elis-Thomas: It is a pleasure for me to open this scrutiny session with the Minister for Natural Resources and Food, starting with a financial scrutiny session. The purpose of this is to look at in-year financial issues within the Minister's portfolio. We have received a briefing paper and further suggestions from the research staff, who are with us this morning; I extend a warm welcome to Martin, who is joining us here.

[6] **Weinidog, a hoffech chi gyflwyno eich tîm?**

Minister, would you like to introduce your team?

[7] **The Minister for Natural Resources and Food (Alun Davies):** We have a real feast for the committee this morning, in terms of the officials that we have brought with us. Dean Medcraft, head of operations and our finance guru, is here to support me during the questions on financial scrutiny. Christianne Glossop is chief veterinary officer for Wales, and Matthew Quinn is director of environment in the Welsh Government. I have further officials who will support me at other periods during this morning's session.

[8] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Wrth agor y sesiwn, hoffwn ddiolch am y wybodaeth gyllidol a'r papur a baratowyd, ac fel mae athrawon yn dweud wrth fyfyrwyr mewn ysgolion a phrifysgolion, mae'n welliant yn bendant ar y llynedd. Felly, rwy'n croesawu hynny'n fawr iawn.

Lord Elis-Thomas: In opening the session, I would like to thank you for the financial information and the paper that has been prepared, and as teachers tend to say to students in schools and universities, it is certainly an improvement on last year. So, I welcome that very warmly.

[9] **Alun Davies:** Diolch yn fawr am

Alun Davies: Thank you very much for that.

hynny.

[10] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Antoinette, would you like to begin?

[11] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Yes. Minister, there have been substantial transfers from your revenue account into your capital account. I know from recent written answers that you have given me that one of the casualties of your department has been the Wales Rural Observatory, where a decision was taken on 6 November to close it. I wondered where that was reflected in your supplementary budget and where you have identified that as a cut in your paper.

[12] **Alun Davies:** I think that you make a mistake, if you do not mind me saying so, in terms of some of the analysis there. We have taken decisions on spending that have been reported and discussed previously at other times here and elsewhere. The Wales Rural Observatory provides research work and support for us. There are a number of different areas where research budgets are held—some research budgets are held jointly between me and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, for example. We have the capacity to provide us with the research that we require. The means by which we acquire that research will change over time. However, I think that you are mistaken and have an erroneous understanding of where we are if you believe that this decision will affect the quality or quantity of research and data available to us as a Government.

[13] **Antoinette Sandbach:** The Wales Rural Observatory has obviously been providing data to the Government—

[14] **Alun Davies:** It has been one source of data.

[15] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Yes, for a number of years, but that source of data is being lost. What I am asking is where that is reflected in your budget. It is quite clear, from the fact that you have given me the written answers, that it falls under your remit. I am asking you to show me where that is reflected in the budget line.

[16] **Mr Slade:** I am Andrew Slade, director of agriculture, food and marine, for committee members' benefit. The Wales Rural Observatory's predominant streams of funding have come through technical assistance as part of the rural development plan. We have had to make a number of arrangements in relation to the ending of the current programme. We are not in a position to make forward commitments under the old programme now, except in a number of specific areas through this transitional period. As part of this, new arrangements for provision of advice and research under the next programme are under current consideration. So, we have had to give people sufficient notice of intention to move money elsewhere. As the Minister says, we will ensure that we have a good research base for the new programme and that we are procuring that from a range of sources. So, I do not think that we are talking about the information provision reducing; it is just how we do that in future.

[17] **Antoinette Sandbach:** To clarify, is the Wales Rural Observatory closing or is this a formal process that you have undertaken in order to—

[18] **Mr Slade:** We have given notice to end that contract, which effectively draws in a number of academics from across Wales and, indeed, draws on input from elsewhere in the UK. However, we are refreshing our arrangements for the future in relation to the new programme.

[19] **Antoinette Sandbach:** However, you are unable to say where that research and evidence base will come from, at this point in time.

[20] **Mr Slade:** It will be part of the process of commissioning under the new programme,

as for other elements of the programme as we move forward.

[21] **Alun Davies:** We commission research from the most appropriate source and that will be from different sources at different times for different sorts of research. That is a process that Government follows year-on-year, and will continue to follow year-on-year.

[22] **Antoinette Sandbach:** If I could just move on to one further topic, which is *Phytophthora ramorum* and the extra—

[23] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** On a matter of order, it might be convenient for the committee, since you will be sitting with us later this morning, that Andrew's nameplate was put on the table. Perhaps Matthew would like to join him, and then everyone is at the table. [*Laughter.*]

[24] **Alun Davies:** I did say that the committee was having a feast this morning. [*Laughter.*]

[25] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** An additional microphone will appear shortly, but you are welcome to share. I know that Matthew is so softly spoken. [*Laughter.*]

09:45

[26] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Minister, you have allocated an extra £2.5 million from your budget towards *Phytophthora ramorum*, but you are currently restricting sales of *Phytophthora* infected larch, and again—[*Inaudible.*] Do you anticipate—[*Inaudible.*]—from sales of infected larch, and do you feel that that is a financially effective way to proceed when that process of not felling almost inevitably risks other species being infected and continual reinfection, as those trees stand dying, which might mean that you have further and greater problems? You risk, for example, the spread into Sitka spruce.

[27] **Alun Davies:** Not at all. We are following exactly the strategy that I outlined in November in terms of the way that we are dealing with *P. ramorum*. So, we are following exactly the strategy that we outlined there, which has been debated and discussed on a number of occasions. We are felling trees in a way that achieves our objectives in terms of disease management without flooding the market. We are attempting to ensure that there is a controlled flow of timber on to the market so that prices can be maintained and that markets can be found for that timber. The danger is that, if we simply went gung-ho into the countryside and felled every tree immediately and put all of our resources into doing that, we would collapse the market. We would not be able to ensure that that timber is used effectively and we would not then be able either to deal with the disease effectively, or to ensure a continued market for that timber. So, I think that it would be economically illiterate of us to follow any other strategy.

[28] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Sorry, but could you answer my question, which was, are you expecting to be repaid the £2.5 million from sales of the infected—

[29] **Alun Davies:** No. We are following precisely the strategy that we followed in November. There has been no change from that.

[30] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Thank you. Mick Antoniw, William Powell and Llyr Gruffydd are next.

[31] **Mick Antoniw:** Minister, I just want to ask you a little about the underspends within the bovine TB programme of the Welsh Government. There has obviously been a lot of evidence written recently about the approach that was adopted in England with regard to culling, as opposed to the vaccination, but there was a significant underspend. I was

wondering whether there is an explanation as to how that has come about and to what extent that impacts, or does not impact, on the policy. Could you outline the progress and the success of the vaccination policy, as opposed to the alternatives that there were at one stage?

[32] **Alun Davies:** I will ask the chief vet to answer some of those questions. However, as an overview of our approach to bovine TB, I will say that I made an oral statement on this matter to the National Assembly last week. Members will be aware that we have seen significant and substantial reductions in the incidence of bovine TB, as measured by the number of cattle slaughtered and the number of herds affected—33% and 23% respectively. That does not mean to say that we have turned any corners, or that we have the disease beaten in any way. I think that we have to be very careful not to overstate these matters. However, it does mean that we are making progress. I think that that is important to note and it is important to recognise.

[33] Mick, you highlighted there the culling versus vaccination situation. I think that it is a lot wider than that; it is not simply about culling versus vaccination. We have seen significant reductions in the incidence of bovine TB across the whole of Wales. There have been some exceptions in some parts of north Wales, but overwhelmingly, when you look at the disease picture, we are seeing reductions across all parts of the country. That has been achieved through a number of different control mechanisms in terms of movement testing, control of movements, and in terms of biosecurity, as well as other means.

[34] What we are doing is bearing down on the disease. I am not complacent and I am not relaxing in any way at all. I want to ensure that the progress that we have made is continued and will continue into the future. It would be wrong if we simply compared what was happening in Pembrokeshire with what has been happening in some parts of England, although I have to say that I found the incompetence of DEFRA on some of these matters quite breathtaking. We need to recognise that lessons need to be learnt from what we are doing in Wales and also from what is happening in England. However, the focus must be to continue to bear down on the disease to control it as a means to an end, which is to eradicate it.

[35] **Dr Glossop:** That is what we have been doing all along: building a programme and adding to the national control measures, such as the annual testing regime. I should say that I think that that is the absolute foundation stone of what we are trying to achieve. You have to get ahead of disease before you can start dealing with it properly. So, the annual testing regime, I believe, has made a significant contribution to the figures.

[36] In terms of the vaccination programme, we need to recognise that it is in one very small area of Wales—288 sq km. Although it is the biggest vaccination effort across the whole of Great Britain, it is still relatively small. Looking at the figures within the intensive action area, and comparing the TB incidence and the number of reactors slaughtered to the broader picture across Wales, you will see that it is broadly the same. So, in no way are we able to attribute any of the effect of the reduction in incidence that we have reported in the past few days to the vaccination programme. Indeed, I would suggest to you that it is way too early to demonstrate a benefit as a result of vaccination. The important thing, as the Minister has indicated, is to continue building the programme on that foundation of annual testing, and taking a more regional approach as the work of the TB epidemiology project starts to provide us with evidence of the different disease pictures in the different parts of Wales.

[37] **Alun Davies:** There was also the underspend.

[38] **Dr Glossop:** The Minister also wants me to address the underspend. As you know, we have had interesting discussions around this table over the last few years about the difficulty in trying to understand the TB budget, because we have different budget lines. Over

the past few years we have overspent on TB compensation. This year we have actually identified that we will be coming in slightly under budget on our TB compensation. In the past, the eradication element of the budget has helped to offset the overspend on the compensation budget. This year—actually, for the first time in a long time—we are not looking to the eradication budget to provide us with support to help with the overspend on compensation. Having said that, we are now in an unusual position where we have not spent the full amount of the budget. That is where the TB epidemiology project will give us the evidence to carry on building and investing that money wisely into the future. However, it does mean that, for this year, we will come in having underspent on the TB eradication part of the budget.

[39] **Mick Antoniw:** So, what happens to the actual underspend amount, which is around £5 million? Was that being designated for other areas of work, or is it just going into the general kitty?

[40] **Alun Davies:** I am not sure that ‘kitty’ is a term that I would use—[*Laughter.*]—unless some people regard these things as a lunch fund.

[41] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** You are denying that you have—[*Inaudible.*]

[42] **Alun Davies:** I deny all such matters and any other such terms that might be used from time to time. [*Laughter.*] There has been a process, and I think that a more elegant way to describe it is a re-prioritisation process within our departmental budget. You saw elements of that in the supplementary budget, and also in terms of the enhancements we have made recently in terms of funding other areas of work.

[43] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** I call William Powell, and then I will call Julie James and Llyr Gruffydd.

[44] **William Powell:** Minister, continuing on the theme of bovine TB, in your paper there was reference to a £5 million provision that was associated with TB EU-related income. I wonder whether you could give us a little bit more context for that sum of money, and also whether the Welsh Government has had to adopt any different procedures in order to qualify for that additional funding.

[45] **Alun Davies:** The funding that you referred to, which I think is £4.8 million in total, is the money that we receive from the Commission when our plan is accepted by it. That funding has been received and forms a part of the overall programme to control and eradicate bovine TB. I do not know whether you wish to add anything to that, Christianne.

[46] **Dr Glossop:** Yes; thank you, Minister. The year 2010 was the first year that we had an eradication plan approved by the Commission. One of the benefits of having a plan approved, of course, is that you can then claim money from the disease eradication fund in Europe. That fund is not just for TB, and is not just for the United Kingdom. Each year, the Commission looks at the plan that we submit, and we submit that in conjunction with England and Northern Ireland. The Commission is keen to see us each year increasing the level of measures that we are adopting, and that is a really good process for us to focus on what we are doing. Then, each year, it decides how much money it will allocate to the UK as a whole. There is then quite a complicated formula as to how exactly we calculate our share of that. For the 2014 plan—that is, the plan that we are delivering now—we are able to claim against TB skin tests—the number of those that we carry out—and the number of gamma interferon blood tests that we carry out. We can claim on the culture of samples taken from TB reactors, and also we can claim for money paid as compensation to farmers. There is a set value attributed to each of those, and we have to contribute 50% of the total ourselves. The calculation is rather complicated. Each year, the Commission decides on a different amount of

funding to attribute to that, so trying to—. We do not want to overestimate the amount that we can claim for this year, and yet we need to take account of it, because it is very useful money to feed into the process.

[47] **William Powell:** So, is the money obtained retrospectively at the end of the year, when all of these data are in and have been evaluated?

[48] **Dr Glossop:** Yes, the money is claimed retrospectively, and so we are in a continual process. Right now we are submitting the 2015 plan, we are claiming on the 2013 plan, and we are delivering on the 2014 plan. That is the kind of rolling process.

[49] **William Powell:** It is just a tad complex, then.

[50] **Dr Glossop:** Yes, I am afraid so.

[51] **William Powell:** Moving back to the issue that you raised earlier regarding the marginal underspend this year on the compensation for the slaughter of cattle, what further assumptions are being made regarding the move to tabular valuation in terms of the implications of that?

[52] **Alun Davies:** We are not making any assumptions on that basis yet, because we have not taken a decision on that matter. It is subject to consultation.

[53] **William Powell:** Finally, the fact that there has been a consistent underspend for the reasons that have been explained—will that have implications for the allocation of the TB eradication programme budget for the coming year?

[54] **Alun Davies:** Those budgets have been set and agreed by the National Assembly, as you are aware. At the moment, those are the budgets that we have in place. They were clearly informed by experience and by knowledge. If we need to make any changes to those budgets during the financial year, then we will do so in the normal way.

[55] **Julie James:** Good morning, everyone. Just to follow up one point that I think that Dr Glossop was making, to make sure I understood it: you were talking about the epidemiology and the studies, and some of us are very anxious to see the vaccination programme extended if the evidence shows that it is worth it. What sort of timescale are you looking at in terms of knowing whether that is a viable prospect, and how, Minister, are you going to structure your budget to make sure that you have the money available if such an expansion should be viable?

[56] **Alun Davies:** We have funds available, as outlined in the budget, to achieve what we believe is possible at present. Clearly, the way in which we address bovine TB will develop and probably change over the years—Christianne has already outlined the work in terms of the specialists who we have approached to look at the disease on a regional basis. Russell George raised an issue last week about a particular strain of bovine TB in his own constituency. It might well be that the way that we address that in Montgomeryshire is different to the way that we address the disease in Pembrokeshire. This is a dynamic budget, and it is subject to that level of dynamic management. So, where we believe that there is capacity to do more, and where we have the resources available, we will do so, but we do need to keep a clear vision of what we want to achieve within the resources available to us.

10:00

[57] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Rwyf eisiau dechrau **Llyr Gruffydd:** I want to start by welcoming trwy groesawu'r cyhoeddiad a wnaethoch yn the recent announcement that you made on ddiweddar ynglŷn ag ariannu neu gynnig funding or providing additional funds for

cymorth ychwanegol i bysgotwyr. O ran eglurder, rwy'n tybio ei bod yn rhy hwyr yn y flwyddyn ariannol bresennol i dynnu'r arian o'r gyllideb hon. A yw hynny'n iawn?

[58] **Alun Davies:** Na; bydd yn digwydd eleni.

[59] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Os felly, mae hawl gennyf ofyn y cwestiwn nesaf, siŵr o fod, sef hyn: pryd y bydd mwy o fanylion ar gael a pha fath o symiau rydym yn sôn amdanynt? Efallai y gallech ymhelaethu ychydig ynglŷn â hynny.

