

**Cofnod y Trafodion  
The Record of Proceedings**

[Y Pwyllgor Cymunedau, Cydraddoldeb a Llywodraeth Leol](#)

[The Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee](#)

24/09/2015

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Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales

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

The 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**

Peter Black	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats
Christine Chapman	Llafur (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) Labour (Committee Chair)
Alun Davies	Llafur Labour
Janet Finch–Saunders	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
John Griffiths	Llafur (yn dirprwyo ar ran Gwenda Thomas) Labour (substitute for Gwenda Thomas)
Mike Hedges	Llafur Labour
Mark Isherwood	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Gwyn R. Price	Llafur Labour
Rhodri Glyn Thomas	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales

**Eraill yn bresennol**  
**Others in attendance**

Leighton Andrews	Aelod Cynulliad, Llafur (y Gweinidog Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus) Assembly Member, Labour (the Minister for Public Services)
Lesley Griffiths	Aelod Cynulliad, Llafur (y Gweinidog Cymunedau a Threchu Tlodi) Assembly Member, Labour (the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty)
John Howells	Cyfarwyddwr, Tai ac Adfywio, Llywodraeth Cymru Director of Housing and Regeneration, Welsh Government
Jane Hutt	Aelod Cynulliad, Llafur (y Gweinidog Cyllid a Busnes y Llywodraeth) Assembly Member, Labour (the Minister for Finance and Government Business)

Amelia John	Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr, Dyfodol Tecach, Llywodraeth Cymru Deputy Director, Fairer Futures, Welsh Government
Y Gwir	Aelod Cynulliad, Llafur (Prif Weinidog Cymru)
Anrhydeddus/The Rt. Hon Carwyn Jones	Assembly Member, Labour (the First Minister of Wales)
Owain Lloyd	Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr, Diwygio Llywodraeth Leol, Llywodraeth Cymru Deputy Director, Reforming Local Government, Welsh Government
Awen Penri	Pennaeth y Gangen Datblygu Cymraeg mewn Addysg, Llywodraeth Cymru Head of Welsh In Education Development Branch, Welsh Government
Jo Salway	Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr, Cyllidebu Strategol, Llywodraeth Cymru Deputy Director, Strategic Budgeting, Welsh Government
Bethan Webb	Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr, Yr Iaith Gymraeg, Llywodraeth Cymru Deputy Director Welsh Language, Welsh Government
Bon Westcott	Dirprwy Bennaeth Diogelwch Cymunedol, Llywodraeth Cymru Deputy Head of Community Safety, Welsh Government

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

Chloë Davies	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Rhys Iorwerth	Y Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service
Hannah Johnson	Y Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service
Claire Morris	Ail Glerc Second Clerk
Elizabeth Wilkinson	Ail Glerc Second Clerk

*Dechreuodd rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod am 09:15.*

*The public part of the meeting began at 09:15.*

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

[1] **Christine Chapman:** Good morning, everyone. Can I welcome you to the National Assembly's Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee? Can I just remind you that, if anyone has any mobile phones, they should be switched to silent? We've had apologies today from Jocelyn Davies and Gwenda Thomas AM, and John Griffiths AM is attending in place of Gwenda, so welcome.

09:16

## **Ymchwiliad Etifeddiaeth: Prif Weinidog Cymru Legacy Inquiry: First Minister of Wales**

[2] **Christine Chapman:** Our next item today is the second of our evidence sessions looking back over policy and legislation inquiries with a view to assessing the impact of the conclusions and recommendations contained in our various reports. I want to give a warm welcome to Carwyn Jones AM, First Minister of Wales; Bethan Webb, deputy director, Welsh language; and Awen Penri, head of Welsh in education development branch. We are looking at the Welsh language issue. So, welcome to you all.

[3] You have sent papers, First Minister, so, if you're happy, we'll go straight into questions. I just want to start off asking you about issues around the 'Bwrw mlaen' strategy. Could you tell me whether you feel it's succeeding in its aim of strengthening the use of the Welsh language in the community?

[4] **The First Minister (Carwyn Jones):** Thank you, Chair. I think it's on the way to doing that. Of course, 'Iaith fyw: iaith byw—Bwrw mlaen' is still quite new. It was published in August of last year at the National Eisteddfod in Llanelli, but just to illustrate what's been done so far, we have allocated capital funding to create 10 Welsh language centres. They are designed to be dynamic, multipurpose centres to make the language visible in communities. We've also made the first set of Welsh language standards, which give the public and, indeed, staff members, the right to receive services through the medium of Welsh in relation, of course, to certain organisations. We've also

had the Pethau Bychain campaign, designed to encourage people to use Welsh more. It's exceptionally important that we don't just increase the number of Welsh speakers but increase the number of Welsh users. It's too easy for people, sometimes, to slip into the habit of using English due to the fact that English is so dominant in our society.

[5] We've also funded a project to extend the Gwynedd schools' language charter—hugely impressive—which has been very effective, again, in making sure that the children feel confident in using Welsh outside the classroom. That has certainly been very successful. As part of ensuring that young people do use Welsh outside the classroom, particularly those who live in areas where Welsh is not a community language, we have been funding digital content and software. It's hugely important that Welsh is seen as a language not just of the classroom, but as a digital language and, of course, as a language for social media.

[6] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. Thank you. I'll bring John Griffiths in now and then Rhodri.

[7] **John Griffiths:** First Minister, I'd like to ask you about areas of Wales that are less strong in Welsh language than others. Despite the question that you had at the Newport Q&A last week about the place of Newport in Wales, there is actually a lot of support in Newport for developing the Welsh language. I wonder if you could say a little bit about how Welsh Government strategy will help areas like Newport, where a lot of people really want to increase the use of Welsh, the visibility of Welsh as a language in the area, but are not quite sure how they should start and how Welsh Government strategy would lend itself to that aim.

[8] **The First Minister:** It's a double-pronged approach. First of all, of course, there's the need to extend the numbers of children in Welsh-medium schools. We've seen that in Newport. We've seen plans for a Welsh-medium comprehensive in Newport, which wouldn't have been thought of 10 years ago. Again, it comes back to this point: how do you encourage people, particularly young people who've used and learned the language in school, to use it outside the classroom and use it when they leave school? One way of doing that, of course, is to fund, as we have done, Welsh language centres where people can go, where the language is the natural medium of communication. There are, I think, three that are already up and running. I went to one in Llanelli, Y Lle. Again, they were saying to me that, for young people, it's a place where they can come and converse naturally in Welsh in

the town of Llanelli, whereas the tendency is, if you're in a group of 10 people and nine speak Welsh and one doesn't, then English will become, by default, the language of that group.

[9] That's the way to do it, in my view, because I think we've come a long way through promoting Welsh-medium education, but there is still a challenge to promote the language outside of the classroom. One way of doing that is to make sure that people know that there is somewhere to go at the outset where Welsh is the medium of communication; it's somewhere where they can practice their Welsh.

[10] **John Griffiths:** Could I—?

[11] **Christine Chapman:** Yes.

[12] **John Griffiths:** Just one supplementary on that, if I may, Chair. Do you think we have the balance right, First Minister, between, understandably, giving a lot of thought and attention to areas where Welsh is strong but nonetheless perhaps diminishing and under threat—the heartlands, perhaps, of the Welsh language—and areas such as Newport where, although the language is relatively weak, I would argue there's been a lot of progress since devolution? Signage and bilingual announcements at railway stations, bank cash dispensing machines—small things, perhaps, but, adding it all up, it does actually feel a lot more friendly and positive towards the Welsh language than it did at the beginning of devolution. There is a lot of work, obviously, that is yet required. I think that, if we're going to realise some of the ambitions around the Welsh language to really make a step change and not just fight a rearguard action, as it were, in terms of Welsh language in Wales, areas like Newport, I think, need more attention in terms of Welsh Government strategy.

[13] **The First Minister:** I think there are different approaches that have to be taken across Wales. The approach in Newport will be different, for example, to the approach in eastern Carmarthenshire. In Newport, it's a question of reintroducing the Welsh language to a community where Welsh was invisible to all intents and purposes until quite recently. In eastern Carmarthenshire, it's a question of defending, almost, the language, ensuring that people continue to use it in an area where the vast majority of schools are Welsh-medium schools and yet there's been a decline in the use of Welsh. That's a difficult one to wrestle with, as we know.

[14] Ultimately, of course, the work that's done with the *mentrau iaith* is important here. Each *menter iaith* will identify the challenges in each community and then shape the approach to promoting the language according to the circumstances in that community. So, ultimately, it's not for Government, to my mind, to say, 'Right, this is the approach here; this is the approach here', but rather for us to be able to fund *mentrau iaith* and for them, of course, to take decisions that are more suited to their local circumstances in terms of broadening the language.

[15] **Christine Chapman:** Okay, thanks. I'm going to bring Rhodri Glyn Thomas in. Rhodri.

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:**

*Nid oes recordiad ar gael o'r cyfraniad hwn.*

*No recording is available of this contribution.*

[16] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** First Minister, you've differentiated between areas like Newport where the language, in your words, almost disappeared relatively recently and there has been a revival to be seen, especially through Welsh-medium education, and areas such as Carmarthen east, where there is the need to safeguard the Welsh language, where the average has decreased below 50 per cent of the population at this point. Starting with those areas that have traditionally been those areas where the Welsh language wasn't at the forefront, what do you make of the statement by the leader of Cardiff council that the use of the Welsh language is not part of the social fabric of the capital city because of technical advice note 20 by the Government?

**Y Prif Weinidog:**

*Nid oes recordiad ar gael o'r cyfraniad hwn.*

*No recording is available of this contribution.*

[17] **The First Minister:** Well, I don't think it's fair to say that that is an opinion of the leader of Cardiff council. There was a context to that statement. I know that he as an individual is very supportive of the



language. We were together, for example, in the Old Library in Cardiff, which has plans, of course, to be turned into a language centre for the city, and he was very supportive of the project. So, the leader himself, Phil Bale, is somebody who is very supportive of the language in terms of the context that statement was made in and the planning context. That doesn't show his opinion on the language, which is a very supportive opinion.

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:**

*Nid oes recordiad ar gael o'r cyfraniad hwn.*

*No recording is available of this contribution.*

[18] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** So, you don't accept the statement that the language isn't part of the social fabric of Cardiff.