[60] **Alun Davies:** Nid wyf eisiau camarwain pobl. Efallai y bu i ti glywed fy nghyfweiliad ar Radio Cymru ddoe. Mae si wedi bod amboutu y math o gynllun cymorth a fydd ar gael i bysgotwyr. Rydym yn gwybod fod pysgotwyr wedi colli lot fawr o offer o gwmpas yr arfordir, ac felly rydym yn ystyried gyda chymdeithasau pysgotwyr Cymru ar hyn o bryd y math o gynllun a fydd gennym, a byddwn yn gwneud yn siŵr y bydd pysgotwyr yn gallu gwneud cais amdano. Felly, mae'n anodd heddiw ymhelaethu gormod ynglŷn â sut mae hynny yn mynd i weithio, oherwydd nid ydym wedi dod i gytundeb gyda Chymdeithas Pysgotwyr Cymru. Rwy'n hapus iawn i ysgrifennu at y pwyllgor pan fyddwn wedi dod i gytundeb gyda'r gymdeithas ynghylch pa fath o gynllun a fydd gennym, a faint o adnoddau y byddwn yn disgwyl gwario ar y cynllun. Rwy'n hapus iawn i ysgrifennu at y pwyllgor pan fydd y manylion hynny ar gael.

[61] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Byddai hynny'n ddefnyddiol iawn; diolch yn fawr. Fodd bynnag, o ran y gyllideb, a ydych yn ymwybodol o ba ran o'r gyllideb y byddwch yn tynnu arni?

[62] **Alun Davies:** Bydd yn dod mas o'r gyllideb bresennol. Bydd yn dod mas o gyllideb Andrew.

[63] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Hynny yw, nid fyddwch yn gorfod symud arian o gyllideb arall i gyfro'r swm?

[64] **Alun Davies:** Na, bydd yn dod allan o *existing budgets*.

fishermen. Just for clarity, I assume that it is too late in the current financial year to draw the money from this budget. Is that the case?

Alun Davies: No; it will happen this year.

Llyr Gruffydd: If so, I have the right to move on to my next question, I suppose, which is this: when will we have more detail available about this, and what kinds of sums are we talking about? Perhaps you could expand a little on that.

Alun Davies: I do not want to mislead people. Perhaps you heard my interview yesterday on Radio Cymru. There has been a rumour about the kind of support scheme that will be available to fishermen. We know that fishermen have lost a lot of equipment around the coast, and we are therefore considering with the Welsh fishermen's associations at present the kind of scheme that we will have, and we will be making sure that fishermen can apply for it. Therefore, it is difficult today to elaborate too much on how that will happen, because we have not come to an agreement with the Welsh Fisherman's Association. I am very happy to write to the committee when we have reached agreement with the association about what kind of scheme we will have, and how many resources we expect to spend on the scheme. I am very happy to write to the committee when we have those details.

Llyr Gruffydd: That would be most useful; thank you. However, in terms of the budget, are you aware of what part of Andrew's budget.

Alun Davies: It will come out of the current budget. It will come out of your budget, Andrew.

Llyr Gruffydd: That is, you will not have to shift funds from another budget to cover the amount?

Alun Davies: No, it will come from existing budgets.

[65] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Ar hyn, y sefyllfa yw nad wyt ti fel Gweinidog, mwy na'r pysgotwyr, eto'n gwybod beth fydd y gost mewn gwirionedd. Fel rwy'n deall, maent yn darganfod mwy o gêr sydd wedi ei ddifetha drwy'r amser—hyd yn oed rŵan. Felly, tan dy fod yn gwybod beth fydd y swm maent yn debygol o fod yn sôn amdano, nid wyt ti'n gallu dod i benderfyniad. Fodd bynnag, pan fydd y wybodaeth honno ar gael, bydd ymateb a chawn wybodaeth a gallwn eich holi ymhellach ar hynny.

[66] **Alun Davies:** Rwy'n hapus iawn i ysgrifennu atoch. Rydych wedi esbonio'r sefyllfa yn well na fi.

[67] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Fyddwn i ddim yn honni hynny—dim ond Cadeirydd wyf i; chi yw'r Gweinidog.

[68] **Alun Davies:** Ar hyn o bryd, mae'r broses asesu yn mynd yn ei blaen. Unwaith mae'r broses wedi dod i ben, byddwn yn gwneud penderfyniad. Unwaith mae hynny wedi cael ei wneud, byddaf yn gwneud datganiad ac yn ysgrifennu at y pwyllgor i gynnig mwy o fanylder ar hynny.

[69] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Rwy'n falch ein bod yn deall ein gilydd. Mae'n ddrwg gen i, Llyr.

[70] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Dim o gwbl. I aros ar y thema forol, roeddwn eisiau holi ychydig am yr achosion o ddifrod ar yr arfordir yn ddiweddar oherwydd y tywydd eithafol. Clywsom gan y Prif Weinidog ddoe fod cadarnhad wedi dod gan Lywodraeth San Steffan ynglŷn â *consequential* i Gymru pe bai gwariant ychwanegol yn dod o Lywodraeth Prydain. Byddwn yn tybio ei bod yn rhy gynnar i wybod faint a phryd ac yn y blaen, ond a oes awgrym y bydd y *consequential* hwnnw yn cael ei ddynodi i daclo'r *issue* hwn, neu a fydd yn mynd i gronfa ganolog y Llywodraeth?

[71] **Alun Davies:** Mae'n rhaid cofio beth ddywedodd y Prif Weinidog ddoe. Mae cytundeb, pe bai'r Trysorlys yn gwario yn ychwanegol, y bydd *consequentials* i Gymru. Ysgrifennais at Owen Patterson ddechrau neu ganol Chwefror yn gofyn iddo, ar ôl clywed

Lord Elis-Thomas: On this, the position is that you as a Minister do not yet know what the cost will be, any more than fishermen know. As I understand it, they are discovering more gear that has been destroyed all of the time—even now. Therefore, until you know what the amount that they are likely to be talking about is going to be, you are not able to come to a decision. However, when that information is available, there will be a response and we will receive that information and we can question you further on that.

Alun Davies: I am very happy to write to you. You have explained the situation better than I have.

Lord Elis-Thomas: I would not make that claim—I am simply the Chair; you are the Minister.

Alun Davies: At present, the assessment process is progressing. Once the process has finished, we will make a decision. Once that has been done, I will make a statement and writing to the committee to offer more detail on that.

Lord Elis-Thomas: I am pleased that we understand each other. I apologise, Llyr.

Llyr Gruffydd: Not at all. To remain on the marine theme, I wanted to ask a little about the cases of damage on the coast recently due to the extreme weather. We heard from the First Minister yesterday that confirmation has come from the Westminster Government on a consequential for Wales should there be any additional expenditure from the UK Government. I would assume that it is too early to know how much and when and so on, but is there any suggestion that the consequential will be designated for tackling this issue, or will it go into the Government's central fund?

Alun Davies: We must remember what the First Minister said yesterday. There is an agreement that if the Treasury spends additional funds, there will be consequentials for Wales. I wrote to Owen Patterson at the beginning or the middle of February asking

datganiad gan Brif Weinidog Prydain, a oes arian ychwanegol i'w gael. Ysgrifennais at DEFRA yn gofyn pa fath o arian ychwanegol a oedd ar gael, a dweud fy mod yn disgwyl gweld *consequentials* i Gymru. Nid wyf wedi cael ateb i'r llythyr eto. Y wybodaeth yr wyf wedi'i gael hyd yn hyn yw nad oes gwariant ychwanegol yn Lloegr. Rydym yn gwybod fod Prif Weinidog Llywodraeth y Deyrnas Unedig wedi ymateb i'r *chaos* mae ei Lywodraeth ef wedi bod yn gyfrifol amdano trwy wneud datganiadau di-rif yn y wasg, ond heb unrhyw wariant ychwanegol. Nid wyf wedi cael unrhyw wybodaeth y bydd gwariant ychwanegol gan DEFRA oherwydd hyn.

[72] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Petai yna *consequential*, a phetai arian yn dod i Lywodraeth Cymru, a fydddech yn gwneud cais am yr arian hwnnw i fynd tuag at gynyddu eich cyllideb chi?

[73] **Alun Davies:** Petai yna *consequential*, a phetai arian yn dod, os felly, buaswn yn disgwyl bod—. Mae'n anodd i mi; mae'r *consequential* yn mynd at y Gweinidog Cyllid, fel yr ydych yn gwybod yn iawn, ac rydych yn gwybod yn iawn fy mod yn ei ffeindio'n anodd iawn i beidio â themtio fy hun mewn i drwbl. Yn amlwg, mae trafodaeth wedi bod, dim *just* aboutu'r difrod i'r amddiffynfeydd môr, ond beth sydd wedi digwydd ar yr arfordir ac o gwmpas yr arfordir—y rheilffyrdd, ffyrdd a phan mae'n dod i *assets* twristiaeth, a phob math o ddifrod sydd wedi cael ei wneud. Rwy'n credu bod rhaid inni edrych, fel Llywodraeth, ar ba adran fydd yn gyfrifol am ymateb i hynny. Rydych wedi gweld ymateb trwof i a thrwy adran yr economi, ac mae hynny'n ymateb i sicrhau ein bod yn ymateb i'r anghenion fel ag y maent ac i anghenion gwahanol fel ag y maent.

[74] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Diolch. Y cwestiwn olaf am 'nawr, os gaf i: yn dilyn y ffaith bod arian ychwanegol wedi gorfod cael ei ffeindio i ymateb i'r achlysuron yr ydym wedi'u profi'n ddiweddar, a ydy hynny'n mynd i olygu y byddwch, efallai, yn edrych i gynyddu'r cyllidebau hynny yn y blynyddoedd sydd i ddod er mwyn gwneud mwy o waith yn y maes hwnnw?

him, after hearing a statement from the UK Prime Minister, whether additional funding was available. I wrote to DEFRA asking what kind of additional funding was available, and said that I expected to see *consequentials* for Wales. I have not received a reply to the letter yet. The information that I have received so far is that there is no additional expenditure in England. We know that the UK Prime Minister has responded to the chaos that his Government had been responsible for by making countless statements in the press, but without any additional expenditure. I have not received any information that there will be additional expenditure by DEFRA because of this.

Llyr Gruffydd: If there were to be a *consequential*, and if funding were provided to the Welsh Government, would you make a bid for that funding to increase your budget?

Alun Davies: If there were a *consequential*, and if there was money coming, if so, I would expect that—. It is difficult for me; the *consequential* will go to the Minister for Finance, as you know very well, and you know very well that I find it very difficult to refrain from tempting myself into trouble. Evidently, there has been discussion, not just about the damage to the coastal defences, but also what has happened on the coastline and around the coastline—the railways, roads and when it comes to tourism assets and so forth, and all kinds of damage that has happened. I think that we have to look, as a Government, at what department would be responsible for responding to that. You have seen my response and that of the department for the economy, and that response is to ensure that we respond to the needs as they are and to the different needs as they exist at present.

Llyr Gruffydd: Thank you. The final question for now, if I may: following on from the fact that additional funds have had to be found to respond to the extreme weather events recently, does that mean that you will, perhaps, look to increase those budgets in ensuing years in order to do more work in that area?

[75] **Alun Davies:** Wrth gwrs, yr ydym yn barod wedi gwneud hynny. Fel yr ydych yn gweld, y gwahaniaeth polisi, os ydych yn leicio, rhyngom ni yma yng Nghymru a beth sy'n digwydd dros Glawdd Offa yw ein bod yn derbyn bod newid hinsawdd yn digwydd; rydym yn derbyn ei fod yn digwydd heddiw; rydym yn derbyn bod impact o hynny yn mynd i fod arnom ni fel cymuned cenedlaethol a bod yn rhaid i ni, fel Llywodraeth, ymateb i hynny. Felly, rydym wedi bod, ers rhai blynnydoedd, yn cynyddu faint yr ydym yn ei wario ar amddiffynfeydd llifogydd a môr, fel yr ydych wedi'i ddisgrifio. Rwyf wedi cael cytundeb yn awr gyda'r Gweinidog Cyllid ein bod yn gallu gwario bron i £4 miliwn yn ychwanegol eto i sicrhau ein bod yn gallu, yn awr—a byddaf yn gwneud datganiad ar hyn yn nes ymlaen heddiw—talu costau trwsio'r amddiffynfeydd a oedd wedi cael eu difrodi yn ystod mis Rhagfyr a mis Ionawr yn llawn, felly mi fydd hynny'n digwydd.

[76] **Llyr Gruffydd:** £8.1 miliwn yw'r cyfanswm.

[77] **Alun Davies:** £7.263 miliwn, *actually*, achos mae yna *co-financing* y tu mewn i hynny. Mi fydd yna ddatganiad llawnach ar hynny yn nes ymlaen heddiw. Rydym yn gwario pob dim sy'n rhaid i ni ei wario i sicrhau bod awdurdodau lleol, o Gonwy i lawr i sir Benfro, yn cael yr adnoddau a'r arian sydd ei angen arnynt i sicrhau bod yr amddiffynfeydd sydd wedi cael eu difrodi yn ystod y ddeufis diwethaf yn cael eu trwsio.

[78] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Diolch.

[79] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Julie James and Julie Morgan on this; who would like to go first?

[80] **Julie James:** Just on this point, Minister, you will know that I live on Gower, and, as a result of these extreme weather events, we have had a large number of seabird deaths—over 300 seabirds washing up on the beaches of Gower alone over the last few weeks. I was very alarmed to be told that Natural Resources Wales is cutting the funding for data collection on seabirds. In particular, it is stopping the 40-year study of seabirds on Skomer, right at the time when those data seem most important, both for understanding the problems that we have had with the extreme weather events and, indeed, for our marine and fisheries strategy, which you announced last June, when you said that data were a prime part of understanding good environmental conditions for our seas. I wonder whether you could comment on that decision and whether it is, in fact, happening, because I have only been told it and I have only second-hand data, and, if so, what we can do about it.

Alun Davies: We have done that already, of course. As you have seen, the policy difference between us in Wales, if you like, and what is happening across Offa's Dyke is that we accept that climate change is happening; we accept that it is happening now; we accept that there is going to be an impact on us as a nation and that we, as a Government, have to respond to that. So, for some years, we have been increasing how much we spend on coastal defences and flood defences, as you have described. I have had an agreement with the Minister for Finance that we can spend nearly £4 million in additional funds to ensure that we can—I will be making a statement on this later on today—pay the costs of repairing the defences that were damaged in December and January fully, so that will happen.

Llyr Gruffydd: That was £8.1 million in total.

Alun Davies: £7.263 million, actually, because there is a co-financing element within that. There will be a full statement on that later today. We are spending everything that we need to spend to ensure that local authorities, from Conwy down to Pembrokeshire, receive the resources and money that they need to ensure that the defences that have been damaged over the last two months are repaired.

Llyr Gruffydd: Thank you.

[81] **Alun Davies:** I think that there has been over-reporting of some of these decisions. I understand that Natural Resources Wales has decided not to renew a single seabird monitoring contract with a university—I think that it is the University of Sheffield. It is only worth £12,000, in total. The Joint Nature Conservation Committee is responsible for most of the monitoring and data collection. That is continuing, so there has been a change in a relatively small part of that, but that does not mean at all that the sort of monitoring that you describe, which is absolutely essential and necessary, as I referred to last June, is not continuing and will not continue into the future. I think that there has been a misrepresentation of that, and I also think that there has been a misunderstanding of that. I am grateful to you for allowing me to set the record straight this morning.

[82] **Julie James:** Thank you, Minister; that is really good to hear. Not now, as it is not appropriate, but perhaps another time we could look at some detail of what the data sets are exactly, and perhaps have a discussion of our marine and fisheries policy, so that we can understand exactly what data sets we are collecting, and also get that publicly known.