**Y Prif Weinidog:**

*Nid oes recordiad ar gael o'r cyfraniad hwn.*

*No recording is available of this contribution.*

[19] **The First Minister:** No, I don't. I think that the language has become more prominent in Cardiff, particularly in areas to the west of the city centre. There are parts of Cardiff where Welsh is heard on the street, and it wasn't like that 20 or 30 years ago. We see, of course, the growth in the language in Cardiff. There's Tafwyl, which is very successful. It has supported and promoted the language in the capital city and it is growing. And, of course, there's the language centre, which has had support from the council. It'll be very important to create a place where people can use the language in a natural way in the capital city.

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:**

*Nid oes recordiad ar gael o'r*

[20] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** You've referred to the centre in Cardiff.

*cyfraniad hwn.*  
*No recording is available of this contribution.*

**Y Prif Weinidog:**  
*Nid oes recordiad ar gael o'r cyfraniad hwn.*  
*No recording is available of this contribution.*

There are centres that have been established across Wales, and £2.25 million has been invested in these centres. What is your expectation in terms of what these centres are going to achieve, and how are you as a Government going to ensure that they are viable in future? It's one thing to establish centres like this, but it's another thing to ensure that they still exist and are still operational in 10 years' time.

[21] **The First Minister:** That's right. What we're asking for is that there will be a report presented to us a year and a half after the money is given to the bodies that will run the centres themselves so that we can evaluate the impact of the centres. That report will look at the objective of the project, and it will also look at what the contribution of the project is to the community where the project is situated and also at evidence of where the successes lie. In a way, it's difficult to measure the success in terms of the use of the language with individuals, but what I'd like to see, for example, is more young people coming to the centres and speaking the language. I was speaking yesterday with a representative of one of the Carmarthenshire initiatives, and what he said was that they'd seen more young people coming to activities and using the language in a natural way. We know that young people have presented a problem in terms of using the language in the east of

Carmarthenshire, but that's happening. So, there will be a report, and, as part of that report, there will be evidence that will have to be submitted to us that shows how successful the centres have been.

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:**

*Nid oes recordiad ar gael o'r cyfraniad hwn.*

*No recording is available of this contribution.*

[22] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** What about the future of the centres? Or are you only looking at the short term?

**Y Prif Weinidog:**

*Nid oes recordiad ar gael o'r cyfraniad hwn.*

*No recording is available of this contribution.*

[23] **The First Minister:** No, they have to be sustainable and permanent; they know that. We want to help them, of course, to establish themselves, but, in time, we'd expect them to consider ways to be self-sustaining. But, no, there would be no point having centres that opened and then closed. It's very important that there is continuity in the life of these centres.

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:**

*Nid oes recordiad ar gael o'r cyfraniad hwn.*

*No recording is available of this contribution.*

[24] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** You've talked about the importance of education in the context of promoting the Welsh language, and you've referred to children in Welsh-medium education and also children in English-medium education. The Government commissioned a report by Professor Sioned Davies to consider Welsh as a second language. In November of last year, Professor Sioned Davies told the BBC that not much has been done in terms of the report since it was published, a year on from the publication of that report. Has anything happened over

the past year?

**Y Prif Weinidog:**

*Nid oes recordiad ar gael o'r cyfraniad hwn.*

*No recording is available of this contribution.*

[25] **The First Minister:** Well, no, that's right. What's happened is that we've said that the report is part of the full review of the curriculum in Wales. There is no point in us considering the Welsh language and then considering the curriculum again, but the report is very important and it will feed into the statement that the Minister will make during the autumn that will deal with the curriculum itself. It's true to say that the system of learning or teaching Welsh in English-medium schools hasn't been effective. You can see that because we haven't created confident speakers of Welsh. So, we need to reconsider the system that we have. That will form part of the statement that will be made on the curriculum in its entirety.

09:30

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:**

*Nid oes recordiad ar gael o'r cyfraniad hwn.*

*No recording is available of this contribution.*

[26] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Considering all of this, how ambitious is the Welsh Government in terms of the future of the Welsh language? How do you respond to Cymdeithas yr Iaith's call to create 1 million Welsh speakers? Do you believe that that's realistic?

**Y Prif Weinidog:**

*Nid oes recordiad ar gael o'r cyfraniad hwn.*

*No recording is available of this contribution.*

[27] **The First Minister:** It's easy to say and difficult to do; but in principle, of course, we'd love to see 1 million Welsh speakers. Before that, we have to ensure that the number of Welsh speakers increases. We also

need to ensure that those who speak Welsh say that they do speak Welsh. We know that, in the census, about 550,000 people said that they spoke or understood Welsh. Now, if you look at some of the other surveys, they suggest that 750,000 people say that they speak Welsh. In my opinion, there are many people who do speak Welsh, but don't have the confidence to say that they do speak Welsh, but that they understand Welsh. The problem is, then, that if they don't think that they speak Welsh, there's less of an incentive for people to transfer or pass on the Welsh language to the next generation. So, we have a job to do in terms of raising people's confidence in terms of the quality of their Welsh.

*Nid oes recordiad ar gael o'r cyfraniad hwn.*

*No recording is available of this contribution.*

[28] On top of that, we want to ensure that the English-medium system does create Welsh speakers who are confident. It can be done. I've seen it happening in Treorchy Comprehensive School. I went to Treorchy school several years ago and I heard children there who were—well, it's an English-medium school with elements of Welsh—children who were confident in Welsh and people doing GCSEs through the medium of Welsh. If it can happen in that school, it can happen across Wales.

*Nid oes recordiad ar gael o'r cyfraniad hwn.*

*No recording is available of this contribution.*

[29] We want to ensure that the statement is made before Christmas, and that we have a system where what has happened in Treorchy

school can be spread across Wales.

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:**

*Nid oes recordiad ar gael o'r cyfraniad hwn.*

*No recording is available of this contribution.*

[30] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** In terms of the statement, therefore, when do you expect to see this progress happening in the number of Welsh speakers? Is there hope that we will see the percentage of Welsh speakers increasing in the 2021 census?

**Y Prif Weinidog:**

*Nid oes recordiad ar gael o'r cyfraniad hwn.*

*No recording is available of this contribution.*

[31] **The First Minister:** I think there is. As the Member knows, he and I shared that hope during the last Government. A lot was done, there was goodwill, but it was very disappointing then to see the percentage falling in the last census, despite what had happened in the years before that. It's very important that we see the growth in Welsh-medium education increasing, and it's very important that local authorities can ensure that there are enough spaces for those who want Welsh-medium education. That's very important. That's why we have asked local authorities to present plans—or WESPs—so that they can show how they're going to do that, and then, of course, ensure that people, once they leave school, don't lose their Welsh. That's why, of course, we focused on the centres, the use of Pethau Bychain, and the aim to boost Welsh in the workplace. That's very important as well.

*Nid oes recordiad ar gael o'r cyfraniad hwn.*

*No recording is available of this contribution.*

[32] One of the things that we have to show more clearly to people is the economic value of using Welsh. We do have, of course, the enterprise

zone in the Teifi valley, which shows that, so that people can see that there is value—not just cultural value but economic value—to continuing with their Welsh language.

*Nid oes recordiad ar gael o'r cyfraniad hwn.*

*No recording is available of this contribution.*

[33] So, there are several ways to do this, in my opinion. The education system in itself isn't enough, and we've invested a lot in the education system. It's very important, but we have to consider how we can build on the good work that's done in the education system.

[34] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. I know Mike had a question on Welsh medium. Do you want to come in now? I'm just thinking because we've got a section in response to this.

[35] **Mike Hedges:** It sort of follows on from what the First Minister just said. First of all, can I declare an interest? My daughter attends a Welsh-medium school, attends a Welsh-medium youth organisation, which is supported by Government funding, and she also is involved in the Urdd. So, can I declare that interest?

[36] My question really follows on from that. There are an awful lot of things that are being done. How do they all fit together, from Ti a Fi at the beginning right the way through to some of the things that are being done by *mentrau iaith* et cetera with people like older teenagers, right the way through to adults? How does it all fit together?

[37] **The First Minister:** I think it fits very well together in relation to Welsh-medium schools, from the *cylchoedd* to begin with, through the *meithrin*, through the Welsh-medium schools, the Urdd and the *mentrau iaith*, which will be involved in the Welsh-medium schools in their area—I see that in my own area—and will provide activities. The Urdd particularly is active in providing activities on a weekly basis for young people, and the *mentrau iaith* do the same thing, quite often out of term time. That's something that they do quite well across Wales. I think the difficulty is that that all happens when young people are in school; it is then what happens after school that is the challenge for us, and what we have to address. Making sure that they use

Welsh in the workplace, making sure that people can identify themselves as Welsh speakers as well. I used to be sceptical of the badge, but over time I've come to like it, because you can then identify somebody who speaks Welsh. If I see somebody wearing the badge, I'll speak Welsh to them quite naturally.

[38] **Mike Hedges:** Just to come back on this, that's why a lot of people who speak Welsh don't wear the badge—because they're frightened. It really does come down to confidence.

[39] **The First Minister:** It does, yes.

[40] **Mike Hedges:** Just picking up what you said earlier about confidence, would I be happy speaking Welsh at a party for my wife's 96-year-old great aunt? Yes. Would I be happy doing exactly the same in this meeting? Absolutely no. That's what it comes down to.

[41] **The First Minister:** That's perfectly normal, and I don't think we should see that as something new. It's one thing to speak a language in a social context; it's another thing to speak it in an official context. It's different with English because the two are often the same thing. English is so dominant, people understand technical terms in English—they hear those terms every day. People don't have the same thing in Welsh. If I'm honest with you, I would not have come to a committee like this before I became an Assembly Member and used Welsh confidently, because my Welsh was the Welsh that I used socially; I wasn't used to using it in an official context. But it's possible to learn that very quickly, and it's encouraging people to have that confidence.

[42] Part of the issue is, I think, that when people speak Welsh with each other they often put in words in English, but nevertheless the language is mainly Welsh. They will then see Welsh, or hear Welsh on the radio, and think, 'Well, if that's proper Welsh, what I speak isn't proper Welsh. So I'll put myself down as an understander in the census rather than a speaker'. It's actually saying to people like that, 'Look, you are a Welsh speaker. There are different degrees of English, as there are different degrees of Welsh, and the fact that what you hear on the radio or tv is different to the Welsh you speak doesn't mean it's less valid'. That is part—it's not the whole solution, of course not, but it's part—of what we're trying to do.