[83] **Alun Davies:** Absolutely. The JNCC collects data sets on all the different seabirds in the area, not just the guillemots, which form a part of the survey that this university was undertaking on behalf of NRW.

[84] **Julie Morgan:** My question goes back to the funding response to the extreme weather. I just wondered what your reaction was, Minister, to the Prime Minister's statement that money was no object.

[85] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Yes. I do not want to create excitement on my right hand here by allowing this question. I am sure that you will circumspect, Minister.

[86] **Alun Davies:** I will be very circumspect, and I will try to respond in a generous way.

[87] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** I think that that may be taking it a bit too far. [*Laughter.*]

[88] **Alun Davies:** Okay. I will try to follow the Chair's injunction.

[89] Watching the television yesterday, you saw the human impact on people in Somerset of some of the storm damage and the floods that we have seen. I think that, for all of us on all sides of this chamber, our hearts will go out to the people who have suffered some appalling personal loss over the last few weeks and months. It is a matter of great disappointment that their plight, if you like, went unreported and was ignored for so long, and that they were put in that position. I think that the Prime Minister, probably acting out of the best of motives, seems to have believed that you respond to storm, flood and climate change with press releases, press conferences and photo opportunities rather than the substance of policy. If I were asked to provide advice, which clearly I have not been, I would say to him that a press release is an inadequate response to the suffering that these people have endured over the last few weeks and months. If he wants to make right for the chaos that his Government has overseen over the last weeks and months in England, he will change course and make the investments and not simply take advantage of a photo opportunity.

[90] **Julie Morgan:** Thank you, Minister. I feel that that was a fair question because it was something that was widely discussed and debated in the context of what money was available. Just to go back now, you said that you will be making an oral statement, or a statement, today about—

[91] **Alun Davies:** A statement.

[92] **Julie Morgan:** You think that that amount of money—£7.73 million—will be enough to cover what is needed.

[93] **Alun Davies:** I do. It is important to recognise the way that we have managed these events over the last few weeks and months. We have the investment programme, which we have described and discussed in this committee and elsewhere on different occasions. That is supported and supplemented by European funding. Members may remember that when I was a Deputy Minister I took decisions that we will continue to support flood defences where you have infrastructure and economic reasons to do so. So, I expect and would anticipate that that will continue into the new funding period.

[94] In terms of where we are, it was clear to me, after visiting Conwy and Denbighshire in December, that significant damage had been done to the coastal environment. It became clear to me again, visiting Aberystwyth and listening to the reports that I was receiving in early January, that there had been another episode of significant damage to our coastal defences. I believed that the right thing to do, as a Minister, was to provide a level of security to people living along the coastline. For that reason, I asked NRW to immediately conduct a review of the damage done to our coastal defences in totality across the whole country. The report that NRW gave me, I published last month. It outlined a number of different instances of damage to coastal defences, to coastal infrastructure and coastal assets.

10:15

[95] We have worked very closely with NRW and local authorities over the last two months or so to identify what that damage is and where funding is best sought to repair that damage. Clearly, we have heard announcements from the Directorate for Economy, Science and Transport. My colleague, Edwina Hart, has stepped in to ensure that coastal tourism assets are repaired in good time for the new summer season. There will be other issues to resolve in terms of infrastructure, whether it be infrastructure utilities or roads and railways, and we need to address those—I recognise that.

[96] In terms of my responsibility for coastal defences, we have identified that there is £8 million that needs to be funded very quickly in order to maintain the repair programme that local authorities and NRW have said is necessary. We have now found all of the money that is required to make good those repairs. The amount of money that we are providing to NRW and to local authorities is £7.263 million. That represents 100% of the funding required to protect properties and businesses, and then a lower intervention rate to provide protection for other areas. The intervention rate and the co-financing rate that we are announcing at the moment are far in excess of what we would normally do. We are doing that because we recognise the severity of the storms that we faced and the requirement and need to respond fully to the difficulties facing local government and NRW. We also recognise, Chair, the immense good work that NRW, local authorities, the emergency services, volunteers and communities working together have done over the last few weeks and months to get people through these potential emergencies. We are seeing potentially up to 70,000 properties protected in Wales as a consequence of our investment and that will continue.

[97] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** A gaf i ofyn yn benodol ynglŷn â'r £5 miliwn a gyhoeddwyd ar gyfer Bae Colwyn yn sir Conwy, lle'r wyf yn byw, wrth gwrs? A ydy'r arian yn ychwanegol at y cyllid yr ydych wedi sôn amdano rwan, neu a fydd effaith ar brosiectau eraill yn dilyn blaenoriaethu'r gwaith hwn ym Mae Colwyn?

Lord Elis-Thomas: May I ask specifically about the £5 million announced for Colwyn Bay in the county of Conwy, where, of course, I reside? Is this additional funding, in addition to the funding that you have just mentioned, or will there be an impact on other projects as a result of prioritising this work in Colwyn Bay?

[98] **Alun Davies:** Nid yw'r £5 miliwn i Fae Colwyn yn rhan o'r datganiad yr wyf wedi ei wneud heddiw. Mae'r arian yn ychwanegol i hynny, ond nid yw'n ychwanegol i'r gyllideb. Felly, mae'n rhan o'r rhaglen fuddsoddi a oedd gennym ac rydym wedi symud ymlaen â'r rhaglen fuddsoddi. Mae'n bwysig cydnabod y gwaith sydd wedi ei wneud ar draws Bae Colwyn, y Rhyl, Borth a manau eraill, Casnewydd—

Alun Davies: The £5 million for Colwyn Bay is not part of the statement that I made today. It is additional to that, but it is not additional to the budget. Therefore it is part of the investment programme that we had and we have moved forward with that investment programme. It is important to acknowledge the work that has been done across Colwyn Bay, Rhyl, Borth and other places, Newport—

[99] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Tywyn. **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Tywyn.

[100] **Alun Davies:** —a Thywyn hefyd, wrth gwrs, ac i weld bod y buddsoddiadau hyn wedi cael impact ac wedi diogelu pobl, bywydau ac eiddo.

Alun Davies: —and Tywyn as well, of course, to see that those investments have had an impact in terms of safeguarding people, lives and property.

[101] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Diolch yn fawr. **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Thank you very much.

[102] Russell George is such a patient person. He could have been setting a budget for Powys, but he is with us today.

[103] **Russell George:** Thank you, Chair; I would rather be here, I think. Thank you for your last question, Chair. With regard to the £5 million for Colwyn Bay, you made an announcement on that £5 million last week, I think. So, that is not additional money—I am just confirming this; that is from within the budget. What projects will potentially be postponed or will not come forward as a result of that reallocation?

[104] **Alun Davies:** None. The Colwyn Bay project is part of a much wider project to protect that part of the north Wales coast. We have already funded part of that project and this money is to complete that project. It is to complete, is it not?

[105] **Russell George:** [*Inaudible.*]

[106] **Alun Davies:** Yes, it is approval of the next and, I think, final stage of the Colwyn Bay improvements. So, that is going to go ahead and will not be impacted by any of the announcements that I have made today. The announcements that I am making today are on additional funds to be made available to local authorities and NRW to fund the repairs that are required as a consequence of the storms of the last two months. I am doing that through the sustainable futures main expenditure group.

[107] **Russell George:** So, if that £5 million that was announced last week was already part of a previous package, what did you announce last week that was new or additional?

[108] **Alun Davies:** We announced that we were going ahead with it. You will be aware that a number of questions were being raised about whether—the question that you just raised actually—projects would be delayed or cancelled as a consequence of the storm damage. We are going ahead with a number of significant projects—Borth, for example, would be another one a bit closer to the Powys coastline [*Laughter.*]

[109] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** It does have a coastline on the River Dyfi, in fairness. [*Laughter.*]

[110] **Alun Davies:** Machynlleth plays the same role for Russell as Trieste played for the Habsburgs, let us say; it is important to recognise that.

[111] So, we are going ahead with these significant investments, and we will continue to do that. We will be able to outline what our investment programme is, and I think that people recognise that the investments that we have made have had an impact already, and we hope that they will continue to have an impact as we adapt to the pressures that will be created by climate change.

[112] **Russell George:** What I am not clear on is the £5 million announced last week. I understand that you are confirming the works in Colwyn Bay. So, you are saying that, prior to last week, those works were not confirmed.

[113] **Alun Davies:** They were planned, but, clearly, until you press the button, there are concerns. For example, you know and I know that we have limited resources available to us and, when there are additional demands placed on those resources, something like the £7 million that we are discussing at the moment, there is concern, and I think that it was reported in the north Wales press that this might mean that the Colwyn Bay work would not go ahead. These concerns, I know, existed within the community. So, we made a clear announcement last week that not only will Colwyn Bay not be deprioritised or stopped, we are pressing the button to ensure that it actually goes ahead, and we start work in this financial year. So, it was very much confirmation that that work will start and will be completed.

[114] **Russell George:** Okay, thank you; I understand. You mentioned—I think that it was in response to Julie’s questions—the additional £7.26 million, but we know that £8.1 million is needed for immediate repairs and another £3 million for the damage caused by the storms, but you also said that you were meeting that full cost. Can you just explain and clarify that?

[115] **Alun Davies:** I will ask Dean to come in to clarify any matters that I am unable to clarify. Essentially, we fund these investments alongside local authorities and NRW. We fund them at an intervention rate, so we will fund a percentage of them. On this occasion, we have increased the intervention rates, because we recognise the damage that has been done and the importance of moving ahead very quickly on these matters. So, we are funding all projects, whether there is a risk to life, to property or to business at 100%. So, we are paying 100% of all those costs. Other intervention rates are 75% and 50%, so we are funding all of those at enhanced intervention rates. Dean, could you come in?

[116] **Mr Medcraft:** As the Minister said, it is 100% for property and it is in negotiations with those local authorities. The enhanced rates of 75% and 50% for landfill sites and roads are much higher than we would normally provide. Again, this is in conjunction with the local authorities and Natural Resources Wales.

[117] **Russell George:** Just to be clear on this, the figure of £8.1 million has been identified for immediate repairs. Are you saying that you disagree with the fact that they are immediate repairs?

[118] **Alun Davies:** No, we are not disagreeing at all. We are saying that they are immediate repairs; they need to be done immediately. However, we are saying that coastal defences are owned largely by local authorities, but otherwise by NRW. The Welsh Government’s responsibility is to provide funding to those bodies in order to sustain and manage, and to build, invest and construct, those defences. We will provide that funding at different rates. On this occasion, we are saying that we are providing 100% for all of those defences that are appropriate for the defence of property and business and to protect life. We are saying that we are doing that at 100%. For those coastal defences that protect

infrastructure, roads and railways, we are providing an intervention rate of 75%. What would the normal rate be?

[119] **Mr Medcraft:** About 50%.

[120] **Alun Davies:** It would normally be about 50%. We are increasing that to 75%. For other sites, that would not have the same resonance in terms of infrastructure and property, we are providing support at a rate of 50%. For most of those investments, we would not actually provide any funding at all, so it is a significantly enhanced and increased intervention rate to provide support and funding for local authorities and NRW to provide reassurance to their communities that they will be kept safe by this Government.

[121] **Russell George:** May I ask what the total amount of capital spend is for flood and coastal management for this financial year and for the next financial year?

[122] **Mr Medcraft:** I will need to come back to you on that.

[123] **Alun Davies:** It is already in the budgets and you have already agreed those budgets.

[124] **Russell George:** Would it be possible to have that information before the end of this session?

[125] **Alun Davies:** Yes, but they have already been published in the budgets.

[126] **Russell George:** Okay.

[127] **Keith Davies:** Bore da. Weinidog, gwnaethoch sôn eich bod yn cydymdeimlo â phobl yn Lloegr ar ôl edrych ar y newyddion neithiwr. Mae Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru wedi newid y mapiau llifogydd, yn sicr yn ardal Llanelli. Mae ystad o dai enfawr yn cael ei hadeiladu ar yr hen Barc y Strade sydd yn awr efallai mewn perygl o lifogydd. Beth sy'n mynd i ddigwydd? Yr hyn rwyf wedi darllen yw, cyn belled ag y mae'r cwmnïau yswiriant yn y cwestiwn, na fydd unrhyw dai a adeiladwyd ar ôl 2009 yn cael unrhyw help o gwbl. Pa drafodaethau rydych chi wedi cael â'r cwmnïau yswiriant hyn neu'r Llywodraeth ganolog?

Keith Davies: Good morning. Minister, you mentioned that you sympathise with people in England having seen the news last night. NRW has changed the flood maps, certainly in the Llanelli area. A huge housing estate is being built on the old Stradey Park which is now perhaps at risk of flooding. What is going to happen? What I have read is that, as far as the insurance companies are concerned, houses built after 2009 will not have any help at all. What discussions have you had with these insurance companies or central Government?

[128] **Alun Davies:** Nid wyf am drafod unrhyw brosiect penodol, na unrhyw beth i wneud â'r Scarlets. [*Chwerthin.*]

Alun Davies: I do not want to discuss any specific project, or anything to do with the Scarlets. [*Laughter.*]

[129] Mae cytundebau wedi bod yn eu lle ers rhai blynnyddoedd erbyn hyn. Rydych chi, Keith, yn sôn am y prosiect *reinsurance* sy'n rhan o'r Bil dŵr sy'n mynd gerbron Senedd San Steffan ar hyn o bryd. Mae cytundeb wedi cael ei wneud rhwng y cwmnïau yswiriant, DEFRA a Llywodraethau Cymru, yr Alban a Gogledd Iwerddon i sicrhau bod yswiriant i gael ar gyfer eiddo a thai a gafodd

Agreements have been in place for some years now. Keith, you are talking about the reinsurance project that is part of the water Bill that is currently before the Westminster Parliament. An agreement has been reached between the insurance companies, DEFRA and the Governments of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to ensure that insurance is available for property and houses that were

eu hadeiladu cyn 2009. Dyna'r cytundeb presennol. Ers hynny, rhoddwyd arweinyddiaeth glir i awdurdodau lleol am y math o gytundebau cynllunio y dylent eu caniatáu. Mae'n fater i awdurdodau lleol wneud y penderfyniadau ar sail y cyngor maent yn ei gael gan Asiantaeth yr Amgylchedd, neu NRW erbyn hyn. Mae'n fater i'r Gweinidog cynllunio benderfynu sut y mae'r broses a'r system hon yn gweithredu. Fodd bynnag, wrth i'n gwybodaeth gryfhau ac i fwy o ddata fod ar gael inni, mae'n glir fod y cyngor y mae NRW yn ei ddarparu i awdurdodau lleol yn bwysig fel rhan o'r broses gynllunio. Byddwn yn bryderus iawn pe bai awdurdodau lleol yn cytuno ar ganiatâd cynllunio ar gyfer datblygiadau lle mae perygl o lifogydd difrifol.

built before 2009. That is the current agreement. Since then, there has been clear guidance to local authorities on the type of planning applications that they should consent to. It is a matter for local authorities to make decisions, based on the advice they receive from the Environment Agency or NRW as is the case now. It is a matter for the planning Minister to decide how the process and this system should operate. However, as our information strengthens and as more data is available to us, it is clear that the advice that NRW provides to local authorities is important as part of the planning process. I would be extremely concerned if local authorities were to give planning consent for developments where there is a serious flood risk.

[130] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Minister, I am very grateful that, following our last scrutiny session, you have included lines in your budget on policy delivery. One of the BELs that you have indicated is the CAP reform agenda ICT implementation—

[131] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** 'BELs' are budget expenditure lines.

[132] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Yes.

[133] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** I just thought that I would tell the audience, which is, no doubt, being entertained by—sorry, go ahead.