[43] But the real issue for us is how we make sure that Welsh isn't marginalised in the English-medium schools. The majority of children are



still in English-medium comprehensives. Yes, the language has been compulsory for more than 20 years. Can we say that the language has been well-taught in every school in Wales and taken seriously in every school in Wales? I'm not convinced of that. We need to make sure that those young people get the opportunity to learn and use Welsh as well. That means working with the English-medium schools as well as the Welsh-medium schools, and that's why the statement this autumn will be so important. How do we re-present, in some ways, Welsh as a subject in English-medium schools? Do we work, for example, at making sure that people see it as a skill as well as an academic subject? For a lot of people, they want an extra skill, rather than to study a subject in the academic sense. There are lots of issues that we're looking at at the moment to see how we can promote the use of Welsh, and confidence in Welsh—not just amongst those who are native speakers, and not just amongst those who are in Welsh-medium schools, but also those who are in English-medium schools where Welsh has not always been taught at the standard we'd like in every single school over the past 20 years or more.

[44] **Christine Chapman:** Alun.

[45] **Alun Davies:** Diolch. Pan wnaeth hi siarad ym mis Mehefin, roedd Comisiynydd y Gymraeg, yng nghynhadledd Mudiadau Dathlu'r Gymraeg, yn dweud ei bod yn treulio gormod o'i hamser yn trio perswadio Gweinidogion a gweision sifil am yr angen i ystyried yr iaith pan maen nhw'n deddfu. Beth ydych chi'n meddwl am y feirniadaeth yma?

**Alun Davies:** Thanks. When she spoke in June, the Welsh Language Commissioner said in the Mudiadau Dathlu'r Gymraeg conference that she was spending too much of her time trying to persuade Ministers and civil servants of the need to consider the Welsh language when they legislate. What do you think of that criticism?

[46] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Wel, rwy'n credu bod yna bethau rydym ni wedi gorfod dysgu fel Llywodraeth, mae hynny'n wir. Nawr, wrth gwrs, mae yna asesiad impact ar yr iaith Gymraeg yn cael ei wneud ynglŷn â deddfau ac yn cael ei wneud ynglŷn â pholisïau mewn ffordd nad oedd yn digwydd, efallai, pum mlynedd yn ôl. Mae'n bwysig dros ben ein bod ni'n

**The First Minister:** Well, I think that there have been lessons for us to learn as a Government, that much is true. Now there is a Welsh language impact assessment that is undertaken in relation to legislation and is undertaken in terms of policies, in a way that perhaps didn't happen five years ago. It's very important that we do have that

cael barn fel yna oddi wrth y opinion from the commissioner to  
comisiynydd er mwyn sicrhau ein bod ensure that we do things as we  
ni'n gwneud pethau fel y dylem ni should, too.  
hefyd.

[47] **Alun Davies:** Felly beth sy'n digwydd nawr? **Alun Davies:** So, what's happening now?

[48] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Wel, mae yna— **The First Minister:** Well, there are—

[49] **Alun Davies:** Achos roedd hyn ym mis Mehefin, nid blwyddyn yn ôl. **Alun Davies:** Because this was in June, it wasn't a year ago.

[50] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Mae yna asesiadau impact ar yr iaith Gymraeg yn cael eu paratoi. **The First Minister:** Welsh language impact assessments are undertaken.

[51] **Alun Davies:** Yn cael eu paratoi— **Alun Davies:** They are undertaken—

[52] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Mae'n rhan, fel bydd yr Aelod yn gwybod, o'r *submissions* mae pobl yn cael fel Gweinidogion. Mae hynny'n rhywbeth mae'n rhaid i weision sifil ei ystyried yn y pen draw er mwyn sicrhau nad oes yna effaith negyddol ar yr iaith. **The First Minister:** It's part, as the Member will know, of the submissions that people receive as Ministers. It's something that civil servants have to consider, ultimately, to ensure that there isn't a negative impact on the Welsh language.

[53] **Alun Davies:** Mae'n bosibl edrych ar ei geiriau mewn ffordd dechnegol, fel rydych chi wedi gwneud nawr—rhaid cael proses mewn lle sy'n ticio'r bylchau gwahanol. Onid ydych chi'n meddwl bod hyn yn adlewyrchu diwylliant? **Alun Davies:** It's possible to look at her words in a technical way, as you've just done there—there has to be a process in place that ticks the right boxes. Do you not think that this reflects a culture?

[54] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Wel, yn y gorffennol, ydi. Mae hynny'n iawn. Mae'n wir i ddweud, yn hanesyddol, nad oedd yr iaith yn cael ei hystyried **The First Minister:** Well, in the past, yes. That is right. It is true to say that, historically, the Welsh language wasn't considered as something that

fel rhywbeth canolog, yn enwedig yn nyddiau'r Swyddfa Gymreig.

was central, particularly in the days of the Welsh Office.

[55] **Alun Davies:** Ond roedd hyn tri mis yn ôl.

**Alun Davies:** But this was three months ago.

[56] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Wel, fel mae pethau yn newid, fel mae'r rheoliadau'n cael eu creu, mae'n rhaid inni, wrth gwrs, felly sicrhau ein bod ni'n gwneud beth y dylem ni hefyd. Rwy'n cofio nôl tua—wel, yn ystod clwy'r traed a'r genau, ar ddechrau'r ddegawd ddiwethaf, tua 5 y cant o staff Parc Cathays oedd yn siarad Cymraeg. Mae hynny wedi cynyddu ac, wrth gwrs, rydym ni'n gwybod bod yna lawer o staff yn siarad Cymraeg yn y swyddfeydd eraill. Ond rwy'n credu ei fod yn wir i ddweud bod rhaid i'r gweision sifil ddysgu hefyd faint mor ganolog yw'r iaith i waith y Llywodraeth.

**The First Minister:** Well, as things change, as regulations are being created, we, of course, therefore have to ensure that we do what we should too. I remember back about—well, during the foot-and-mouth outbreak at the start of the last decade, around 5 per cent of staff in Cathays park were able to speak Welsh. That has increased and, of course, we know that many staff members can speak Welsh in the other offices. But I believe it is true to say that civil servants also need to learn how important the Welsh language is to the Government's work.

[57] **Alun Davies:** Achos roedd hyn dri mis yn ôl. Mae'n amlwg nad yw'r dysgu yna wedi bod yn llwyddiannus.

**Alun Davies:** Because this was three months ago. Evidently, that learning hasn't been successful.

[58] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Wel, mae'n rhaid inni ddysgu—. Dyna pam mae'r comisiynydd gennym ni: er mwyn sicrhau, os oes yna wendidau, ein bod ni'n delio â'r gwendidau yna yn gyflym. Mae'n dangos hefyd faint mor annibynnol yw'r comisiynydd ei hunan. Ond mae'r asesiadau hynny yn rhan o greu polisiau ac yn rhan o greu deddfau yn y pen draw er mwyn sicrhau bod yr iaith yn cael ei hystyried fel mater pwysig sydd yn rhan o'r system creu polisi.

**The First Minister:** Well, we do have to learn—. That's why we have a commissioner: to ensure that, if there are weaknesses, we do deal with those weaknesses quickly. It shows also how independent the commissioner is. But, those assessments are part of policy making and also part of making legislation, ultimately, in order to ensure that the Welsh language is considered as an important consideration as part of the policy—

making process.

[59] **Alun Davies:** Felly rŷch chi'n derbyn y feirniadaeth ac rydych chi'n ymateb i hynny.

**Alun Davies:** So, you accept the criticism and you're responding to that.

[60] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Wel, mae'n rhaid inni gyd ddysgu fel cyrff cyhoeddus. Mae'n wir amdanom ni, mae'n wir am awdurdodau lleol a lle mae'r comisiynydd yn dangos inni fod yn rhaid inni ystyried ffordd wahanol o weithio, mae'n rhaid inni, wrth gwrs, wrando.

**The First Minister:** Well, we all have to learn as public bodies. It's true for us, it's true for local authorities and where the commissioner shows us that we need to consider different ways of working, we must, of course, listen.

[61] **Alun Davies:** Diolch am hynny.

**Alun Davies:** Thank you for that.

[62] Pan oeddech chi yma fis Tachwedd y llynedd, mi wnaethom ni drafod y darlun sydd gennym ni o ariannu'r Gymraeg ar draws adrannau gwahanol yn y Llywodraeth. Mi oedd y pwyllgor yn eithaf beirniadol nad oedd y darlun yn glir iawn am ble mae'r arian yn mynd a pha mor effeithiol ydy'r cyllido yma. Beth ydych chi wedi ei wneud yn y flwyddyn ers hynny i sicrhau bod y wybodaeth a'r darlun sydd gennym ni wedi gwella?

When you were here in November last year, we discussed the picture that we have in terms of funding the Welsh language across different Government departments. The committee was quite critical that the picture wasn't very clear in terms of where the funding goes and how effective this budgeting process is. What have you done in the years since then to ensure that the information, and the picture that we have, have improved?

[63] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Wel, mae tua £28 miliwn yn cael ei wario ar y Gymraeg mewn un ffordd neu'r llall os ydych chi hefyd yn cyfrif y system addysg ac, wrth gwrs, beth ŷm ni'n gwneud i hybu'r Gymraeg tu fas i'r system addysg. Felly, mae'n bosib edrych ar yr arian sy'n cael ei hala ar y Gymraeg yn y system addysg a hefyd yr arian sydd yn rhan o'm

**The First Minister:** Well, around £28 million is spent on the Welsh language in one way or another, if you also include the education system and, of course, what we do to promote the Welsh language outside the education system. So, it's possible to look at the funding that is spent on the Welsh language in the education system, but also the

cyllideb i fel Gweinidog yr iaith funding that is part of my budget as  
Gymraeg a gweld y swm o £28 the Minister with responsibility for  
miliwn sydd wedi cael ei hala. the Welsh language and to see that  
£28 million in expenditure.

[64] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you. Janet.

09:45

[65] **Janet Finch–Saunders:** The benchmarks that the Welsh Government will be using to determine whether the standards regime is an improvement on Welsh language schemes in terms of how organisations treat the Welsh language; what are your opinions on that, please?

[66] **The First Minister:** What will the benchmarks be? The commissioner is responsible for monitoring compliance with the standards, as was the case with the Welsh language schemes. The duties, for example, in relation to record-keeping standards means that organisations will have to report on their compliance with the standards in a more robust and more prescribed way than was the case with the Welsh language schemes, and quantifiable data will need to be part of their reporting process. But, the commissioner will be able to identify data from those organisations that are required to comply with the standards and, of course, that is for the commissioner then to—

[67] **Janet Finch–Saunders:** Could you confirm the timetable for making regulations for the second and third set of standards?

[68] **The First Minister:** Yes. In terms of the second set of standards, we would look to lay the regulations before the end of this year. We will announce a detailed timetable for introducing the regulations later in the autumn; that's with regard to the second set of regulations. With the third set of regulations, the commissioner is in the process of compiling her reports following her third investigation this autumn. I don't anticipate that the third set of standards will be ready before the election next May, but the intention is that the second set of standards will be in place before then.

[69] **Janet Finch–Saunders:** Okay. I have a general question in terms of concerns that have been raised with me by my constituents, especially when we have new families moving in to Aberconwy. It may well be that they're very supportive of the Welsh language, having moved into Wales, but they do

find it very difficult then to integrate in that year with children who are very capable of speaking Welsh. What steps are you taking as a Government to ensure that anyone wanting to integrate into Welsh-medium education or, indeed, even into just basic Welsh lessons, do not feel left behind and that there is some kind of work that goes in at the beginning, really, so that there is better integration? Otherwise, it does become a them-and-us situation, and the child can then left behind in other studies.

[70] **The First Minister:** It's for each local authority to put in place a system of immersion in the language and, indeed, it does happen across Wales—Gwynedd have done it and Ceredigion has been very successful in doing this. Where young people and children arrive in a community, it's not possible for them to suddenly arrive in a school where there's a language they're not familiar with, they do need that extra help. And, indeed, there are two examples there of local authorities who do that. I would encourage other local authorities in Wales to adopt that kind of system, because I've seen it work very well. I think it was two years ago I met a young woman aged 12 or 13 who had within six weeks gone from being in an immersion centre to going into a Welsh-medium school to actually winning prizes in the eisteddfod for writing in Welsh. Maybe that's an exception, but it does show, and the evidence shows, that that does work for those children who come into those areas.

[71] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** In Aberconwy, I'm not too familiar, or even aware of there being immersion centres, and it's something that's being raised with me quite frequently now, because of our nearness to the north of England. Families are moving in and they are feeling that it's almost impossible to integrate because, you know, they do need that extra support, but it doesn't appear to be too available in north Wales.

[72] **The First Minister:** That might be true of Conwy. I've mentioned Ceredigion and Gwynedd as two examples there; Awen, I'm just wondering whether there are any examples of local authorities where a similar or a different approach is taken.

[73] **Ms Penri:** There are different models across Wales. Cardiff have got an immersion model as well, so we can discuss it with Conwy as part of their Welsh in education strategic plan to look at that for the forthcoming years.

[74] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Brilliant; thank you.

[75] **Christine Chapman:** Can I just ask, following on from Janet's question, about the consistency? Obviously, there are going to be differences across local authorities, but what work is being done to try to reach best practice across Wales, rather than just in certain areas?

[76] **The First Minister:** The approach can't be the same everywhere, but it can't be worse in some areas than in others. How do we go about this? The Welsh in education strategic plans are part of that process, making sure that local authorities across Wales have in place a system for dealing with the situation that has been identified. That much is clearly important. We know, for example, that the schools charter in Gwynedd has been hugely successful, and we have rolled that out to pilots across Wales to see if that model works in different parts of Wales. Again, that's important, but local authorities have to be able, through their Welsh in education strategic plans, to show how they are promoting Welsh, and that would include how they help those who are late arrivals, as it were, in the Welsh-medium education system, to help them to integrate.

[77] **Christine Chapman:** Okay, thank you. Gwyn, you've got a question.

[78] **Gwyn R. Price:** Good morning. The Welsh Language Commissioner has decided to omit over 200 bodies from her third standards investigation—whether any discussions were held with you over this decision, and your views on the high-profile organisations, such as Arriva Trains Wales and Network Rail, being omitted in this respect.

[79] **The First Minister:** Well, the investigation itself—or rather, the investigations that are taking place are rolling out the standards in a phased way to different organisations. With regard to the set 1 organisations, most, if not all of them, already have Welsh-language schemes in place. So, for them, it should be fairly easy to adapt. Then, of course, as part of the second standards investigation, more organisations would look to be brought in—NRW, the tribunals, S4C, oddly, which you would expect, the national library, the Wales Millennium Centre and so forth. In the third investigation, we then look at some government departments, providers of social housing, water providers, Royal Mail, and the Post Office. The issue is: how far can the commissioner go in terms of producing standards for different organisations? We know that, as far as public organisations are concerned, it is easier to do that. When it comes to private sector organisations, it's difficult, because of the Assembly's competence to legislate beyond the public sector. It's one of the difficulties that we face—I mean, are railway

companies public organisations or not? Well, they're private providers, but they can't exist without public subsidy, in reality. But, what we're looking to do with the first three sets of standards is to roll out those standards as widely as is possible and practicable, and then, beyond that, we have to wait and see what the Wales Bill might do.

[80] **Gwyn R. Price:** So, do you have any involvement, First Minister, in that, with the commissioner?

[81] **The First Minister:** Well, I don't have any involvement. It's for the commissioner to draw up the standards. We have regular meetings; I had a meeting with the commissioner yesterday. Yes, there is a discussion, of course, and, from our point of view, we will offer an opinion, but the commissioner is an independent body and, ultimately, these investigations are for her.

[82] **Gwyn R. Price:** Thank you. Could I have your response to the Welsh Language Commissioner's claim that the 2011 Measure and the standard process is administratively onerous and that it is therefore time to return to the Measure, to strengthen and streamline it?

[83] **The First Minister:** I wouldn't disagree with that. I think there are elements of the Measure that are more difficult than they need to be. There are some areas of the Measure that could be simplified. There are some areas of the Measure that introduce a level of consultation that goes beyond what is sensible. So, yes, I think, after May of next year, there'll be a need to revisit the Measure, to see what can be done to make it work more effectively.

[84] **Gwyn R. Price:** Thank you.

[85] **Christine Chapman:** I've got a couple of supplementaries before we move on to some other questions. Rhodri first, and then Alun.

[86] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Rŷch Rhodri Glyn Thomas: You say, First Minister, that the standards are an issue for the commissioner and that the commissioner and the commission are completely independent, but the commissioner introduced standards and the Welsh



Cymru, ac fe arweiniodd hyn at gryn oedi cyn i Lywodraeth Cymru gyhoeddi safonau. Felly, nid yw'r datganiad hynny yn gwbl ffeithiol gywir. Ac a gaf i eich cyfeirio chi at bwynt gweithredu 34 yn strategaeth Llywodraeth Cymru, 'laith fyw: iaith byw'?

[87] 'Gwneud safonau a fydd yn galluogi'r Comisiynydd i osod dyletswyddau ar gwmnïau'r sector preifat sy'n rhan o gwmpas Mesur y Gymraeg, gan gynnwys cwmnïau telathrebu, gweithredwyr bysiau a threnau, a chwmnïau cyfleustodau.'

[88] Pryd yn union fydd hynny'n digwydd? Mae'n rhan ganolog o'ch strategaeth chi.

[89] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Mater yw hwnnw i'r comisiynydd. Nid ydym yn dylanwadu ar y comisiynydd ynglŷn â chyrff. Nid ydym yn dylanwadu ar y comisiynydd ynglŷn â'r ymchwiliad sy'n cymryd lle. Mae'n wir dweud mai'r Llywodraeth sy'n gwneud y rheoliadau, ond yn fy marn i, ni fyddai'n rhywbeth y byddem ni eisiau ei wneud, sef anghytuno ynglŷn â'r rheoliadau eu hunain. Byddem ni'n erfyn ar y comisiynydd i roi i ni ganlyniadau'r ymchwiliad, ac y byddem ni, felly, yn gwneud y rheoliadau ar ben hynny. Ond, ynglŷn ag a ydym ni'n dylanwadu ar y comisiynydd tra ei bod hi'n gwneud ei gwaith, yr ateb i hynny yw 'na'.

Government rejected them, and this led to severe delays before the Welsh Government published standards. So, that statement is not completely factually accurate. Could I refer you to action point 34 in the Welsh Government's strategy, 'A language for living: a living language'?

'Make standards, which will enable the Commissioner to impose duties on private sector companies which fall within the scope of the Welsh Language Measure, including telecommunications companies, bus and train operators, and utility companies.'

When exactly is that going to happen? It's a central part of your strategy.

**The First Minister:** That's a matter for the commissioner. We don't influence the commissioner in terms of the bodies. We don't influence the commissioner in terms of the investigation that takes place. It's true to say that it's the Government that creates the regulations, but in my opinion, it's not something that we would want to do, namely to disagree in terms of the regulations themselves. We would urge the commissioner to pass on the results of the investigation to us, and that we would create the regulations on top of that. But, with regard to whether we have an influence on the commissioner as she does her work, the answer is 'no'.

[90] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Ond mae'ch strategaeth chi, fel Llywodraeth, yn ymwneud yn benodol â'r sectorau yma sy'n ymwneud â'r bobl: y cwmnïau telathrebu a gweithredwyr bysiau a threnau. Onid ydych chi'n ei gweld hi braidd yn od, felly, bod Arriva Cymru a Network Rail wedi cael eu heithrio tra bod y comisiynydd yn canolbwyntio ar y Gwasanaeth Gwybodeg GIG Cymru a'r Swyddfa Twyll Difrifol, sydd ddim yn adrannau sy'n mynd i ymwneud, mewn gwirionedd, â phobl ac â hawliau pobl i ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg?

[91] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Ie, ond rhywbeth i'r comisiynydd i'w ystyried yw hwn. O fewn amser, wrth gwrs, fe fyddem ni'n erfyn ar y cwmnïau hyn i gadw at y safonau uchel ynglŷn â'r iaith. Nid felly y mae hi wedi bod, wrth gwrs, yn y gorffennol, ond wrth i'r safonau gael eu rhoio allan, fe fyddem yn erfyn ar y sector breifat i ystyried y safonau fel yr arfer gorau—*best practice*—at y dyfodol.

[92] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Onid ydych chi'n gweld gwrthgyferbyniad fan hyn rhwng eich pwyslais chi ar geisio gwneud y Gymraeg yn rhywbeth sy'n rhan naturiol o fywyd pobl, ac eto bod cwmnïau sy'n ymwneud yn feunyddiol â phobl yn cael eu heithrio, ar hyn o bryd, rhag gweithredu'r safonau?

[93] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Wel, beth rŷm ni'n trio'i wneud yw sicrhau bod y

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** But your strategy, as a Government, relates specifically to these sectors, which are related to people: telecommunications companies and bus and train operators. Don't you see it a bit strange, therefore, that Arriva Wales and Network Rail have been omitted while the commissioner focuses on the NHS Wales Informatics Service and the Serious Fraud Office, which are not departments that are involved with people and people's rights to use the Welsh language?

**The First Minister:** Yes, well, this is something for the commissioner to consider. In time, of course, we will urge these companies to adhere to the high standards in relation to the Welsh language. That's not always been the case in the past, of course, but as the standards are rolled out, we would urge the private sector to consider the standards as best practice for the future.