[134] **Antoinette Sandbach:** There are two areas that I wish to look at. The first is around fly-grazing and rural-proofing, for which you have set aside £570,000. Is that rural-proofing in relation to all Welsh Government legislation or only in relation to your department?

[135] **Alun Davies:** That is in relation to this department.

[136] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Therefore, is each department responsible for its own rural-proofing budget line under its own departmental expenditure?

[137] **Alun Davies:** How other departments structure their budgets is a matter for them and not a matter for me.

[138] **Antoinette Sandbach:** So, is the answer to that that you are not aware?

[139] **Alun Davies:** It is a matter for other departments and Ministers; it is not a matter for me. That is the answer to the question.

[140] **Antoinette Sandbach:** In terms of rural-proofing, we know that it has been indicated that it cuts across all departments and that it is integrated into the Welsh Government. As the Minister who is primarily responsible for rural areas, how do you ensure that that rural-proofing takes place if you are not aware whether or not there is provision for it in other departmental budgets?

10:30

[141] **Alun Davies:** Rural-proofing is not something that happens in a vacuum or in the abstract. The delivery of services, for example, in rural Wales happens in a different way. Services are delivered in different ways in different parts of the country, from a small-town environment or inner-city environment to a rural environment. That happens as part of the normal course of business. I think that Members should be wary of looking at one budget line and then over-interpreting that. The budget line for rural-proofing is, in essence, a budget line for a piece of work that is continuing at the moment. If Members believed that the whole of rural-proofing, for example, in the delivery of our department is simply in one element, they would be very badly misled. It is a part of everything that we do.

[142] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I accept that, because you deal with natural resources, but what I am looking at is rural-proofing across other departments, and what I am asking you about is the co-ordination between your department and other departments. For example, we have the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill going through the Assembly at the moment, and there is no rural-proofing assessment available in relation to that. What I am asking is: how are you ensuring that that element is being considered when, for example, the Wales Rural Observatory, which would look at delivery of services and do that kind of research, is not now available to you, due to the cuts that have taken place there? How are you ensuring that the impact on rural communities is taken into account?

[143] **Alun Davies:** I would suggest to you very gently that the greatest impact on rural communities has been the effect of the disastrous economic policies of the United Kingdom Government, and a consequence of that. Let me say, in terms of the question that you are trying to ask, clearly, matters on the social services Bill are for the Deputy Minister for Social Services, not for me. Matters on the delivery of education are for the Minister for Education and Skills, and not for me. Matters on the delivery of local government and public services will be for those Ministers.

[144] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** I think that you have made the point. You are beginning to sound like a repeat of what the late George Thomas used to say when he described himself as the Minister for everything. You are the Minister for—

[145] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Nothing. [*Laughter.*]

[146] **Alun Davies:** I am not the Minister for everything.

[147] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Can I—

[148] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** I am sorry—I am afraid that we are out of time.

[149] **Antoinette Sandbach:** It is just about the ICT on the CAP. I only wanted to ask because obviously, as you are aware, there were considerable problems in England in relation to the transfer from historic to area-based entitlements. A lot of that was linked with the ICT. Are you satisfied that the £291,000 is sufficient to avoid those problems in Wales, and have you been co-ordinating with DEFRA to find out what the mistakes were in England in order to avoid those problems here in Wales?

[150] **Alun Davies:** Yes and yes.

[151] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** I see that Andrew Slade is smiling. He might want to say something.

[152] **Mr Slade:** I apologise, Chair, having been—

[153] **Alun Davies:** Responsible for all of those troubles. [*Laughter.*]

[154] **Mr Slade:** I thoroughly reject any notion of that. I was, however, working in DEFRA at the time, and remember only too well the issues that Ms Sandbach sets out. I can assure the committee that we are learning from the experience of elsewhere, not just England, in terms of managing this transformation. I would also add that the budget line is merely the precursor to a wider programme of CAP reform and IT change that we will be making, but making to our existing IT platform, rather than trying to introduce a brand new system at the same time as a new reform. That was one of the difficulties faced by colleagues in England.

[155] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** We are all, I am sure, very glad that you are working for us—or for him.

[156] **William Powell:** Minister, I would like to return for the moment to the theme of flood defence. I wonder whether you have any update for this committee on European regional development funding for this current year or the time to come in relation to flood defence expenditure?

[157] **Alun Davies:** We have accessed funding from the ERDF in order to support and sustain the investment programme that we are taking forward on flood and coastal risk management. That is something that I think the Member is aware of. Is it up to something like £40 million, Matthew? It is something like that, on current terms. Clearly, as a Deputy Minister at the time, I took decisions on the sort of funding projects that would be available in the new round of programmes and I think that I was very clear then—I certainly hope that I was—that we would continue to fund flood defence where there is a clear economic or infrastructure case for doing so.

[158] **William Powell:** Thank you for reiterating that. This is a final question from me, because I am conscious of the passage of time, but time is also ticking away fast on any potential bid that could go to the European solidarity fund. I wonder, Minister, whether you could give any update on the progress or otherwise of a bid that could involve some of the expenditure that Wales is involved in. I know that this has been promoted by a number of the Welsh MEPs—Jill Evans and Derek Vaughan—and also the Liberal Democrat group in Brussels. However, whether or not there is anything positive to report would be good news from you.

[159] **Alun Davies:** I did have a series of letters followed by press releases from a number of different sources in January on this matter. I have written to Owen Paterson and I have said to the United Kingdom Government that the Welsh Government would support a bid to the EU solidarity fund if the UK, as the member state, felt that that was appropriate. Clearly, the UK has the opportunity to structure a bid dependent on the damage caused not only at a UK level, but also on a regional basis within the United Kingdom. As I said in a previous answer, I have written to DEFRA on these matters and I am awaiting a reply.

[160] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Mae gennyf un cwestiwn am broses y gyllideb cyn i ni dorri am egwyl fer a symud i'n craffu mwy cyffredinol.

Lord Elis-Thomas: I have one question on the budgetary process, before we break and move to our more general scrutiny session.

[161] Yn y gyllideb atodol, roedd cyfraniad o £90 miliwn o bob adran i'r gronfa refeniw wrth gefn, oherwydd cyllid ychwanegol yn cael ei roi yn y gwasanaeth iechyd. Cyfraniad eich adran chi oedd y mwyaf ond un. Sut cafodd y penderfyniadau hyn eu gwneud, a beth oedd effaith hynny ar fwriadau gwariant

In the supplementary budget, there was a contribution of £90 million from each department to the revenue reserve, because of additional funding being given to the health service. Your department's contribution was the largest but one. How were these decisions made, and what was the impact of that on

eraill o fewn yr adran?

[162] **Alun Davies:** Fel mae'r pwyllgor yn ymwybodol, rydym ni fel Llywodraeth wedi bod yn rheoli'r cyllidebau mewn ffordd ddeinamig yn rheolaidd. Y broses yw fy mod i'n cyfarfod â'r Gweinidog Cyllid, ac rydym yn trafod sefyllfa ein cyllideb ni a chyllideb y Llywodraeth yn ei gyfanrwydd. Bydd y pwyllgor yn ymwybodol bod Llywodraeth Cymru wedi gweld toriadau difrifol iawn gan Lywodraeth San Steffan i gyllideb ein Llywodraeth. Mae hynny'n meddwl fod pob un ohonom fel Gweinidogion wedi ystyried ein sefyllfaedd cyllidebol a pha fath o gyfraniadau y gallwn eu gwneud i sicrhau bod rhaglen y Llywodraeth yn ei chyfanrwydd yn gallu symud ymlaen.

[163] Felly, rwyf wedi bod yn ystyried gyda swyddogion ein sefyllfa gyllidebol y tu mewn i'r adran ac rwyf wedi gwneud y penderfyniad fy mod yn gallu rhyddhau adnoddau i'r canol, ac rwyf wedi ysgrifennu at y Gweinidog Cyllid i ddweud hynny. Rwy'n parhau i drafod gyda'r Gweinidog Cyllid i sicrhau ein bod yn gallu diogelu ambell ran o'r gyllideb. Rydym wedi bod yn trafod llifogydd ar hyn o bryd, ac yr ydym hefyd wedi bod yn trafod buddsoddiadau yn y Gymru wledig, er enghraifft. Yr RDP nesaf fydd yr RDP mwyaf yn ein hanes. Rydym yn mynd i fod yn gwario bron £1 biliwn dros y cyfnod i sicrhau buddsoddiadau mewn amaeth ac yn yr economi wledig.

[164] Felly, rwyf wedi diogelu rhannau o'r gyllideb, ac, fel rydych wedi gweld yn y gyllideb atodol, rydym wedi gwneud penderfyniadau, lle mae'n bosibl, i symud arian yn ôl i'r canol i sicrhau bod yr arian yn cael ei ddefnyddio.

[165] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Yr anhawster sydd gennym ni, fel pwyllgor, ac mae'n sicr ei fod yn wir am bwyllgorau eraill yn y Cynulliad sy'n ceisio craffu ar gyllidebau ac yn ceisio sefydlu'r cysylltiad rhwng lefelau gwariant a phenderfyniadau polisi, yw, pan fydd newid fel hyn yn digwydd, mae'r berthynas honno'n cael ei thorri. Felly, fel Gweinidog, dweud wyt ti yn y diwedd mai blaenoriaethau'r Gweinidog sy'n penderfynu, mewn trafodaeth â'r Gweinidog Cyllid, yr hyn sy'n digwydd.

other expenditure within the department?

Alun Davies: As the committee knows, we as Government have been managing budgets in a dynamic way, regularly. The process is that I meet the Minister for Finance and we discuss where our budget and the Government's budget in its entirety are. The committee will know that the Welsh Government has seen severe cuts from the Westminster Government to our Government's budget. That means that all of us as Ministers have considered our budgetary situations and what contributions we can make to ensure that the programme for government in its entirety can move forward.

Therefore, I have been considering with my officials the budgetary situation within the department and I have made the decision that I can release resources to the centre, and I have written to the Minister for Finance to say that. I continue to discuss this issue with the Minister for Finance to ensure that we can safeguard some parts of the budget. We have been discussing floods at present, and we have also been discussing investment in rural Wales, for example. The next RDP will be the biggest RDP in our history. We will be spending nearly £1 billion over the period to ensure investments in agriculture and in the rural economy.

So, I have safeguarded parts of the budget, and, as you have seen in the supplementary budget, we have made decisions, where possible, to move money back to the centre to ensure that that money is used in that way.

Lord Elis-Thomas: The difficulty for us as a committee, and I am sure that it is true of other committees in the Assembly that are scrutinising budgets and trying to make those links between expenditure levels and policy decisions, is that, when there is such a change, that relationship is broken. Therefore, you are saying as the Minister that it is the ministerial priorities that decide, in negotiation with the Minister for Finance, what happens. I think that it would be useful if we could get some more information about

Rwy'n meddwl y byddai'n ddefnyddiol pe bai modd inni gael mwy o wybodaeth am effaith y penderfyniadau hynny pan maent yn digwydd. Rydym yn ceisio dilyn—fel yr oeddech yn garedig iawn yn cyfeirio ato yn ein trafodaeth ynglŷn â TB—patrymau gwariant er mwyn inni allu mynegi ein barn a cheisio craffu yn effeithiol. Pan fydd hyn yn digwydd, mae'r berthynas honno yn cael ei thywyllu, beth bynnag am ei newid.

[166] **Alun Davies:** Rwy'n cytuno â chi. Rydym yn dod i ddiwedd y flwyddyn gyntaf, o ran y gyllideb, lle rwyf wedi bod yn gyfrifol amdani gydag adran newydd. Etifeddais gyllideb a oedd wedi cael ei greu o ganlyniad i newidiadau'r *reshuffle* fis Mawrth y llynedd. Wrth reoli'r gyllideb, rydym wedi trio gosod mwy o linellau yn y gyllideb i alluogi'r math o graffu yr ydych wedi awgrymu sydd ei angen arnom. Rwyf yn credu bod yn rhaid inni fod yn fwy clir am amcanion a gweledigaeth yr adran. Rwyf yn credu bod hynny'n glir. Dyna pam wnes i ddatganiad yn yr hydref am amcanion *high-level*, os hoffech, yr adran ac am yr hyn roeddem yn mynd i'w gyflwyno yn ystod y flwyddyn i ddod, a chredaf ein bod yn gwneud hynny. Byddwn yn awgrymu wrth y pwyllgor, os hoffech weld lle y mae blaenoriaethau'r adran, i edrych ar y datganiad hwnnw fel ffordd i ddeall hynny. Ar lefel personol, wrth edrych ar y cyllidebau, rwyf wedi trio diogelu'r rhannau lle mae'r incwm economaidd mwyaf pwysig. Felly, rydym yn trafod llifogydd, lle mae impact economaidd o ran y buddsoddiad ei hun ac impact y buddsoddiad. Hefyd, o ran yr RDP, mae buddsoddiad yn y Gymru wledig, yr economi wledig a chymunedau gwledig; mae'n hynod o bwysig ein bod yn gwneud hynny. Felly, rwyf wedi bod yn trio rheoli'r gyllideb mewn ffordd ddeallus ac mewn ffordd bydd yn helpu ni i gyflawni'n hamcanion. Rwyf nawr yn gobeithio ein bod wedi gwneud hynny.

[167] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Diolch yn fawr, Weinidog. Cymerwn doriad am 10 munud a mi ddown yn ôl at y craffu cyffredinol.

the impact of those decisions when they are taken. We try to follow—as you so kindly referred to in our discussion on TB—expenditure patterns so that we can express our views and scrutinise effectively. When this happens, that relationship is damaged, or made ambiguous at least, whatever is changed.

Alun Davies: I agree with you. We are coming to the end of the first year, in terms of the budget that I have been responsible for with a new department. I inherited a budget that was created as a result of the changes following the reshuffle last March. In managing the budget, we have tried to set out more budget lines in order to enable the kind of scrutiny that you have suggested we need. I do believe that we need to be clearer about the objectives and the vision of the department. I think that is clear. That is why I made a statement in the autumn on the high-level, if you like, objectives of the department and about what we intended to introduce in the coming year, and I think that we are doing that. I would suggest to the committee, if you want to see where the priorities of the department are, that looking at that statement would be one way of understanding that. On a personal level, in looking at the budgets, I have tried to safeguard those parts where there is the most economic income. Therefore, we discuss flooding, where there is an economic impact in terms of the investment itself and the impact of the investment. Also, in relation to the RDP, there is investment in rural Wales, the rural economy and rural communities; it is very important that we do that. So, I have tried to manage the budget in an intelligent way and in a way that helps us to realise our objectives. I hope that we have succeeded in doing that.

Lord Elis-Thomas: Thank you very much, Minister. We will break for 10 minutes and then we will return for general scrutiny.

*Gohiriwyd y cyfarfod rhwng 10:42 a 10:57.
The meeting adjourned between 10:42 and 10:57.*

**Craffu ar Waith y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol a Bwyd—Sesiwn Graffu
Gyffredinol**

Scrutiny of the Minister for Natural Resources and Food—General Scrutiny

[168] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Croeso yn ôl i'r Gweinidog a'i swyddogion. Pwrpas y sesiwn hon yw craffu yn fwy cyffredinol ar faterion sydd o fewn portffolio'r Gweinidog. Mae Llyr yn gyntaf.

Lord Elis-Thomas: Welcome back, Minister, and also welcome to your officials. The purpose of this session is to hold a more general scrutiny session on issues within the Minister's portfolio. Llyr is first.

[169] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Diolch, Gadeirydd. Rwyf eisiau gofyn cwestiynau am Glastir, os caf. Roedd disgwyl, rwy'n meddwl, i ryw 2,000 o ffermwyr arwyddo cytundebau *Glastir Entry* erbyn 1 Ionawr a rhyw 800 o safbwynt *Glastir Advanced*. A allwch chi ddweud wrthym faint o'r rheiny a oedd wedi arwyddo eu cytundebau erbyn 1 Ionawr, os gwelwch yn dda?

Llyr Gruffydd: Thank you, Chair. I want to ask a few questions on Glastir, if I may. There was an expectation that some 2,000 farmers would have signed their Glastir Entry contracts by 1 January, and some 800 in terms of Glastir Advanced. Can you tell us how many of those had actually signed their contracts by 1 January?

[170] **Mr Slade:** I do not have that information immediately to hand, but we are waiting for—. Where are we now? The first week of March. We should have a clearer position within two or three weeks, and we can write, through the Minister, to you with that detail.

[171] **Llyr Gruffydd:** A allwch chi gadarnhau felly faint o ffermwyr a oedd wedi derbyn cytundebau i'w harwyddo mewn pryd ar gyfer eu harwyddo erbyn 1 Ionawr? Byddwch yn gwybod pam yr wyf yn gofyn y cwestiwn.

Llyr Gruffydd: Can you therefore confirm how many farmers had received contracts to sign in time for them to be signed by 1 January? You will know why I am asking that question.

[172] **Alun Davies:** Ydw, rwyf yn deall. Rwyf yn hapus i ysgrifennu at y pwyllgor o ran nifer y cytundebau sydd ar gael ar hyn o bryd. Fodd bynnag, a gaf i ddweud hyn? Rydym yn mynd trwy gyfnod o ymgynghori ar hyn o bryd ar Glastir, a hefyd rydym yn trio datblygu ac ehangu argaeledd cytundebau Glastir Uwch. Mae galw cynyddol wedi bod amdanynt. Ar hyn o bryd, rydym yn sicrhau bod digon o adnoddau ar gael gan y Llywodraeth i sicrhau bod ffermwyr yn cael y cymorth sydd ei angen arnynt er mwyn llenwi'r cytundebau ar gyfer Glastir Uwch ac i symud i mewn i'r broses. Ar hyn o bryd, rwyf yn meddwl efallai bod arnom angen tipyn bach mwy o adnoddau er mwyn sicrhau ein bod yn gallu gwneud hynny. Rwyf yn pryderu ambell waith nad oes digon o adnoddau gennym, gyda'r wybodaeth dechnegol, i alluogi ffermwyr i fod yn rhan o Glastir Uwch fel y maent angen bod, eisiau bod ac yn dymuno bod. Rwyf yn mynd i sicrhau bod y math o adnoddau a fydd

Alun Davies: Yes, I understand. I am happy to write to the committee in terms of how many contracts are available at present. However, may I say this? We are going through a consultation period at the moment on Glastir, and we are also trying to develop and expand the availability of the Glastir Advanced contracts. There has been increased demand for them. At present, we are trying to ensure that enough resources are available from the Government to ensure that farmers have the help and support that they need to fill in the contracts for Glastir Advanced and to move on to the process. At present, I think that we need more resources to ensure that we can do that. I am concerned sometimes that we have insufficient resources, with the technical information, to allow farmers to be part of Glastir Advanced as they need to be and as they want and wish to be. I will ensure that the kind of resources that we need for the new Glastir, if you like, in the new RDP are in place at that time.

angen arnom ar gyfer y Glastir newydd, os liciwch, yn yr RDP newydd yn eu lle ar y pryd.

11:00

[173] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Diolch i chi am eich gonestrwydd o safbwynt y wasgfa sydd ar adnoddau, achos byddwch yn gwybod bod nifer o ffermwyr wedi derbyn llythyr yn gofyn iddynt gydymffurfio â rheolau'r cynllun, gan gynnwys y *management options*, o 1 Ionawr er, wrth gwrs, nad oeddynt wedi arwyddo'r cytundeb a bod nifer ohonynt yn teimlo ei bod yn annheg bod disgwyliad iddynt fod yn gweithredu elfennau neu barchu rheolau'r rhaglen heb eu bod yn swyddogol yn rhan ohoni. Felly, byddai derbyn y wybodaeth i'w groesawu, oherwydd gofynnais y cwestiwn yn ysgrifenedig i chi ac ni chefais y wybodaeth. Os gallwch ddarparu'r wybodaeth i'r pwyllgor byddwn yn gwerthfawrogi hynny, dim ond i gadarnhau eto faint o gytundebau oedd wedi mynd allan i gael eu harwyddo cyn 1 Ionawr a faint ohonynt oedd wedi cael eu dychwelyd hefyd. Byddwn yn ddiolchgar iawn pe baech yn darparu hynny.

Llyr Gruffydd: Thank you for your honesty in terms of the pressure that exists on resources, because you will know that a number of families have received a letter asking them to comply with the rules of the scheme, including the management options, from 1 January, although, of course, they had not signed up and many of them felt that it was unfair that there was an expectation of them to be implementing elements or respecting the rules of the programme without officially being part of it. Therefore, receiving that information would be welcomed, because I did ask that as a written question and I did not receive the information. If you could provide the information to the committee, I would appreciate that, just to confirm again how many contracts were issued to be signed before 1 January and how many were returned. I would be very grateful if you could provide that.

[174] **Alun Davies:** Rwy'n credu bod hynny'n glir yn y *transcript*. Byddwn yn darparu'r wybodaeth honno i'r pwyllgor.

Alun Davies: I think that that is clear in the transcript. We will provide the committee with that information.

[175] **Julie Morgan:** I wanted to ask about some animal welfare issues. First of all, you say in your documents that you are developing a new animal health and welfare framework for Wales. I wondered if you could tell us a bit about that.

[176] **Alun Davies:** In terms of where we are at the moment, I was very clear, when I was appointed, that we needed to develop the animal health and welfare structure that we have in Wales. I am also concerned that we need to improve the veterinary infrastructure that we have in Wales. At the moment, we work alongside the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency—AHVLA—and we have been through, I think that it is fair to say, quite a difficult process with it to reach an agreement on surveillance 2014, which is a new, improved approach for detecting new and re-emerging animal diseases in Wales. It thought that the approach was more improved than we did, and I was certainly concerned to ensure that we have an infrastructure in Wales that we can build upon and use to develop in the future. I think that we are closer to agreement on that than we were when we started negotiations. We are not where I would prefer us to be, to be quite candid with you, but we have certainly had an improved offer from AHVLA.

[177] What I am looking at doing at the moment is to ensure that we are able to establish a centre of expertise in Carmarthen, that we work with Aberystwyth University to develop post-mortem, diagnostics, examination and laboratory testing facilities there with a view to entrenching and continuing to develop further services elsewhere.

[178] **Julie Morgan:** You will be launching the framework, will you?

[179] **Dr Glossop:** Yes, of course. This is the sequel to the animal health and welfare strategy for Great Britain, which was published in 2004 and was a 10-year plan of continuing and lasting improvements. The 10 years are out. We have talked a lot with Scotland and England to consider how we, first of all, agree on overarching principles, because we must recognise that we are connected geographically and epidemiologically with those two countries, but we also need to develop our own framework now for Wales. So, two things are happening. We are preparing to go out to consultation on the broader outcomes and the broader approach to a new framework for Wales with those key principles of working in partnership, and everybody recognising their own roles and responsibilities. Also, I think that it would be fair to say that it is about strengthening the element that focuses on companion animals, because the previous strategy very much focused on the farming sector. So, that is the first thing that is happening, and the consultation will be issued shortly. Alongside the normal consultation process, we will also be consulting with young people, because they are the future animal owners and the future farmers.

[180] On the second thing that has happened, you will have seen that we have gone out to advertisement for five public appointments to establish a new board to help guide us with our deliberations on animal health and welfare. We had a lot of applicants, and we were really pleased with that. Interviews are taking place in April, so that we can then establish a new board to help us with the development of the new framework and also to focus on the delivery of that. So, I think that real progress has been made, but there is more to be said, and I believe that you are planning to launch the new framework in July, Minister.

[181] **Alun Davies:** In July, yes. To add to what Christianne has said in response to this question, I think that we have got to be very ambitious about what we want in terms of the animal health and welfare structure and framework in Wales. We have to do all the things that Christianne has described, but we also have to be very clear about where the future lies and that this framework, this strategy, is something that neither goes to rust on a hard drive or goes to gather dust on a shelf, but guides us over the coming period as well as establishing firm foundations for where we want to be. Part of the Cymorth TB process is about Government and private vets working together. I want to see more of that happening. I want to see us laying the basis for a vastly improved network of veterinary services in Wales, and I want to see us working with the higher education institutions in Wales to see how we can work together to improve the research and training opportunities as well. The structures are in place at the moment. We will be launching this, as Christianne has indicated, in the summer. However, I want this to be a document that both guides our work and describes our vision for the future.

[182] **Julie Morgan:** I am interested that Christianne said that companion animals are going to be part of this strategy, and they have not been before. I do not know whether you or Christianne could tell us what that would mean.

[183] **Dr Glossop:** The earlier strategy was actually aimed at all animals, but I think that, to be honest, it was easier to focus on farming to start with. The establishment of the steering group 10 years ago very much focused on those organisations. RSPCA was part of that group, but it was actually its cattle specialist, John Avizienius, who sat on the group. So, when we tried to focus on companion animal subjects it was a more difficult discussion. We considered the possibility of having a separate companion animal group, but felt that that was fighting against the overall ambition to raise standards of animal health and welfare across all kinds of animals in Wales.

[184] So, the first thing is that, as we consider the composition of our new group, we have been taking account of making sure that we get a balance of skills and interests: it is not just

all farming groups or small animal groups; it is a mixture. We are very much looking for people who can offer more than one element of expertise—perhaps a farmer with a good understanding of welfare or a small animal welfare expert who is also a veterinary surgeon. It is about getting a combination and also then considering how we can make best use of the Animal Welfare Act 2006, which gives us an opportunity to move out in terms of prevention and education rather than simply, as you well know, focusing on prosecuting people for poor standards. So, it is about education. The fact that we are going to be consulting with young people as well will help us. Most young people we talk to will have a better understanding of companion animals than they perhaps will of farm animals.

[185] **Julie Morgan:** I have a quick question about legislation and the wild animals in circuses legislation. I know that the UK Government is planning to ban wild animals in circuses and that you were hoping that we would be able to be part of that legislation. Can you update us on that?

[186] **Alun Davies:** I do not think that there is anything to update you on since I last spoke to the committee on this matter. Members will be aware that I wrote to Lord de Mauley, the DEFRA Minister, on this matter last summer. DEFRA has made a commitment to legislate for England on this matter. I said to him that the Welsh Government would wish Wales to be included in that legislation so that we have one piece of legislation covering both countries. I do not yet know what the UK Government intends to put in its legislative programme for the coming—probably the final—year of this UK Parliament. However, I would anticipate that, when that legislation is brought forward, we will ensure that Wales is a part of it.

[187] **Julie Morgan:** So there is no timescale on that.

[188] **Alun Davies:** The UK Government has made a commitment to legislate in this Parliament.

[189] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Julie James is next and then Russell George.

[190] **Julie James:** My question is not on this point. I want to turn to the waste programme for a minute. There are a number of projects going ahead on the food waste side, but the Government, and your department in particular, has said quite a lot about some of the sector plans. I just wonder whether you have any update on when we might expect to see those sector plans published and what they might contain by way of targets and so on.

[191] **Mr Quinn:** The final two should be out by the summer, so that will complete the set that we spoke of at the last scrutiny session.

[192] **Julie James:** Apologies, Minister, for the seriously nerdy aspect to the next question, but will you be looking at some of the capacity for the big commercial anaerobic digesters that the local authority consortium has put together to absorb some of the commercial waste rather than building new facilities? I think that there is an issue arising about over-capacity in Wales as people realise how much food they waste once the collection services go in. I am delighted to say that almost all local authorities experience a decrease in the amount of food waste they collect as people realise how much food they are wasting. Therefore, there is a capacity issue that could be addressed by the commercial sector rather than the public sector bearing the cost of the gate fees that occur if the collection falls.

[193] **Mr Quinn:** All the waste procurements are structured to reflect potential changes, and the opportunity for other sources is built into the contracting. So, the potential is there if the market emerges.

[194] **Julie James:** That is good to hear. My last point on waste is the whole issue about

how we encourage more local authorities to hit and exceed the 52% recycling targets, and, indeed, how we encourage Julie James to get her recycling sorted out in a more efficient way as well. I wonder whether we have looked at any incentives or fining schemes.

[195] **Alun Davies:** Alun Davies too, of course. We all have our responsibilities here. I hear what is being said. I do not believe that fining local authorities is the best approach. We have that tool available to us, but it is not a tool that I would use out of choice. For me, we have to balance the requirements of delivering recyclate that is of value with, at the same time, making that a straightforward and simple process for householders, for argument's sake, in the domestic sector. Sometimes, we see local authorities approaching this in different ways. I am a simple sort of guy and I like to find a simple way of doing this. I recognise that commingling is probably the simplest way, but I also recognise that that does not deliver the sort of recyclate that is of the greatest value. So, we need to find a balance there. I am not entirely sure that we are there at the moment, quite honestly, but I think that we need to get there very soon. We will see recycling rates increase where we make it easy and straightforward and simple for householders, and those have to be our watchwords and what guides us in taking this matter forward.

[196] **Julie James:** I cannot tell you how delighted I am to hear you say that. My own slightly more centrally planned approach would be that I would also like to see local authorities co-operate more and have the same systems, because there is a difficulty when you are holidaying in west Wales and trying to figure out what you are supposed to put in the Pembrokeshire bag and then being in Cardiff for part of the week and trying to figure out what you put in the Cardiff bag and then going home to Swansea to figure out what bags there look like, which are all different colours. It is beyond my small brain to be able to contemplate. I think that the point I am trying to make here is that we are trying to encourage tourism and people to commute from different areas in Wales and all the rest of it. We are also trying to be one of the greenest countries on the planet, which I am delighted to say, but perhaps some more strategic planning around the day-to-day reality of trying to cope with that might be an idea in some of these plans we are about to see.

[197] **Alun Davies:** Hallelujah. Yes, quite. I hope that local authority members on this committee have taken note of those words. I will certainly be making that point myself.

[198] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Talking of local authority members, Russell George is next.

[199] **Russell George:** I agree with Julie James's comments on the different coloured boxes and bags wherever you go; it is very confusing. It seems that each local authority has its own method and process now and it is difficult to change that. My local authority often uses the threat of being fined by the Welsh Government to encourage people to recycle. I use the word 'threat' in a certain way, but how are you going to encourage, perhaps not individuals, but local authorities to meet their targets if you are so reluctant to issue a fine? I think that that is probably the right approach—that it is the last resort.

[200] **Alun Davies:** I am interested in Powys's approach here, which is basically to browbeat the electorate with threats of fines and various other terrible impositions. Let me say that I do not like fining people; I do not like fining authorities. That is certainly not my preferred route and you will be aware that, when I have had the opportunity to take decisions on these matters, I have not gone down that route. However, I think that there is consensus across the table here that we want to see recycling taking place, that we want it to be easy, straightforward and simple, and that we want it to deliver recyclate that is of value to local authorities and others. We have to square that circle. We have a ministerial policy board on this matter, and I think it might be useful if these exchanges were copied to the board.

11:15

[201] **Russell George:** My main question is on the removal of the biodiversity indicators. I asked you this question at the Royal Welsh Show session last year. At that time, you talked about the need to create your own data sources. May I ask how you got on with that approach?

[202] **Alun Davies:** Do you want to take that question?

[203] **Mr Quinn:** Yes. Can you just clarify which diversity indicators were removed from what?