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Don't you see there being a contrast here between your emphasis on trying to make the Welsh language a natural part of people's lives, and yet the companies that deal with people on a daily basis are being excluded, at present, from implementing the standards?

**The First Minister:** Well, what we try to do is ensure that the standards are

safonau'n cael eu rhoio allan mewn ffordd ymarferol. Rwy'n credu mai dyna beth sydd wedi digwydd gyda'r safonau hyd at nawr. Mae'r comisiynydd wedi canolbwyntio ar gyrff cyhoeddus hyd at nawr, ond mae yna waith i'w wneud gyda Network Rail ac Arriva. Bydd rhai yn cofio'r ffræ a gefais ag Arriva ynglŷn â Heol y Frenhines yng Nghaerdydd. Ac wrth gwrs rwyf wedi cwrdd yn ddiweddar â Network Rail o achos yr arwyddion yn yr orsaf honno—y ffaith bod y Saesneg yn amlwg ar flaen mynediad yr orsaf a bod y Gymraeg wedi'i chwato rownd y gornel. Mae hynny'n mynd i newid o achos y cyfarfod a gawsom. Byddwn i'n erfyn ar y cyrff hynny i edrych i fabwysiadu'r safonau hyn, ac wedyn, wrth gwrs, mewn amser, i sicrhau bod y safonau hynny'n safonau gorfodol arnyn nhw.

[94] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** A ydych chi wedi gwneud unrhyw beth i geisio sicrhau eu bod nhw'n mabwysiadu'r safonau yma?

[95] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Wel, rwyf wedi cwrdd â nhw. Rwyf wedi siarad ag Arriva ac wedi cwrdd â Network Rail yn ddiweddar. Rwyf wedi pwysleisio iddyn nhw, unwaith eto, pa mor bwysig yw'r iaith. Cawn weld, wrth gwrs, os bydd Network Rail yn parhau yn y pen draw; nid oes neb yn gwybod hynny. Nid ydym yn gwybod beth sydd yn mynd i ddigwydd gyda *franchise* newydd rheilffyrdd Cymru eto, ond mae'n bwysig dros ben bod

rolled out in a practical manner. I think that's what's happened with the standards up until now. The commissioner has focused on public bodies to date, but there is work to do with Network Rail and Arriva. Some will remember the argument that I had with Arriva in relation to Queen Street in Cardiff. And of course I have met recently with Network Rail as a result of the signage in that particular station—the fact that the English language was prominent at the entrance of the station and the Welsh was hidden around the corner. That will change because of the meeting we had. I would urge those bodies to look to adopt these standards, and then, of course, in due time, to ensure that those standards are compulsory standards for them.

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Have you done anything to try to ensure that they do adopt these standards?

**The First Minister:** Well, I've met with them. I've spoken to Arriva and I've met with Network Rail recently. I've emphasised, once again, how important the language is. It remains to be seen whether Network Rail will continue, ultimately; nobody knows what's going to happen. We don't know what's going to happen with the new railway franchise in Wales yet, but it's very important that the companies realise that Wales is a

y cwmnïau'n sylweddoli mai gwlad bilingual country.  
ddwyieithog yw Cymru.

[96] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. Thank you. Alun.

[97] **Alun Davies:** Rwyf am ddilyn Alun Davies: I want to follow on from  
pwyntiau Rhodri. Brif Weinidog, Rhodri's points. First Minister, you've  
rydych chi wedi dweud droeon eich said, time and again, that you want  
bod chi eisiau hybu defnydd o'r to boost the use of the Welsh  
Gymraeg. Os ydych chi eisiau hybu language. If you want to boost the  
defnydd o'r Gymraeg, onid ydych use of the Welsh language, don't you  
chi'n cytuno bod Swalec yn fwy agree that Swalec is more important  
pwysig nag Ofgem? than Ofgem?

[98] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Wel, mae **The First Minister:** Well, Swalec is a  
Swalec yn gwmni sy'n delio mwy â'r company that deals more with the  
cyhoedd, mae hynny'n sicr, ond nid public, that's for sure, but Swalec,  
yw Swalec, er yr enw, yn gwmni sydd despite its name, doesn't have a  
â phencadlys yng Nghymru. Nid yw headquarters in Wales. That doesn't  
hynny'n meddwl, wrth gwrs, y dylai mean, of course, that Swalec should  
Swalec wrthod y Gymraeg, ond mae'n reject the Welsh language, but it's  
bwysig dros ben ein bod yn sicrhau very important that every  
bod pob corff, yn y pen draw, yn organisation, ultimately, considers  
ystyried y Gymraeg fel rhywbeth the Welsh language as something  
hollol naturiol i'w defnyddio fel rhan completely natural to use as part of  
o'u gwasanaethau nhw. their services.

10:00

[99] **Alun Davies:** Felly, 'ie' ydy'r **Alun Davies:** So, 'yes' is the answer,  
ateb, ie? yes?

[100] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Ydy Swalec **The First Minister:** Is Swalec—?  
yn—?

[101] **Alun Davies:** Bod Swalec yn **Alun Davies:** Swalec is more  
fwy pwysig o ran y defnydd o'r important in terms of the use of the  
Gymraeg nag Ofgem? Welsh language than Ofgem.

[102] **Y Prif Weinidog:** O ran delio â'r **The First Minister:** In terms of dealing  
cyhoedd, rwy'n credu bod hynny'n with the public, I think that that is

iawn.

correct.

[103] **Alun Davies:** So, ydy penderfyniadau'r comisiynydd iaith yn dilyn blaenoriaethau'r Llywodraeth pan rydych yn dweud eich bod chi eisiau hybu'r defnydd o'r Gymraeg?

**Alun Davies:** So, do the decisions of the Welsh Language Commissioner follow the Government's priorities when you say that you want to boost the use of the Welsh language?

[104] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Y peth yw, unwaith eto, rydym yn dod nôl i beth sy'n bosibl ynglŷn â chyrrff cyhoeddus a beth sy'n bosibl ynglŷn â chyrrff preifat, yn enwedig cyrrff preifat sydd yn hollol annibynnol ynglŷn â'r gwasanaethau maen nhw'n eu rhoi. Wrth ddweud hynny, wrth gwrs, byddwn am weld cyrrff preifat yn mabwysiadu'r safonau uchel sydd gan gyrff cyhoeddus er mwyn gwasanaethu pobl Cymru yn y ffordd iawn.

**The First Minister:** The thing is, we come back again to what's possible in terms of public bodies and what's possible in terms of private bodies, especially those private bodies that are entirely independent in terms of the services that they offer. Having said that, of course, we would want to see private bodies adopting the high standards of those public bodies in order to offer services in Wales in the right way.

[105] **Alun Davies:** Ond mae'n anodd iawn i mi weld, os ydych chi fel Prif Weinidog Cymru yn dweud eich bod chi eisiau hybu'r defnydd o'r Gymraeg a bod y safonau yn ffordd o wneud hynny, bod y Swyddfa Twyll Difrifol yn fwy pwysig nag Arriva Cymru a Swalec.

**Alun Davies:** But it's very difficult for me to see, if you as First Minister say that you want to boost the use of the Welsh language and that the standards are a way of doing that, that the Serious Fraud Office is more important than Arriva Cymru and Swalec.

[106] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Na. Maen nhw i gyd yn bwysig, ac nid—  
[*Anghlywadwy.*]

**The First Minister:** No They're all important, and not—[*Inaudible.*]

[107] **Alun Davies:** Ie, ond nid ydynt yr un mor bwysig â'i gilydd, nag ydyn nhw?

**Alun Davies:** Yes, but they're not as important as each other, are they?

[108] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Wel, mae unrhyw gorff sy'n delio gyda'r

**The First Minister:** Well, any body that deals with the public directly—. For

cyhoedd yn uniongyrchol—. Er enghraifft, mae Swalec yn delio â'r cyhoedd; Ofgem—llai. Mae hynny'n wir. Felly, mae'n bwysig dros ben bod y cwmnïau hynny, fel Swalec, yn ystyried pwysigrwydd y Gymraeg. Wrth ddweud hynny, wrth gwrs, mae'n bwysig dros ein bod ni'n gallu rhoio allan y safonau mewn ffordd ymarferol. Ocê, mae gennym ni dri ymchwiliad ar hyn o bryd. Yn y pen draw, fel rhan o'r broses o ailystyried y Mesur, efallai bydd yna gyfle wedi hynny i weld ym mha ffordd y gallwn ni estyn y safonau ymhellach na beth yw'r sefyllfa ar hyn o bryd.

[109] **Alun Davies:** Pryd ydych chi'n disgwyl i hynny digwydd?

[110] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Bydd hynny'n digwydd ar ôl i'r drydedd set o reoliadau gael eu gwneud, felly bydd hynny'n mynd â ni mewn, byddwn i'n meddwl—. Nid wyf yn gweld hynny'n digwydd cyn yr etholiad ym mis Mai, felly diwedd y flwyddyn nesaf. Bydd yn rhaid ystyried wedi hynny, beth bynnag yw'r canlyniad ym mis Mai, ym mha ffordd y gallai'r Mesur gael ei gryfhau ac ym mha ffordd, felly, y byddai'n bosibl i estyn y rheoliadau i sectorau eraill.

[111] **Alun Davies:** Ydy hyn yn destun trafod rhyngoch chi â'r comisiynydd? Rwy'n cydnabod eich bod chi wedi nodi ei hannibyniaeth hi—rwy'n cydweld â hynny—ond rhaid, ar yr un pryd, bod y comisiynydd yn gweithredu polisiau a

example, Swalec deals with the public; Ofgem—less so. That's true. So, it's important that those bodies, such as Swalec, do consider the importance of the Welsh language. Having said that, of course, it's very important that we can roll out the standards in a practical manner. Okay, we have three inspections at present. Ultimately, in terms of the process of reconsidering and reviewing the Measure, perhaps there will be an opportunity to see how we can extend the standards further than what the situation is at present.

**Alun Davies:** When do you expect that to happen?

**The First Minister:** That will happen after the third set of standards have been made, so that will take us into, I would think—. I don't see that happening before the election in May, so at the end of next year. Then, we would have to consider, whatever the result in May, how the Measure could be strengthened and how, therefore, it will possible to extend the remit of the standards to other sectors.