[204] **Russell George:** Yes. At the committee last year, at the Royal Welsh Show, I asked the Minister about the removal of biodiversity indicators on species and habitats. At that time, the Minister talked about creating our own data sources.

[205] **Mr Quinn:** I am still not clear exactly what we were—. We are still tracking those issues, so I am not sure what the specific reference is. The Minister announced the intention to create a data hub that would be accessible publicly that would bring together all the datasets that we have around natural resources. That is in hand at the moment, working across different holders of that material.

[206] **Alun Davies:** May I say, in answer to your question, you asked a very good question at the Royal Welsh Show when we were launching our response to the ‘State of Nature’ report, if I remember correctly.

[207] **Russell George:** Yes, that is right.

[208] **Alun Davies:** We said that we would respond to that in a number of different ways. We said that we would create a nature fund, which is now being created, and we have received, I think, 460 different responses to our call for ideas. We are taking that forward. However, part of that was that we needed to have far better datasets available to us in Wales. I think that the ‘State of Nature’ report was seeking a wake-up call for people across all of the different countries of the United Kingdom. It was certainly something that I responded to in the way that you described. However, one of the weaknesses, possibly, of that report was that we did not have the sort of datasets available to us in Wales that we require. We are still working on that matter. We have not fully resolved it yet, but, clearly, when it is resolved we will be making a statement on it.

[209] **Russell George:** Thanks, that was the point that I was asking about. I appreciate that.

[210] **Mr Quinn:** Sorry, and we do have more data than what were used and available in that report. So, it is a question of bringing it together. Some of the assumptions that that report made were not transferable to Wales, where some of those species are actually doing better. So, we need to get those data in the public domain.

[211] **Russell George:** Will that indicator or those indicators for biodiversity be in the next programme for government? Is that something that you are seeking to do?

[212] **Alun Davies:** I hesitate to tread on the toes of the First Minister. [*Laughter.*] You do tempt me, Russell, into some terrible trouble—

[213] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** You do not hesitate to tread on the toes of UK Ministers— [*Laughter.*]

[214] **Russell George:** That is a good point, Chair.

[215] **Alun Davies:** They are fair game. [*Laughter.*] May I say that I think that we do need to measure the effectiveness of what we do and the nature fund was intended to be an immediate response to how we respond to the—. It was to respond to two things: first, the ‘State of Nature’ report and, secondly, to a very real feeling among land managers, landowners, farmers and others that, all too often, agri-environment schemes are things that are done to you rather than things that are done with you. There was also a sense of trying to work with different groups of people and individuals to create a fund whereby we are able to support work that would not necessarily be covered by a formal agri-environment scheme. Your question is a good one in terms of how you measure the impact of that. Clearly, we will measure the impact differently for that work than for a Glastir-type scheme. It probably would not be subject to the same levels of scrutiny and audit that one of the major agri-environment schemes would be or has been in the past. However, we need to understand that we are using public money; we need to understand that it is used well, effectively and for the purpose given. So, we need to do that and I accept that. At the same time, in terms of the new rural development plan, we need to be very clear what our ambitions are for that. When we come to writing and delivering individual programmes and elements of that RDP, they will have objectives attached to them. They will have very clear targets attached to them and those targets will be measurable.

[216] **Russell George:** In terms of the £6 million for the nature fund, when will that money be spent? Will that be in the next financial year?

[217] **Alun Davies:** Yes.

[218] **Russell George:** When will you be making an announcement on how you intend—. Do you have any further thoughts on that?

[219] **Alun Davies:** My further thoughts on that—there is that temptation again. We have had 460 responses to our call for ideas. We are currently sifting through those responses and we will make a further announcement on how the £6 million will be spent before the end of this month.

[220] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** The next questions will be from Mick Antoniw, Antoinette Sandbach, William Powell, and then me.

[221] **Mick Antoniw:** I have two relatively short questions. One is, I suppose, an information point. You refer to the Agricultural Sector (Wales) Bill, which, of course, has recently been to the Supreme Court. We are all, obviously, very grateful for the ongoing protection that agricultural workers have while that is being considered. Is there a fixed date now for the judgment? Perhaps, in addition to that, in terms of pressing on immediately afterwards, subject to the outcome of course, is there a timescale for the implementation of the Bill, post-judgment? Are there any views on that or is that premature?

[222] **Alun Davies:** I think that my views on this matter should await the judgment of the Supreme Court.

[223] **Mick Antoniw:** Okay, I thought that you might say that, Minister—[*Laughter.*]—so I will go on to my next relevant matter—

[224] **Alun Davies:** I do not mind criticising the Prime Minister, but I am not going to presuppose what the Supreme Court has to say. [*Laughter.*]

[225] **Mick Antoniw:** It was just an off-chance. On the issue of food production, I attended a tasting session of Welsh produce at Talbot Green recently. I was quite impressed really with

the number of Welsh companies, some of which are in my constituency, that are expanding, exporting and really seem to have established a Welsh brand that is becoming very successful, certainly internationally in terms of exports. Many of them referred to the support from the Welsh Government. You will be pleased that it was all very positive and it was very encouraging to me as well, but—

[226] **Alun Davies:** You sound surprised.

[227] **Mick Antoniw:** However, since we are spending some £5 million in this area, I am wondering how we are evaluating strategically how that is best being used. As the progress of the Welsh brand continues, is there a need to step that up? Is the funding that we have within that sufficient at the moment? How do you see that coming forward and how do we value the benefit that we get from that investment and ensure that it is best used?

[228] **Alun Davies:** I am grateful to you for your comments. I did see your tweet from Talbot Green, and it is good to see that there were so many food producers there from Wales who were showing their products. We have seen some good growth in the food sector and in the food industries in Wales over the past few years. I am putting in place an action plan that I am saying will help to drive growth of up to 30% in terms of the economic impact of the food sector in Wales. I and Andrew Slade were at Gulfood last week in Dubai, where there were 14 Welsh businesses selling their produce and doing very well as well. One of the best things about the conversations that we had with people there was the fact that, without exception, they were all very supportive of the work that the Welsh Government is doing and very supportive of what we are doing to reinvent, if you like, our food strategy and to reinvent the support that we give to the food sector. Clearly, I work very closely with the Minister for the Economy, Science and Transport on these matters. We work together to ensure that food businesses have the support that they require and then that, through our colleagues in education, we deliver the sort of skills to the sector that are required.

[229] The action plan for the food and drink industry is designed to bring together many of these policy interventions and to do so in a coherent way so that we can help a business grow from, perhaps, a farm kitchen through to a multinational—help a business grow from a very small base to increase its turnover, to improve the quality and value of what it is able to produce and then to create jobs and the economic impact that we want to see. At the moment, I am very happy with where we are. We are going through a very intensive period of consultation with the industry. We have had a number of different events up and down the country talking to the industry. The industry has responded extraordinarily positively to our proposals and our draft action plan. We are looking at the moment in more detail at those responses. When we have a final plan and when we have been able to absorb all of the contributions from the industry, we will launch that. We will be doing that before the summer recess.

[230] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Perhaps at a certain show.

[231] **Alun Davies:** Quite possibly, but quite possibly before then as well.

[232] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Minister, I want to go back to Glastir. As you know, there have been a number of changes. I appreciate that you are consulting on it at the moment, but will you be able to make clear to farmers who perhaps did not previously qualify that you are looking at part-farm schemes, for example? If you accept the recommendation that there should be—or if the outcome of the consultation is that there should be a part-farm scheme, will you do what you can to publicise that to ensure that farmers take up that option and realise that the change has taken place? Can you also confirm that people who have signed up to the existing scheme— Can you confirm that everybody will be operating under the same rules? That was an issue that was highlighted previously. The early adopters, if you like, were

concerned that they were signing different Glastir contracts, and there were subsequent changes. I think that it is important that that is made clear.

[233] **Alun Davies:** Yes. With regard to a part-farm scheme, it was, of course, my proposal so I am highly likely to accept it. [*Laughter.*] Unless I see any strong reason—

[234] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I think that it was my suggestion actually. [*Laughter.*]

[235] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** For goodness' sake, that is a discussion for outside. [*Laughter.*]

[236] **Alun Davies:** Unless I see any strong arguments against it, we will be moving forward in that way. The consultation on Glastir that I launched earlier this year, in January, is, as you will see, having read the document, far more directive than my previous work on this where I just said to people, 'Tell me what you think' and I listened to what people had to say. So, I have some very clear ideas contained in that document. At the moment, I am following the example of a Trappist in the sense that I am not commenting until the end of that consultation, but, clearly, I am paying close attention to it. When we are in a position to make announcements, we will do so. We will do that reasonably quickly, actually, after the end of the consultation. We will move forward quite quickly on that.

[237] On your second question on access to new contracts, we have been very clear—Andrew, correct me if I am wrong on this—that all of those people with a current Glastir contract will be able or will have the option to move to a new contract if they wish to do so.

[238] **Mr Slade:** Yes, if they wish to exercise the break clause in their original contract.

[239] **Alun Davies:** But that has always been the case. I understand that some people have not always understood it, but that has always been the case.

[240] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I think that, sometimes, people do not appreciate that, with the rule changes, they have the option to break and sign again. On the agricultural carbon reduction and efficiency scheme, ACRES, you have said that there has been a very high demand for take-up. I know, for example, that Natural Resources Wales has indicated some Objective 1 areas in terms of water quality management that have not been included in ACRES. That has caused confusion on the ground because some are within and some are without and it does not seem clear what the criteria are for including some Objective 1 water priority areas and not others. While you are looking at expanding ACRES, will you be looking at including all of those high priority areas?

[241] **Alun Davies:** We will be looking at all those matters within the consultation.

[242] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Finally, going back to forestry, you will be aware that the Welsh Government had the aspiration to plant 100,000 ha of new forest and that only 2,200 ha have been planted so far. Are you satisfied that farmers who have taken up that option are being adequately—are not being penalised by the divisional offices in relation to the coding on their single farm payment forms? Minister, you will be aware that I have written to you recently in relation to some issues in Caernarfon, where new woodland was planted. It was previously agricultural land in 2008. Do you think that the message has gone out clearly enough that people taking up that scheme still qualify for payments that they would have received previously? It seems that that message has not gone out. That is going to act as a big disincentive to creating new woodland.

11:30

[243] **Alun Davies:** I think that we have a long way to go in terms of delivering on our

ambitions for forestry. That is partly what lay behind my thinking in terms of the nature fund and ensuring that money is available to do that. We will maximise access to RDP funding from 2014 to 2020 to assist and promote the increase in woodland planting in Wales, and we want to speed up progress towards the targets that have been set. I am hoping that we will have a vision for forestry support that covers all the bases that you have described in terms of providing hard information to people about the context within which woodland may be planted and the impact on other schemes, projects and programmes.

[244] However, my concern is that we actually look at afforestation and the planting of habitat in a much more coherent and holistic way. One of the great failings of the past approach is that we have simply said, ‘We want trees planted, woodland planted, forestry planted’ and just left it at that. There has been some funding available in order to deliver that, but probably not enough, if we are quite honest about that. What we have not done is think about that in a way that has an impact on the landowner or the land manager. So, rather than simply saying that we want to have woodland on a particular piece of land, we should approach that in terms of a shelter belt, management of stock, management of water and the management of different habitats. That is a far more convincing narrative than simply saying, ‘Plant a tree in the middle of a field’, where nobody actually wants it. So, I think that we have got to take a fundamentally and substantially different approach to this. Those thoughts and views will inform the next RDP. I am absolutely committed to ensuring that we maximise the funding and the resources available to us to plant woodland, but also to recreate habitat in Wales.

[245] Going back to Russell’s question on data collection and the ‘State of Nature’ report, the one thing that ‘State of Nature’ taught us and should have taught us and must have taught us is the fact that we are losing habitats and that we are not creating, recreating and managing habitats well enough wherever they are. Woodland is perhaps one of the best examples of that. It is not the only one. Wetlands are another example of that. However, we need to be doing that in a far more coherent way than we have done in the past.

[246] **Antoinette Sandbach:** In terms of the ‘State of Nature’ report, I know that there is considerable information available in the records offices. This was something we raised in earlier committee sessions. Actually, the ‘State of Nature’ report did not look at a lot of Welsh data that were available. Has Welsh Government actually started to look at those data or to co-ordinate a body to look at those data—I do not know, maybe NRW could do it—so that those data are more widely available? It seems that some assumptions may be being made that are not accurate and that there are records out there that could show otherwise. May I say how much I welcome the idea of habitat creation? I know, for example, that stream-side planting could do much to stop the erosion of riverbanks and prevent flooding. If that sort of scheme is encouraged, I think it will do much to help upstream and prevent problems further downstream. I am certain that that would be welcomed.

[247] **Alun Davies:** Yes, that is exactly the approach that we have taken in terms of data. I have already answered a question from Russell on that, and we do not really have much to add to that.

[248] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** William Powell is next.

[249] **William Powell:** Key to the delivery of the Welsh Government’s policy objectives in this area, surely, is the maintenance and development of rural skills. The appointment of Professor Wynne Jones, the former principal and chief executive of Harper Adams University College, has been broadly welcomed in this area. Minister, I wonder whether you can outline the scope of the review that he is to undertake in further education rural skills and where you see it contributing to the development of this area.

[250] **Alun Davies:** Thank you for that, Bill. In terms of where we are at the moment, we have a tremendous pool of talent, if you like, in agriculture colleges and agriculture departments across Wales, and we have a tremendous pool of talent working in places such as the Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences and elsewhere. What I am hoping we can do is look across the whole area of provision and look at how we can maximise value, collaboration, co-operation and the impact that that has.

[251] One of the conversations that we have had at this committee and elsewhere, of course, is on the future of the agriculture industry in Wales. We talk about agriculture, but we all also talk about other land-based industries. One of the things on which I think that there has been widespread and a large breadth of agreement is that we need to improve our skills base. We need to improve our skills base for young people going into the industry—new entrants, as well as young farmers. We also then need to have a link with that, through Farming Connect, to ongoing skills development and knowledge sharing throughout a professional career. So, we need to look at this in a far more coherent way, again, than we have done in the past. I have always been impressed by the work that Professor Wynne Jones has done in terms of the agri-academy and agriculture leadership. I felt that he was exactly the right person, who had the knowledge and the understanding of the sector, and of the issues involved, to be able to take this overview of how to take us further and faster than we could go without it. This is very much a very positive approach, from my point of view, to look at how we maximise the value available to the agriculture industry, but also other land-based businesses, and how we can ensure that the resilience and efficiency that we all want to see in agriculture, for example, is actually hard-wired into people at the beginning of their careers, so that they then have the opportunity to learn from new knowledge, new experience and new skills as their careers progress.

[252] **William Powell:** Minister, could you just outline the timescale of the review that he will be leading on?

[253] **Alun Davies:** The review will actually be completed reasonably quickly this year. It is not something that I intend to—. I want it to inform the new RDP.

[254] **William Powell:** That is really good news. I hope, and maybe with the indulgence of the Chair, that it might be possible for Professor Wynne Jones to contribute to a session of this committee if the timetable and the scheduling allows.

[255] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** We have just decided that.

[256] **William Powell:** That is brilliant. Excellent. Perhaps I could move briefly to a question on the marine environment, moving from the terrestrial. It is the Welsh Government's aspiration to implement a Wales marine spatial plan. I think that the target date is 2015. Minister, could you outline the timeline of the development of that plan since—as in other areas—the clock is ticking, and there are a number of elements that need to constitute such a plan?

[257] **Alun Davies:** I think that I launched the consultation on the statement of public participation for the Welsh national marine plan last month. It is the first national marine plan that we have produced in Wales. We are looking at and listening to what stakeholders and other people have to say as a part of the consultation, which is going on at present. Marine plans are designed to be revised every six years. I want to ensure that we do have a process in Wales, established reasonably quickly and certainly established by next year.

[258] **William Powell:** That is a very ambitious target, and it is very encouraging. However, concerns have been expressed to me about the capacity that exists in terms of delivering this. It is my understanding that, in England, something in the order of 30 staff

members have been involved in the development of a plan that is significantly less extensive in its scale than ours. I would appreciate some reassurance as to the adequacy of the staff—the human resource—that are in place to deliver the ambitious objectives that you have outlined.

[259] **Alun Davies:** I have also heard these numbers. I do not know where people get them from. One of the reasons why I established a single marine division within the Welsh Government last year, when I was appointed to office, was because I recognised that we needed to maximise the impact that our staff and our officials have, and to actually maximise the impact of our spending and resources. We are doing that. We have just made the appointment of a person who will lead this work on a permanent basis. So, we have actually put together that division and we have put together staff members and officials to work in that division, to work across different disciplines, and to work together to deliver what we need in terms of our strategic marine and fisheries programme. I delivered an oral statement on that some months ago now. I will be updating Members through another oral statement before the summer recess, but I will say to Members that I am content that we have the resources in place within this division in order to deliver the marine planning process that I have outlined.

[260] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Yn y papur rydych wedi ei ddarparu i ni ar gyfer y cyfarfod yma, rydych chi'n sôn ei bod yn amserol cael rhyw fath o *refresh* o bolisi newid hinsawdd Llywodraeth Cymru. Byddwn yn ddiolchgar pe gallech ymhelaethu ynglŷn â pham eich bod yn teimlo bod hynny'n angenrheidiol. Rydych chi'n cyfeirio at gyfleoedd ar gyfer twf gwyrdd ac yn y blaen, a byddai'n neis clywed mwy o gefndir ynglŷn â'r meddwl y tu ôl i hynny.

Llyr Gruffydd: In the paper that you have provided to us for this meeting, you mention that it would be timely to have some sort of refresh of the Welsh Government's climate change policy. I would be grateful if you could expand upon why you believe that is necessary. You mention opportunities for green growth and so on, and it would be nice to hear a little background on the thinking behind that.

[261] **Alun Davies:** Mi wnes i gyflwyno a chyhoeddi'r adroddiad blynyddol ar newid hinsawdd ym mis Rhagfyr, ac mae hyn yn dangos ein bod yn gwneud *progress*, ond bod angen mwy o *progress* fyth. Mae'r adroddiad yn dangos ein bod wedi cyrraedd ein targedau ac y byddwn yn cyrraedd ein targedau'r flwyddyn wedi hynny hefyd. Felly, rydym ar gwrs i wneud hynny ar hyn o bryd. Fodd bynnag, ar ôl ystyried adroddiad panel newid hinsawdd y Cenhedloedd Unedig, mae'n rhaid i ni ailystyried beth rydym yn ei wneud ac ystyried yr hyn rydym yn ei wneud yng Nghymru yn sgîl yr adroddiad a gafodd ei gyhoeddi ym mis Medi, rwy'n credu, a sicrhau bod yr hyn rydym yn ei wneud yn y fan hon yn adlewyrchu'r wybodaeth ddiweddaraf sydd gennym drwy'r Cenhedloedd Unedig.

Alun Davies: I presented and published the annual report on climate change in December, and that shows that we are making progress, but that we need more progress. The report shows that we have reached our targets and that we will reach them next year as well. So, we are on course to do that at present. However, after considering the report of the United Nation's panel on climate change, I think that we need to reconsider what we are doing and consider what we are doing in Wales in the wake of that report that was published in September, I think, and ensure that what we are doing here reflects the latest information that we have through the United Nations.

[262] Mi wnes i fynychu cyngor yr amgylchedd ym Mrwsel ddydd Llun yr wythnos hon ac mi wnes i gyfrannu at y drafodaeth aboutu'r safbwynt a'r *approach* y mae'r Deyrnas Unedig yn eu cymryd yn y

I attended an environment council in Brussels on Monday of this week and I contributed to the debate about the standpoint and the approach that the UK is taking in this policy area. I think that DECC has a proper grip on

maes polisi hwn. Rwy'n meddwl bod gan DECC *grip* go iawn ar y polisi. Rwy'n falch iawn o'r hyn sy'n cael ei awgrymu ar hyn o bryd. Rwyf wedi awgrymu wrth Ysgrifennydd Gwladol DECC bod rhaid i ni gydweithio'n fwy agos fel Llywodraethau'r Deyrnas Unedig a bod rhaid i ni wneud hynny yn sgîl y trafodaethau sy'n digwydd tu mewn i'r Undeb Ewropeaidd. Fodd bynnag, hefyd, rhaid i ni fod yn rhan o'r broses ehangach ryngwladol o dan asgell y Cenedloedd Unedig yn arwain at y trafodaethau a fydd yn digwydd y flwyddyn yma yn Lima ac yna'r trafodaethau mwy pwysig, efallai, ym Mharis y flwyddyn nesaf.

[263] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Diolch am hynny. A allwch chi gadarnhau, felly, yn yr adnewyddiad o'r polisi rydych yn ymgymryd ag ef y bydd y Llywodraeth yn dal i ymrwymo i'r 3% o doriad bob blwyddyn a 40% erbyn 2020? Rwy'n cymryd nad oes bwriad gennych i ailedrych ar y targedau hynny.

[264] **Alun Davies:** Nid wyf eisiau i bobl redeg i ffwrdd â'r syniad ein bod yn gwneud hyn er mwyn rhedeg i ffwrdd o'r math o dargedau sydd gennym ar hyn o bryd. Rwyf eisiau sicrhau bod y gweithrediadau yr ydym yn eu cymryd ar hyn o bryd, a'r ffordd rydym yn gweithredu'r polisi, yn cydymffurfio â'r wybodaeth ddiweddaraf sydd gennym ac nad oes unrhyw beth arall ychwanegol y dylem ei wneud.

[265] Hefyd, rhaid i ni ystyried beth sy'n digwydd gyda newid hinsawdd. Cawsom y drafodaeth yn y sesiwn gynt ar y llifogydd, amboutu'r impact y mae newid hinsawdd ac wedyn y newid ym mhatrwm y tywydd yn eu cael ar bolisi. Rhaid i ni ystyried hynny a rhaid i ni ystyried hynny ym mhob un maes polisi. Rydym yn sôn yn y fan hon amboutu adnoddau naturiol, fel y dylem, ond mae newid hinsawdd yn cael impact ar draws y Llywodraeth ac ar draws pob un maes polisi. Mae'n rhaid i ni, fel Llywodraeth, fod yn sicr ein bod yn gwneud pob dim rydym yn gallu o dan bob un maes polisi i gyrraedd ein targedau a chyrraedd ein gweledigaeth ni fel cenedl i ymateb i beth sy'n digwydd gyda newid hinsawdd. Felly, rwyf eisiau i hyn fod yn rhywbeth positif.

the policy. I am very pleased with what is being suggested at present. I have suggested to the Secretary of State for DECC that we have to co-operate more closely as the Governments within the UK and that we have to do that in the wake of the negotiations that are happening within the European Union. However, we also have to be part of the wider international process under the auspices of the United Nations leading to the negotiations that will happen this year in Lima and then the more important discussions that will take place in Paris next year.

Llyr Gruffydd: Thank you for that. Can you confirm, therefore, that in the policy refresh that you are undertaking that the Government will still be committed to that cut of 3% annually and 40% by 2020? I take it that there is no intention to review those targets.

Alun Davies: I do not want people to run away with the idea that we are doing this in order to run away from the kind of targets that we have at present. I want to ensure that the actions that we are taking at the moment, and how we are implementing the policy, complies with the latest information that we have and that there is nothing additional that we should be doing.

Also, we have to consider what is happening with climate change. We had the discussion in the previous session on floods, about the impact that climate change and the change in weather patterns are having on policy. We have to consider that and we have to consider that in all policy areas. We are talking here about natural resources, as we should be, but climate change is having an impact across the Government and across every policy area. We, as a Government, have to ensure that we are doing everything that we can in every policy area to reach our targets and to achieve our vision as a nation to respond to what is happening with climate change. So, I want this to be a positive refresh.

[266] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Mae hynny'n grêt. Rwy'n falch iawn o glywed hynny. Un agwedd bwysig, pan fydd hi'n dod i gyflawni'r agenda honno, yw ynni a pholisi ynni. Rydym bellach yn deall y bydd y *delivery plan* ar gyfer ynni Cymru yn cael ei gyhoeddi'n fuan. A fydd y cynllun cyflawni hwnnw yn gosod targedau ar gyfer y gwahanol fathau o ynni adnewyddadwy, yn dilyn, neu yn adlewyrchu, rhai o argymhellion y pwyllgor hwn?

11:45

[267] **Alun Davies:** Bydd y cynllun yn cael ei gyhoeddi, fel y dywedais yn y Siambr ddau fis yn ôl, rwy'n credu. Rydych yn gwybod, o holi'r Prif Weinidog ar y mater hwn yn ystod yr wythnosau diwethaf, nad ydym yn gosod targedau lle nad oes gennym gyfrifoldeb. Mae hwnnw'n bwynt pwysig. Nid yw Llywodraeth Cymru yn gallu dweud ei bod yn mynd i osod targed er mwyn gwneud hyn, hyn a hyn os nad yw'r pwnc wedi ei ddatganoli inni, achos nid oes gennym y gallu i wneud hynny. Rwy'n credu bod y pwyllgor hwn, bron yn unfrydol, yn credu bod angen datganoli'r grym hwn i Gymru, ac rwy'n credu bod argymhellion y pwyllgor yn agos iawn at argymhellion y Llywodraeth pan mae'n dod i'r broses o ddatganoli'r hawliau hyn. Rwy'n gobeithio y bydd y datganoli yn digwydd yn fuan, ac unwaith y bydd hynny'n digwydd, byddwn mewn sefyllfa i osod cynllun ar sut i ddefnyddio'r grymoedd newydd a fydd gennym.

[268] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Felly, byddwch yn gosod targedau yng nghyd-destun y pwerau sydd gennych, os ydym yn edrych ar nifer o gynlluniau llai—cynlluniau cymunedol a'r math yna o beth.

[269] **Alun Davies:** Rhoddaf enghraifft i ti o beth rwy'n bwriadu ei wneud. Mae gennym dargedau yn barod, wrth gwrs, ar gyfer rhaglen Ynni'r Fro, ac rydym wedi cael y rheini ers rhai blynnyddoedd. Rwyf wedi bod yn glir. Pan edrychwch chi ar y papur ymgynghorol ar yr RDP newydd, bydd targedau yno ar gyfer y rhan o'r RDP rwy'n gallu gosod amcanion a gweledigaeth ar gyfer ynni adnewyddadwy arni. Felly, byddwch yn gweld hynny yn yr RDP. Rwyf am i'r RDP fod nid yn unig yn ffynhonnell

Llyr Gruffydd: That is great. I am very pleased to hear that. One important aspect, when it comes to achieving that agenda, is energy and energy policy. We now understand that the delivery plan for Welsh energy will be available soon. Will that delivery plan set targets for the different types of renewable energies, in line with, or reflecting, some of this committee's recommendations?

Alun Davies: The scheme will be published, as I said in the Chamber two months ago, I believe. You know, from asking the First Minister about this issue during the last few weeks, that we do not set targets where we do not have responsibility. That is an important point. The Welsh Government cannot say that we are going to set a target in order to do this, this and this if those policy areas are not devolved, because we do not have the ability to do that. I think that this committee, almost unanimously, agrees that we need to devolve this power to Wales, and I believe that the committee's recommendations and the Government's recommendations are very similar when it comes to the process of devolving these consents. I hope that this devolution will happen soon, and once that happens, we will be in a situation to set out a plan for how to use the new powers that we will have.

Llyr Gruffydd: So, you will be setting targets in the context of the powers that you currently have, if we look at a number of smaller schemes—community schemes and so on.

Alun Davies: I will give you an example of what I intend to do. We already have targets, of course, for the Ynni'r Fro programme, and we have had those for some years. I have been clear. When you look at the consultation paper on the new RDP, it will include targets for the part of the RDP on which I can set out my objectives and my vision for renewable energy. So, you will see that in the RDP. I want the RDP to be not only a source of finance but a document with a vision of what we want to see in rural Wales over the

ariannol ond yn ddogfen gyda gweledigaeth o beth rydym eisiau ei weld yn y Gymru wledig ar gyfer y blynyddoedd nesaf. Mae ynni yn rhan bwysig o hynny ac yn rhan bwysig o fy ngweledigaeth i, a byddaf yn sicrhau bod gennym brosiect neu raglen a fydd yn adlewyrchu hynny, a bydd gan y rhaglen honno dargedau.

[270] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Fy mwriad i yw ein bod yn gorffen am ganol dydd, ond cyn hynny, rwyf eisiau mynd yn ôl i'r traethau, lle rydym ein dau wedi treulio peth amser yn ystod yr wythnosau a'r misoedd diwethaf yn edrych ar yr hyn sydd wedi digwydd. Pryd y byddi di, fel Gweinidog, yn cymeradwyo a chyhoeddi'r cynlluniau rheoli traethlin?

coming years. Energy is a very important part of that and a very important part of my vision, and I will be ensuring that we have a project or a programme that reflects that, and that programme will have targets.

Lord Elis-Thomas: My intention is that we wrap up by midday, but before then, I want to return to the beaches, where we have both spent some time over the past few weeks and months, looking at what has happened. When will you, as Minister, approve and publish the shoreline management plans?

[271] **Alun Davies:** Right. There has been a lot of reporting on some of these matters. I think that it is important that I outline exactly what a shoreline management plan is and where we are on this at the moment. Shoreline management plans have been developed by local authorities and others. There are four SMPs covering Wales—two of them are cross-border with England—and they will provide the strategic planning framework for coastal risk management. They will do so when I agree them and when this Government agrees them. At the moment, they are draft plans. I am extraordinarily disappointed and I deplore the level of reporting and coverage of these plans in recent weeks, particularly by the BBC. The BBC has caused unnecessary concern and anxiety for many people up and down the Welsh shoreline. The BBC should be ashamed of itself for broadcasting some of this material.

[272] These plans are absolutely essential to how we manage the shoreline. They are also about people's lives, people's businesses and people's homes. It is enormously irresponsible to report these draft plans as facts. No decisions have been taken. When decisions have been taken, they will then be reported, first of all to this place, and they will be done in consultation with communities that may or may not be affected. What we will not be doing is simply allowing the BBC to railroad us into some of these decisions.

[273] So, I am very clear. I am profoundly disappointed with some of the erroneous reporting that we have heard in recent times. It is important for the communities involved, and the people whose lives are affected, that we deal with these matters with due process and with due seriousness, that we take this matter very, very seriously and that we do not simply use it to produce a story here and a story tomorrow.