**Alun Davies:** Is this a subject of discussion between you and the commissioner? I recognise that you've noted her independence—I agree with that—but, at the same time, the commissioner has to implement the Government's policies

deddfwriaeth y Llywodraeth. Felly, buaswn i'n meddwl ei bod hi wedi cymryd rhywfaint o sylw o flaenoriaethau'r Llywodraeth, ac mae'n od wedyn ein bod yn gweld y blaenoriaethau yma, sydd ddim, o beth rwy'n gallu ei weld, mewn unrhyw ffordd yn dilyn blaenoriaethau'r Llywodraeth.

[112] **Y Prif Weinidog:** Na, nid wy'n credu nad yw hi'n dilyn blaenoriaethau'r Llywodraeth; rwy'n credu bod lot fawr o waith wedi cael ei wneud gan y comisiynydd er mwyn sicrhau bod gennym dri adroddiad, a'n bod ni'n gallu bod mewn sefyllfa i greu rheoliadau cyn mis Mai ac mewn sefyllfa i greu'r drydedd set erbyn diwedd y flwyddyn nesaf. So, mae yna lot fawr o waith wedi cael ei wneud gan y comisiynydd er mwyn sicrhau ein bod ni yn y sefyllfa yna ar hyn o bryd. Ynglŷn â'r dyfodol, pwy a wŷr beth fydd yn digwydd wedi hynny ynglŷn â'r Mesur ac wedyn, wrth gwrs, ynglŷn â'r rheoliadau newydd a fydd yn cael eu gwneud.

[113] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you, Alun. We've got 10 minutes left, and I know two Members haven't had the opportunity to come in yet, so I'm going to bring Mark in and then Peter.

[114] **Mark Isherwood:** I would commend again to you the report by the legislation committee in the last Assembly on the Welsh language legislative competence Order. I chaired it, but it covered many of these matters and there was good evidence from Governments, such as that in Catalonia, around these issues. So, although it's a few years back, I think a pertinent discussion was had. Given that the Welsh Language Commissioner's regulatory role was intended to run alongside a promotional role, the 2011 Measure said that the commissioner's principal aim is to promote and

and legislation. So, I would think that that she would have paid some attention to the Government's priorities, and it's strange, then, that we see these priorities, which are not, from what I can see, in any way in alignment with the Government's priorities.

**The First Minister:** No, I wouldn't say that she doesn't follow the Government's priorities; I think that a great deal of work has been done by the commissioner to ensure that we have three reports, and that we can be in a situation to create regulations before May and in a situation to create the third set by the end of next year. So, a great deal of work has been done by the commissioner to ensure that we are in this situation at present. In terms of the future, who knows what will happen then in terms of the Measure and then, of course, with regard to the new regulations that will be made.

facilitate the use of the Welsh language, but you stated to the Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister in March that work to promote the Welsh language was primarily an activity for Government, and the ambiguity caused around that. How do you respond to the call from Dyfodol i'r laith for a stand-alone Welsh language authority to promote the language?

[115] **The First Minister:** I don't know whether that would run in tandem with the commissioner or not, but my inclination would be that I don't think we could swallow up resources in creating a new body, with new staff and new headquarters, when that money could be spent on promoting the language, and I don't see what the point of setting up such a body would be.

[116] It's right to say that the commissioner has a role in promoting the language—that's true—as do we, as a Government, but to have a commissioner and a stand-alone promotional body for the language seems to me to be duplication and extra cost.

[117] **Mark Isherwood:** So, who do you think has the principal role? Is it you, Government, or is it the—?

[118] **The First Minister:** We share it. The commissioner has a role in terms of regulating—that much is true. Our role obviously is to promote Welsh in education and to promote Welsh more generally in society, but the commissioner also has a role to help and assist those organisations, for example, which are trying to satisfy the standards. One of the things that we do need to do—and what we're looking at, at the moment—is address the fact that there are now different badges that indicate whether somebody speaks Welsh or not. Some are ours and some are the commissioner's. We need to bring them in-house as one brand, if I can put it that way, so that that confusion ends in the future.

[119] In fairness to the commissioner, much work has been done on making sure that the preparatory work that has been done for the creation of the three sets of standards. That has taken up a lot of time. Once that work has been done, that, hopefully, will free up some time then for the commissioner to be able to look at other areas that she feels are important.

[120] **Mark Isherwood:** Given the correspondence to you from the Chair of the commissioner's audit and risk assurance committee in March, raising the issue of future financial sustainability for the organisation, and concerns raised by the commissioner over reductions to her budget having a possible



detrimental impact, how do you respond?

[121] **The First Minister:** The commissioner has received significant budget cuts—it's true. That's part of the overall financial picture, due to what we've had given to us by the UK Parliament. But I am mindful of the fact that the commissioner has absorbed those substantial cuts. She has still managed to deliver what we would expect her to deliver, but, of course, I am mindful of the fact that no organisation can sustain substantial cuts for many years. I'm mindful of that as part of the budget process that we will face, but nobody knows where we will be until we know the outcome of the comprehensive spending review.

[122] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. Thank you. Peter.

[123] **Peter Black:** Thank you, Chair. I'm going to ask a question about the Welsh-medium education strategy, so I'm going to start by declaring that I'm a member of a local education authority. In terms of that particular strategy, First Minister, the Minister for Education and Skills states, in the 2014–15 annual report on the strategy, that he's disappointed that not all targets have been achieved. Why has the Welsh Government failed to meet its targets in the Welsh-medium education strategy?

[124] **The First Minister:** I think one of the reasons is the need for greater consistency of approach across local authorities. That now is happening through the Welsh in education strategic plans so that we are aware of what their plans are. There are some local authorities that have done well; others have done less well. But it is important for us to understand and to approve their plans for the promotion of Welsh-medium education in the future. That will then achieve greater consistency across Wales and that will help us to make sure that the best practice is rolled out to those who are not doing quite so well.

[125] **Peter Black:** There is some inconsistency and I think some of the authorities are less than enthusiastic about promoting Welsh-medium education. Is that your experience or is that starting to be addressed?

[126] **The First Minister:** I think some are more used to promoting Welsh-medium education than others. There are some authorities that have had very good provision for a long time. Gwynedd is one example cited and Rhondda Cynon Taf is another example where there is substantial provision of Welsh-medium education. In other parts of Wales, it's probably fair to say

that there's not been as much progress as we would have wanted. But as part of the WESP process, and evaluating those plans as they come from the local authorities, we will then be able to see what the plans are to move Welsh-medium education on and we'll be able to identify weaknesses in some parts of Wales, where we feel that the plans are not as robust as they might be.

[127] **Peter Black:** To what extent is this strategy dependent on specific and additional investment in Welsh-medium education in local authorities?

[128] **The First Minister:** There are some parts of Wales where demands are strong for both Welsh-medium and English-medium education. Cardiff is an example of that, and Cardiff council have to wrestle with that. In other parts of Wales, the demand for Welsh-medium education has often been paralleled by a decrease in the number of pupils in an English-medium school in a particular area. So then, of course, it's easier for a local authority to say, 'Well, that school there—the numbers are dropping; that will then become the Welsh-medium school', and we see that in many parts of Wales. In other parts of Wales, that isn't possible because both sectors are growing. So, sometimes, it's not a question of capital investment; it's not a question of having to find extra money for an extra school. Yes, it is a question of recruiting the staff, obviously, we understand that, but, quite often, a reorganisation of the way education is delivered can be achieved at minimum cost. In some parts of Wales, it's more difficult; it does require capital spending, it does require new buildings, and that, of course, is what twenty-first century schools is designed to help to achieve.

[129] **Peter Black:** There are some examples where local authorities have taken on the obligations they have in terms of Welsh-medium education but not really met them with any enthusiasm. I'm thinking, for example, of Neath Port Talbot, which is creating a new Welsh-medium comprehensive in the south of the county borough in a school that they have declared unfit for English-medium education.

[130] **The First Minister:** Well, no child should be in a school that is unfit to be used as a school. That goes without saying. There was a time when, quite often, Welsh-medium schools were set up in very old buildings; less so, now. It was a way of using a building that was in a difficult condition. You don't see that to the same extent now. We see the new schools being built across Wales; we see refurbishment of schools, where Welsh-medium schools are being set up, but nobody could argue that any child should be in a school that is not fit for purpose. As Neath Port Talbot look at the case for any new

Welsh-medium school, it's important that the refurbishment is carried out to make sure the school is fit for purpose.

[131] **Peter Black:** Are these factors that the Welsh Government take into account with the funding of the twenty-first century schools programme? For example, would you look at that sort of issue when you come to approve funding?

[132] **The First Minister:** Well, it's for local authorities to bid, of course, under the twenty-first century schools programme, and any bid would be—

[133] **Peter Black:** But are you asking the right questions?

[134] **The First Minister:** Sorry?

[135] **Peter Black:** Are you asking the right questions in terms of that?

[136] **The First Minister:** Well, I'm not familiar with the example that you are giving to me, but it stands to reason, obviously, that we wouldn't want children to be in schools that are below the standard that we would expect. We'd expect local authorities to make the investment that is required and we'd expect local authorities, if they wanted to, to bid for extra moneys in order to meet those requirements. And, of course, there is ministerial involvement, potentially, where a school changes its status—not as much as there used to be, but, nevertheless, it's there if there are objections.

[137] **Christine Chapman:** We've got two minutes left. I know Mike had indicated, so if you could be very quick.

[138] **Mike Hedges:** Two very brief questions: it's almost like *Match of the Day*—one good, one bad. Are you pleased to see the number of three to four-year-olds who are speaking Welsh continuing to grow, and do you think Mudiad Meithrin are playing a major part in that? The second one is: lots of children go to *Ti a Fi* at two and go through Welsh-medium education until the age of 18, but, when they go on to higher education, it is nigh on impossible in a huge range of subjects to study through the medium of Welsh.

[139] **The First Minister:** Yes. In many parts of Wales, the local *cylch* is the default provider. People will send their children to the local *cylch*, Welsh-medium, and see that as being the thing to do—the usual thing to do in that

community. Of course, what we've always seen over the years is a slight drop-off then in children in Welsh-medium education as time goes on. So we know that some who are in *cy/ch* will not go into primary school; some who are in the primary school will not then go on to the comprehensive. Then, of course, we see this challenge past 18. It is right to say that the provision of courses in further education, for example, has grown quite significantly over the past seven years. We've seen something close to a 60 per cent to 70 per cent increase in the number of courses that are available. We are seeing, of course, through the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, the extension of Welsh-medium courses across the university sector. It is right to say that there was a time when, short of studying Welsh, there were very few opportunities to study through the medium of Welsh in universities in Wales. We are now seeing a growth in the areas and in the breadth of subjects available that can be studied through Welsh because of the work that's being done by the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol.

[140] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. Thank you. I know some Members did have further questions, but we have run out of time. So, I apologise for that. First Minister, if you're happy, we will send some further questions; you could perhaps respond in writing. So, can I thank you and your officials for attending today? We'll send you a transcript of the meeting so that you can check for any inaccuracies. Thank you very much.

[141] Can we now take a short break? The committee will break until 10.30 a.m. Thank you.

*Gohiriwyd y cyfarfod rhwng 10:15 a 10:30.  
The meeting adjourned between 10:15 and 10:30.*

**Ymchwiliad Etifeddiaeth: Y Gweinidog Cymunedau a Threchu Tlodi a'r  
Gweinidog Cyllid a Busnes y Llywodraeth  
Legacy Inquiry: Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty and  
Minister for Finance and Government Business**

[142] **Christine Chapman:** The next item is continuing our legacy inquiry. We've got the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty and the Minister for Finance and Government Business. Could I give a warm welcome to Lesley Griffiths, Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty, and also to Jane Hutt, Minister for Finance and Government Business? We have John Howells, director of housing and regeneration; Amelia John, deputy director,

Fairer Futures; Jo Salway, deputy director, strategic budgeting; and also Jeff Andrews, specialist policy adviser.

[143] Obviously, this session is quite a long session, and I know that Jane Hutt, the Minister, has to leave after a short time, so, we're going to start off with questions to Jane Hutt first of all. I want to ask the first question. This is, obviously, on the equality side.

[144] Minister, could you just give your views on the extent to which widening the scope of the draft budget equality impact assessments to include socioeconomic disadvantage has been successful?

[145] **The Minister for Finance and Government Business (Jane Hutt):** Thank you very much, Chair. I think, if we just look at the widening of that scope to socioeconomic disadvantage, this of course now comes alongside nine protected characteristics. Of course, this is all part of our strategic integrated impact assessment. We felt it was very important that we included socioeconomic disadvantage in order to help us make budget allocations in line with our priorities as a Welsh Government, but also to enable us to have a full picture in terms of the budget of socioeconomic impacts. It might be useful just to sort of clarify where you wouldn't necessarily be looking at budget setting if you didn't have that socioeconomic perspective in terms of the impact. Last week, I know that we discussed, for example, the importance of investment in not just the health service but in social services, and, indeed, housing as well. We know that you can invest in the health service, but, if you don't make a link between housing and health, for example, and, indeed, social services as well in terms of vulnerable people, you won't necessarily be making the right budget decisions. So, the socioeconomic perspective is crucial for us to ensure that we are steering our budget and setting our budget to meet those needs. I think, as a Government, our commitment to supporting the most vulnerable people to tackle disadvantage and inequality, and particularly talking about health and social services in terms of health inequalities—. Clearly, the socioeconomic perspective indicator has helped with this. Of course, as the Assembly debates mental health needs, physical and learning disabilities, and frail older people, all of these issues particularly have an impact if you look at the socioeconomic disadvantage. I'll also say that it's quite important if you look, for example, at our pupil deprivation grant. Of course, colleagues will be aware that that was about how we look at the most socioeconomically disadvantaged pupils and groups in terms of giving that increase in funding.

[146] One final point: it's been very valuable as well in looking at ways in which we can mitigate policies that we find have a disadvantage for vulnerable people, particularly, for example, welfare reform. On the other hand, if you want to be proactive as well in terms of socioeconomic disadvantage, not just pupil deprivation grant, investment in housing, investing in childcare, for example, to enable parents to get back into the workplace\_and into training and learning as well as work, but also ensuring that you're investing in those children who, if they don't have that early years investment, will be disadvantaged.

[147] **Christine Chapman:** I know John wants to come in, but I want to bring Peter in first.

[148] **Peter Black:** Minister, when you come to look at your equality impact assessments, what evidence and what mechanisms do you use to actually assess how effective they've been sometime after the budget has been published—maybe in the run-up to the next budget?

[149] **Jane Hutt:** Well, of course, we have to look at the impact, don't we, of the decisions that we made in terms of budgeting. That's where the importance of the approach we're taking to impact assessment—. Obviously, we are saying now that equality impact assessments have to be undertaken in terms of the start of policy development, leading to budgetary decisions, but then we need, as you say, Peter, to review the impact of that. Clearly, that's done partly through evaluation, which, of course, is in the public domain in terms of the impact of our investment, and, of course, we will identify the impact of investment in the pupil deprivation grant, that being one example. Also, last year we did undertake a review of evidence in inequalities in Wales, which, of course, has been published, and that review can show us where there are gaps in terms of how we approach this in terms of budget setting for tackling inequalities, but it can also identify where we have made progress. I think health indicators, educational indicators—all of that will demonstrate and show us what the impact of our investments has been. I think that's something where it's been very helpful to get the views and the advice of the budget advisory group for equality.

[150] **Christine Chapman:** John.

[151] **John Griffiths:** Minister, I very much welcome the Welsh Government's commitment to ensuring that the money that it spends helps achieve its social justice and equality objectives, but obviously there are questions

around how strongly Welsh Government can claim to be evidence based in that work, and I note that you've stated that evidence around particular protected characteristics is very limited, so I'd be interested to know what further work Welsh Government will carry out to ensure that it's in a better position with regard to those particular protected characteristics to show that its spend is achieving its desired objectives.

[152] **Jane Hutt:** That very much follows on from Peter's question about improving the outcomes, identifying the gaps, and particularly in relation—. We've been talking about socioeconomic characteristics and indicators, but for the protected characteristics we are also clearly focusing in terms of our statutory responsibilities for that. I've mentioned the review of evidence on inequalities that we've undertaken, and obviously the committee's aware of that, I'm sure. I think it is difficult, because evidence around protected characteristics is still very limited, not just for us in Wales, but across the board. So, we're still in the early stages, and I'm sure that Amelia and the Minister will want to talk about those issues as well, in terms of how we can improve the evidence base. But I think we get the data from national, UK-level surveys, and we do of course disaggregate that to a Welsh level. We've got administrative data, smaller surveys, and our national survey I think is very useful, which we published early this year. Then we can use that data to help us inform decisions about protected characteristics. I have mentioned the budget advisory group for equality, and they've had workshops over the last year, for example, on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill, the tackling poverty action plan, the implications of welfare reform, the Wales infrastructure investment plan, housing issues, and the foundation phase evaluation report. They bring, of course, a wealth of expertise to that group, and they can feed in and help us in developing the evidence base.

[153] I think perhaps also the opportunities for the future development of data sources is where we look to the next census for England and Wales, and also we do very much look to our Welsh index of multiple deprivation.

[154] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you, Minister. Well, obviously, we'll move on now to Lesley Griffiths's questions. Obviously, with these legacy reports, the committee published a number of reports on various themes, so I want to start off with the report that we did in August 2013, which was 'The future of equality and human rights in Wales'. I know Janet has got some questions on that. Janet.

[155] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Good morning, Minister. Minister, how do you

feel the UK Government's proposal to replace the human rights Bill with the British bill of rights will affect the Welsh Government's approach to equality and human rights, and is your department working with the UK Government in this regard?

[156] **Lesley Griffiths:** Well, obviously, human rights are completely embedded in the actions of the Welsh Government and, also, the Assembly. The Government of Wales Act requires Welsh Government not to act incompatibly with the convention rights that are set out in the Human Rights Act 1998. The Assembly also can't legislate in a way that is incompatible. We're going to do all we can to ensure that the rights that the people of Wales presently enjoy are not eroded by anything or by any proposals that come forward from the UK Government. We're obviously waiting for more information. I heard a speech yesterday by the Scottish First Minister, and I think she's on the same page as we are in relation to this. If the UK Government did decide to repeal the Human Rights Act, I think it would be an absolute step backwards for equality right across the UK. There's been a bit of backtracking. So, we are working—certainly, officials are working—with the UK Government. The First Minister has also made his view very clear.

[157] So, at the moment, the UK Government hasn't given us a clear indication of how it would actually implement the repeal of the Act or if, indeed, they would replace it. I think things haven't been—. You know, certainly, no proposal had been brought forward, but we would certainly have something to say. We would understand an LCM would be required, for instance, but, as a point of respect, we would expect the UK Government to certainly take our views into account. We would expect them to seek our agreement to any proposals.

[158] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** So, have you made any representations to the UK Government with your concerns?

[159] **Lesley Griffiths:** Certainly, the officials have, and I understand the First Minister has raised it with the Prime Minister, too.

[160] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Okay, thank you.

[161] **Christine Chapman:** Janet, before you move on, I think Alun had a supplementary on this particular aspect. Am I right?

[162] **Alun Davies:** Yes. I think there are concerns throughout Wales and



elsewhere about the UK Government's proposal to replace the Human Rights Act with a British bill of rights of their own making. Now, I'm glad to hear you restate the Welsh Government's view that this would be an appalling, retrograde step. I presume, therefore, that the Welsh Government will be seeking an active discussions with the UK Government about this and how, if necessary, Wales can be taken out of the provisions of the new UK Bill and remain in the Human Rights Act regime and remain within the overarching structures that sustain that regime as well.

[163] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes, certainly, we would have a very, very clear view of it. I think, if the UK Government just proceeded with it against the wishes of the devolved administrations, you know, you're talking a serious constitutional—well, 'crisis' is probably too strong a word, but I think it would be—

[164] **Alun Davies:** Well, I think it would be.

[165] **Lesley Griffiths:** It would be of huge concern, and, certainly, officials are continuing to work, but I think there has been a bit of backtracking from the UK Government. Certainly, I meet regularly with the Secretary of State for Wales and I'm due to meet him in the next few weeks, and I've asked for it to be on the agenda, just to see what the current thinking is of the UK Government.

[166] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** I'd just remind Members that, of course, this was included in the manifesto on which the current Government is elected. So, clearly, the concerns that you have are not necessarily shared by everybody.

[167] **Alun Davies:** They are in Wales. The Tories didn't have a majority in this country.

[168] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Minister, could you provide further detail on the way in which socioeconomic factors will be measured in the indicators under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, for example by measuring the number of people in poverty in Wales?

10:45

[169] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes, obviously, the Act requires Welsh Ministers to publish national indicators to measure progress. So, over the summer,

officials have been working on developing a set of national indicators. That will be out to consultation; that's being built on internal discussions between officials and other arm's-length bodies. That is expected to be launched in mid October, and we're currently finalising the draft set that will go out for consultation. It's really important that we measure against the goals—the seven goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. I think it's goal no. 6, if I remember, that's for a more equal Wales, and, obviously, that's the one that I think, from my portfolio, we need to best measure and have a look at progress, both in terms of poverty and across sociodemographic groups.