[274] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Diolch yn fawr am ddweud hynny—mae'n help mawr—ond nid yw'n ateb fy nghwestiwn. Rwyf wedi gofyn y cwestiwn hwn o'r blaen. Y bwriad oedd cyhoeddi'r cynlluniau hyn yn wreiddiol cyn dy gyfnod di fel Gweinidog, yn 2012. Yna, dywedaist ym mis Ionawr y byddant yn cael eu cymeradwyo'n ddiweddarach eleni. Byddaf yn ysgrifennu yn fwy manwl ar y mater hwn gan ei fod yn fater etholaethol—nid wyf am gymryd amser y pwyllgor i drafod bae Ceredigion, er y gallwn

Lord Elis-Thomas: Thank you very much for saying that—it is very helpful—but it does not answer my question. I have asked this question previously. The intention was to publish these plans originally before your tenure as Minister, in 2012. Then, you stated in January that they will be approved later this year. I will write to you in greater detail on this because it is a constituency matter—I do not want to take up committee time discussing Cardigan bay, although I could do that. However, the fact that the second

wneud hynny. Fodd bynnag, mae'r ffaith nad yw'r ail gynllun traethlin wedi'i fabwysiadu yn golygu bod pethau'n anodd iawn i awdurdodau lleol ac eraill sydd wedi gweithio'n galed yn y maes hwn gyda'r boblogaeth mewn gwahanol ardaloedd—rwy'n meddwl am Bwllheli yn benodol. Lle mae parodrwydd i weithio a buddsoddi, nid yw'n bosibl cael trafodaeth ynglŷn â pha gynlluniau y gellir eu gweithredu, gan nad yw'r cynlluniau hyn eto wedi'u cymeradwyo. Dyna'r anhawster. Mae'n bwysig ein bod yn cael cydweithrediad a bod pobl yn deall, ond bydd yn hybu dealltwriaeth os bydd pobl yn gweld sut mae'r cynlluniau'n cychwyn, fel petai.

[275] **Alun Davies:** Rwy'n cytuno gyda chi, Gadeirydd. Ar hyn o bryd mae'r cynlluniau'n cael eu hystyried yn yr adran gan swyddogion. Unwaith y bydd y swyddogion yn cwblhau eu hystyriaeth ohonynt, byddant yn dod ataf i, er mwyn i mi gael eu hystyried fy hun. Unwaith y byddaf wedi gwneud hynny, byddaf yn gwneud datganiad. Rwy'n gobeithio y bydd hynny'n digwydd yn nes ymlaen eleni.

[276] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Diolch yn fawr iawn. Mae'n amserol, Weinidog, inni gael arweiniad clir ar y mater hwn, fel y gellir sicrhau bod y boblogaeth yn deall yr hyn rydym yn siarad amdano a beth yw'r blaenoriaethau anodd. Roeddech yn cyfeirio yn gynharach at fuddsoddiadau sydd wedi bod yn llwyddiannus. Un profiad positif ar ôl yr holl lanast sydd wedi bod oedd eistedd ar y prom yn Nhywyn ac edrych ar y cynllun yno, lle mae'r cerrig wedi suddo ymhellach i mewn i'r tywod, neu mae'r tywod wedi codi i fyny. Beth bynnag, mae'r morlin yn wahanol iawn i'r hyn a arferai fod yno. Mae'n amlwg bod y cynllun hwnnw wedi gweithio, ac mae angen inni feddwl am beth y gallwn wneud yn Aberystwyth a lleoedd eraill sy'n debyg i'r cynllun hwnnw. Gorau po gyntaf y byddwn yn cael y fframwaith gweithredol hwnnw, fel y gallwn roi sicrwydd i bobl ein bod yn bwriadu gweithredu.

[277] **Alun Davies:** Rwy'n cytuno'n llwyr gyda chi. Fodd bynnag, mae'n rhaid inni hefyd gael y fframwaith polisi iawn, ac nid dim ond symud yn gyflym i gyrraedd *deadline* yr ydym wedi ei osod. Mae'n rhaid

shoreline plan has not yet been adopted makes things very difficult for local authorities and others that have worked hard in this area with the populations in various areas—I am thinking specifically of Pwllheli. Where there is a willingness to work and invest, it is not possible to have a discussion as to which plans can be implemented because these plans have yet to be approved. That is the difficulty. Is it important that we have collaboration and that people should understand, but it will enhance understanding if people can see how the plans are commencing, as it were.

Alun Davies: I agree with you, Chair. At present, the plans are being considered by officials in the department. Once the officials have completed their consideration, they will come to me for me to consider them myself. Once I have done that, I will be making a statement. I hope that that will happen later on this year.

Lord Elis-Thomas: Thank you very much. It is timely, Minister, that we should have clear leadership on this issue, so that we can ensure that people understand what we are discussing and what the difficult priorities are. You referred earlier to investments that have been successful. One positive experience following all of the damage that has been was to sit on the prom in Tywyn and to look at the scheme there, where the stones have sunk deeper into the sand, or the sand has risen. In any case, the shoreline is very different to what it was. That clearly has worked, and we need to think about what we can do in Aberystwyth and in other areas to emulate that. The sooner that we get that operational framework the better, so that we can assure people that we intend to take action.

Alun Davies: I agree entirely with you. However, we also have to have the correct policy framework, and not just move quickly to meet a deadline that we have set. We have to consider this seriously and come to a

inni ystyried y mater hwn o ddifrif, a dod i benderfyniad. Yna, gallwn drafod y penderfyniad hwnnw gyda phobl. Nid wyf am rithro i wneud penderfyniadau nad wyf am eu gwneud ac nad wyf yn teimlo'n barod i'w gwneud ar hyn o bryd.

decision. Then, we can discuss that decision with people. I do not want to rush into a decision that I do not want to make and that I do not feel ready to make at present.

[278] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Rwy'n deall hynny.

Lord Elis-Thomas: I understand that.

[279] Russell, I believe that you wanted to come in.

[280] **Russell George:** I have a quick question regarding clarity on energy. Minister, in your response to Llyr, you mentioned that you did not intend to set targets for energy projects that are not within the responsibility of the Welsh Government. That is a different approach to what has been the approach in the past. Is that your approach, going forward?

[281] **Alun Davies:** I think that that is what you will find in the Energy Wales delivery plan, when it is published later this month. I also said in response to Llyr that, where I have the opportunity to deliver small-scale, community-based renewable schemes as a part of the next RDP, we will be setting a very clear set of measurable targets for that.

[282] **Julie James:** Very quickly, I wish to go back to shoreline management plans. The committee is also looking at the planning Bill, and we had a very useful session with various planning officials about the way that the Bill is structured, what will be contained in the planning guidance that goes with that Bill, and the need to keep policy in that document. I want to ask you to make sure that the 'Positive Planning' document and the development of planning policy accurately reflects the marine environment and the shoreline management plans. At the moment, the word 'marine' does not appear anywhere in the consultation. That is fine, because it is not meant to be a policy document, but I would like to be reassured that the policy document itself will contain those relevant references.

[283] **Alun Davies:** In terms of the planning Bill, it is a terrestrial Bill rather than a marine Bill. However, it certainly needs to fit in to the suite of legislative vehicles that we are currently bringing forward—the planning Bill, the environment Bill and the future generations Bill. All of those Bills will need to fit together—and they do fit together—to make a coherent statutory policy framework.

[284] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Hoffwn ddilyn hynny gyda chwestiwn pellach ynglŷn â'r tri Bil rydym yn mynd i'w hystyried—Bil cenedlaethau'r dyfodol, y Bil cynllunio, fel y dywedodd Julie, a Bil yr amgylchedd.

Lord Elis-Thomas: I would like to follow that up with a further question on the three Bills that we will be considering—the future generations Bill, the planning Bill, as Julie mentioned and the environment Bill.

[285] Rydym yn parhau i bryderu fel pwyllgor am y diffyg cydlynad a synergedd—beth bynnag yw'r gair—rhwng y Biliau hyn, yn enwedig gan fod y tri Bil yn debyg o gael eu cyhoeddi yn agos at ei gilydd. Y dyddiadau diweddaraf sydd gennym yw mis Gorffennaf eleni ar gyfer Bil cenedlaethau'r dyfodol a'r Bil cynllunio—gobeithio na fydd hynny ar yr un diwrnod; hoffwn ddweud hynny'n gyhoeddus gan ein bod wedi ceisio dweud hynny'n breifat—a

We continue to be concerned as a committee about the lack of co-ordination and synergy—whatever the word is—between these three Bills, particularly as all three Bills are likely to be published in close succession. The latest dates that we have are July for the future generations Bill and the planning Bill—I hope that that will not be on the same day; I say that publicly, as it is something that we have been trying to make clear privately—and 2015 for the environment

2015 ar gyfer Bil yr amgylchedd. Sut ydych chi'n mynd i sicrhau o fewn y Llywodraeth, rhwng y tri neu bedwar Gweinidog sydd â chyfrifoldeb yn y maes hwn, bod cydweithrediad a synergedd? A ydych chi, fel prif weinidog—*lower case*—yr amgylchedd yn mynd i arwain ar y cydweithio?

[286] **Alun Davies:** Byddaf, wrth gwrs, yn arwain ar un o'r Biliau, ond nid ar y ddau arall. Rydym yn trafod hyn, fel Llywodraeth, ac rwy'n credu bod y pwyllgor wedi bod yn gohebu gyda Lesley Griffiths ar y mater hwn. Mae Lesley wedi ymateb i chi yn esbonio'r cydweithio ar y tri Bil.

[287] Nid oes gennyf lot i'w ychwanegu at lythyr Lesley, fel mae'n digwydd. Rwy'n hyderus iawn y bydd y tri Bil yn cyflwyno fframwaith newydd i gynllunio yng Nghymru, a chynllunio a rheoli ein hadnoddau naturiol, gan wneud hynny mewn ffordd sy'n sicrhau lles cenedlaethau'r dyfodol. Felly, rwy'n hyderus iawn y bydd y tri yn ffitio'n dda gyda'i gilydd, ac rwy'n credu y bydd hynny'n fwy amlwg pan fydd y tri Bil wedi cael eu cyhoeddi.

[288] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Mae gennym ddwy funud.

[289] So, Antoinette, I am feeling so generous—

[290] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I am very grateful. I want to come back to Christianne Glossop on the TB issue. We dealt with the financial aspect, but we did not deal with the programme outcomes in the scrutiny session. In the intensive action area, where badgers have already been vaccinated, are you still seeing repeat breakdowns on farms where, previously, cattle with TB reactors have been culled and therefore taken out of the equation?

[291] **Dr Glossop:** It is the highest incidence TB area in Wales. We have 25% of the herds there having TB breakdowns each year, and that picture is quite similar now.

[292] **Antoinette Sandbach:** So you have not seen a physical change on farm, as it were.

[293] **Dr Glossop:** It is too soon. With regard to badger vaccination, it is way too soon to tell.

[294] **Alun Davies:** We will be publishing a report on this later this month and that will outline how we see the programme progressing. However, as Members will be aware, when this programme was introduced two years ago, it was a five-year programme. It was stated very clearly then that it is part of a suite of measures that will address and control bovine TB. We know that that suite of measures is having an effect, because we know from the data that it is having an effect. What we are not going to say is that this particular method or means of addressing the disease works well here and does not work well elsewhere. It would not be correct to say that.

Bill. How will you ensure, within Government, between the three or four Ministers who have responsibility in this area, that there is collaboration and synergy? Will you, as the lead minister—*lower case*—for the environment be leading on this?

Alun Davies: I will, of course, be leading on one of the Bills, but not on the other two. We do discuss this, as a Government, and I think that the committee has been corresponding with Lesley Griffiths on this issue. Lesley has responded to you explaining the co-ordination of the three Bills.

I do not have much to add to Lesley's letter, as it happens. I am very confident that the three Bills will introduce a new framework for planning in Wales, and for planning and managing our natural resources, doing so in a way that ensures the welfare of future generations. So, I am confident that the three Bills will fit well together, and I think that that will be more evident when the three Bills are published.

Lord Elis-Thomas: We have two minutes.

[295] **Antoinette Sandbach:** As I understand it, badgers need to be vaccinated annually. If there are badgers being vaccinated annually in that 25% in the intensive action area and that figure remains the same—. I appreciate that it is a five-year programme, but at the moment, after two years of annual vaccinations, from what the chief veterinary officer has just said, that breakdown does not appear to have changed. What I was asking was: are you still seeing breakdowns on farm where the TB infected animals have been removed? Are you still seeing persistent breakdowns on the same farms?

12:00

[296] **Dr Glossop:** We do have persistent herd breakdowns across Wales, and a new project will focus on those. The same is the case in the intensive action area. I should just clarify, though, that we have seen a slight reduction in the IAA, but that is in line with the national reduction. So, we have seen that. However, to date, we do not expect to see any impact from badger vaccination, and nor have we.

[297] **Antoinette Sandbach:** In effect, are you saying that, until that five-year programme has been completed, you will not look at rolling it out more widely, because you cannot assess the effectiveness or otherwise of the scheme within the five years?

[298] **Alun Davies:** We are already rolling out people to vaccinate badgers. We started that last year, and we will make further announcements in the next few weeks and months on how we roll out the grant-based approach to badger vaccination. We are seeing significant declines in the incidence of bovine TB. We are seeing it decline at twice the rate that is being seen across the border in England. So, we are seeing a suite of measures being pursued to control and then eradicate bovine TB, and that is beginning to see an impact. I will not, for one moment, say that the corner has been turned and that we are on the home straight with this. We are not. We are clearly not, and there will be bumps along the road, but I hope that those bumps will be at a lower level than we have seen in previous years. We are seeing a number of different measures being taken where this Government is proactively bearing down on the disease and, taken together, those measures are having a demonstrable impact on the incidence of the disease. What we have to do now is ensure that we use all the measures at our disposal to ensure that this trend becomes a long-term trend.

[299] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Ms Glossop, in terms of—

[300] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** It is Dr Glossop, I believe.

[301] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Dr, sorry—I knew I was getting it wrong. [*Laughter.*]

[302] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** She has a fine PhD in this very subject. Let that be known. And she is the chief veterinary officer—

[303] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I know, I know.

[304] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** —for Wales, and indeed, points west or east.

[305] **Antoinette Sandbach:** In terms of dead badgers that have been found in the intensive action area, which, I understand are being collected and tested as part of the programme, what percentage of those are being confirmed as having TB, and how does that compare with over the border in other areas?

[306] **Dr Glossop:** I can give you the figures between June 2012 and April 2013. We are preparing a report of the subsequent year now. We picked up 43 dead badgers across the IAA.

Thirty-seven of those were suitable for sampling. I will not go into the details of why the others were not. Seven of those 37 tested positive for a field strain of mycobacterium bovis, so that is 19%, but I am sure that you will appreciate that that is not a prevalence figure—that is just of the ones that we picked up. Of course, the badgers being culled in England right now are not being tested for TB, but if you compare those data with the randomised badger culling trial figures, where 10 areas had extensive culling carried out, it is about the same. They found about 20% of badgers in high-TB-incidence areas for cattle infected with TB. It is about in line with that. We are not surprised by those results.

[307] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** A gaf i ddiolch i'r Gweinidog a'i swyddogion? A gaf i gyflysu hynny hefyd at eitem 4 ein busnes?
Lord Elis-Thomas: May I thank the Minister and his officials? May I also link that to item 4 of our business?

12:03

Papurau i'w Nodi Papers to Note

[308] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Diolch iddo am ei llythyrau: y llythyr ynglŷn ag amddiffyn yr arfordir yng Nghymru ar 21 Chwefror, a'r llythyr yn ymateb i'r adroddiad ar rywogaethau goresgynnol estron a gyhoeddwyd gan y pwyllgor. Diolch i'r Gweinidog am barhau â'i arfer da o dderbyn argymhellion y pwyllgor hwn; hir y parhao. Bydd y pwyllgor nesaf yn cwrdd ar 13 Mawrth i gynnal sesiynau tystiolaeth ar Fil cynllunio (Cymru) drafft. Diolch yn fawr.
Lord Elis-Thomas: I thank him for his letters: the letter on coastal protection, and also the letter responding to the report on invasive alien species that the committee published. I thank the Minister for continuing with his good practice of accepting the recommendations of this committee; long may it continue. The next committee meeting will be held on 13 March to hold evidence sessions on the draft planning (Wales) Bill. Thank you.

*Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 12:04.
The meeting ended at 12:04.*