[170] I think it's really important to say that we've been looking at how we can link the future generations Act with the tackling poverty action plan and the revised children tackling poverty strategy. I think it's really important that we dovetail all those together.

[171] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Okay. And the supplementary to that is: during the poverty inquiry, and certainly during the workshops that took place accordingly, one thing that came out, very evident, was that there is a lot of duplication in process in terms of data collecting, so that you're able then to have the right information to know exactly where the resources need to go and in what direction. How is your department working to avoid that duplication and ensure that any data that you're collecting for your department is relevant and is then fed into your policies?

[172] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes, certainly, we don't want to see duplication; that's a very strong message that's gone to officials. We obviously look at the Welsh index of multiple deprivation; we look at the data there. That helps us with all of our tackling poverty action plan and the strategy. I think the future generations Act will avoid a lot of the duplication and there will be more focus on the indicators that have come out of the Act.

[173] **Christine Chapman:** If there aren't any other questions on this section, I want to move on now to the report that the committee published in December 2011 on disability-related harassment. I know Rhodri Glyn has a number of questions.

[174] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Fe Rhodri Glyn Thomas: You will gofiwch chi, Weinidog, fod yr remember, Minister, that the report adroddiad yn cyfeirio at y refers to the centres for reports by canolfannau ar gyfer adroddiadau third parties on these matters, and

gan drydydd parti ar y materion yma, a bod argymhelliad yn yr adroddiad yn galw am fwy o gysondeb daearyddol ar gyfer y canolfannau yma. A oes gwaith wedi cael ei wneud ar hynny er mwyn sicrhau eu bod nhw ar gael i'r cyhoedd yn gyffredinol ledled Cymru?

[175] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes. I think that the launch of the national hate crime report and support centre, which happened just a few months before I came into portfolio, has made it much easier for people in Wales to report hate crime. Many of these people don't want to go to the police, so we've now got that national centre as well, alongside the third-party reporting centres. There is limited evidence on the impact of the third-party reporting centres. We don't collect data on the number and location of them, but I think, now that we've funded the national centre, through the equality and inclusion grant, that has brought partnership much more to the fore. So, we're working across all four police areas, and I think that partnership working is now showing benefits. We've got a network of caseworkers who work in the centre; there are a lot of volunteers who work in the centre. If Members haven't visited, I would encourage you to do so.

[176] I think the most important thing is that we enable people to report hate crime. If you look at the figures, they're really low and I don't think it's because it's not happening; I think it's because people don't want to report it. So, I think it's really important that they have that facility to be able to do so, and not just to go to the police.

[177] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Mae'r ffaith bod cyn lleied o bobl yn cyflwyno tystiolaeth ar y materion yma yn bryder, oherwydd mae Prifysgol Teeside wedi canfod bod cynnydd wedi bod mewn troseddau casineb ers llofruddiaeth y Drymiwr Lee Rigby yn 2013. Beth mae Llywodraeth Cymru wedi'i wneud o ran addasu ei fframwaith troseddau casineb mewn ymateb i'r math yma o ddigwyddiad? Roedd un yng

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** The fact that so few people do put forward evidence on these matters is a concern, because Teeside University has found that there has been a spike in hate crimes following the murder of Drummer Lee Rigby in 2013. What has the Welsh Government done in terms of adapting its hate crime framework in response to this kind of incident? There was one in north Wales recently, in Mold, I believe, and

ngogledd Cymru yn ddiweddar, yn yr there have been other cases in Wales  
Wyddgrug rwy'n credu, ac mae also.  
achosion eraill wedi bod yng  
Nghymru hefyd.

[178] **Lesley Griffiths:** We didn't actually see a spike in hate crime reporting after the death of Lee Rigby. You referred to the attempted murder in Tesco in Mold, where they said it was a revenge attack for Lee Rigby, but we didn't actually see a spike. However, there was an increase of 1 per cent in 2014–15 in hate crime reporting, but I think that was for race hate crimes. What we've been doing is working with faith groups. It's really important to meet with them. I met with a group not long ago where clearly hate crime is occurring but people don't want to come forward. As I say, it's about making that facility available. You mentioned the one in Mold, and, as you say, there have been other ones in Wales. It's really important that we engage with families in the communities, and I think it is the race and faith groups that know these people and enable us to do that.

[179] You'll be aware we have the hate crime framework, which is updated annually. I published an updated progress report in June and a new annual delivery plan. We've now got an independent advisory group, which I chair, which helps us with the delivery plan and helps us to identify priorities. One priority this year was to continue to work very closely with religious groups and faith groups and help them with their training, for instance, and, certainly, we're taking that forward. We've also got National Hate Crime Awareness Week. We had it last year and we're doing it again this year, next month. This year, there's going to be a focus on cyber bullying, because people are telling us that that's an area where we need to be raising awareness and ensuring that people come forward to report.

[180] **Christine Chapman:** On that, what sort of dialogue are you having with the education Minister on work being done in schools to take this forward?

[181] **Lesley Griffiths:** I've met several times with the Minister to discuss that. Obviously, officials work—I don't know if Amelia wants to say some more?

[182] **Ms John:** We have an all-Wales anti-bullying group that draws together officials both from education and from the Fairer Futures Division within the Minister's portfolio. We meet quarterly and we swap the chair between us, and we make sure that stakeholders from all sides are there. We are very

much making links to bullying in schools and outside schools, cyber hate and the hate crime agenda.

[183] **Christine Chapman:** Okay, thank you. I've got John first, then Mark.

[184] **John Griffiths:** Minister, could I just ask about some of the developments that may well impact on these issues, such as the further refugee dispersal in relation to the terrible problems in Syria, for example? Could you tell me what you think are the relative issues, in terms of parts of Wales that have relatively high ethnic minority populations, such as Newport, Cardiff and Swansea, and other areas of Wales that do not have those ethnically diverse demographics, in terms of issues around hate crime and whether problems are likely to be more or less depending on the ethnic diversity of an area, and if there's any evidence for that that you're aware of?

[185] Just in general, as well, what work in being done to prepare for the dispersal of the Syrian refugees, given that they may face issues around hate crime? My own local paper, for example, has had a number of letters, and I've heard people repeat this, along the lines of, 'There are quite a number of young male refugees from Syria who can hurl rocks at border guards but are not willing to stay and fight and defend their country'. I think it's clear that, with that sort of mindset around and those sorts of letters being published, Syrian refugees will potentially face a degree of hostility. Given that we live in times of austerity, there's a general view that we should be looking after our own, as it were, rather than welcoming people here. So, I am concerned, because I think those views are very wrong headed. But, there's a danger that there will be an atmosphere that will have particular difficulties for these Syrian refugees, perhaps compared with others that have come here in the past.

[186] **Lesley Griffiths:** There's a couple of very important points there. Just to talk about the Syrian refugees, the UK Government has expanded the Syrian vulnerable persons relocation scheme and said we're going to take a certain number over the next five years: 20,000. So, last week, the First Minister called a summit. The First Minister chaired it. I was there, and the Minister for Public Services. We brought together partners from right across Wales—the WLGA and third sector—because, obviously, it is local authorities that are going to be taking an increased number of Syrian refugees. We can't dictate to them. The UK Government can't dictate to them. They have to come forward. I think it's 17 of the 22 local authorities in Wales that have come forward already and said—. You mentioned the dispersal areas. We

have four dispersal areas at the current time. We have Cardiff, Newport, Swansea and Wrexham. I think you're right, they are far more prepared to take an increase in the number of Syrian refugees.

[187] I think the language that's used is really important. The First Minister made it very clear that Wales is prepared to help with these people who are fleeing war. On the day previous to the summit, the Minister for Public Services and I met five Syrian refugees, one of whom had been in Wales for many, many years, and four who had been here less than a year. We wanted to understand what they needed on arrival, so that they could integrate into the community. I think that is really important. These people bring fantastic skills. Every one of the Syrian refugees that we met—apart from one, who'd had to leave his university course when he fled from Syria—had Master's level education. They bring fantastic skills. So, one of the things that was raised at the summit was that we should do some sort of skills audit to see what skills they are bringing and how we can use them. I think if people can then see how they fit into their local community, then that will help community cohesion. I do think the language used is really important. The Syrian refugees will be just that: refugees. The UK Government have said that they won't have to seek asylum. On humanitarian grounds, they will become refugees. That's really important because then they can work, they can train, they can take up skills opportunities, they can go to university.

[188] I think that the most important things that we can do to help them integrate into the community is housing; I think the local authorities need to be aware—. You know, you said about people being a bit sort of grumpy about not looking after your own. The local authorities made it very clear at the summit that they can manage that, but it has to be done at a level that they are comfortable with. That's certainly the message that I will take back to the Minister in the UK Government.

[189] The other thing is—and this certainly came across from the refugees that we met—that English lessons would be really important because they don't feel that they've got the standard of English, some of them, to be able to take up work opportunities. So, if we want to see that integration and have that community cohesion, it's really important that we help them in that way. So, the UK Government again have said they will fund the first year of the programme, the extended programme. I will certainly be pushing—and I know the First Minister will—with the Prime Minister to try and ensure that we have further funding as we go over the five-year programme.

[190] **Christine Chapman:** Okay, thanks. Mark.

[191] **Mark Isherwood:** Yes, issues around hate crime are addressed by the cross-party group on disability, which I co-chair, and the cross-party autism group, which I chair, sponsored by Disability Wales, the National Autistic Society and others. I think you're aware that I am also President of the Centre for Cultural Engagement, which came out of the North Wales Association for Multicultural Integration. All these bodies and others are working on the ground—non-governmental bodies—to raise awareness, break down barriers, improve understanding and get people to engage. How can, or will, Welsh Government better work with these organisations, a), for intelligence, because they know what's going on on the ground, but, b), to support—not necessarily materially, although that would be welcome—the practical work that is being delivered in certain communities, and developing that elsewhere?

[192] **Lesley Griffiths:** I think the main thing we have to do—. We can't do it on our own; Government can't do it on its own. We have to work in partnership. We have many fora where we work with the people that you have just discussed. I mentioned before the race forum. We have the equality forum. The First Minister chairs the faith group. I'm the vice chair of that. It's really important that we work with people from across all faiths, all races. You mentioned disability. We all came together, for instance, to hear about the impact of welfare reform—all the representatives of the different groups. So, we will continue to do that. Officials also meet with groups. Do you want to say a bit more about that, Amelia?

[193] **Ms John:** Disability Wales is represented on the budget advisory group on equality, on our strategic equality plan board, and Diverse Cymru as well. Through the equality and inclusion grant, we fund disability organisations. We really keep in contact with them about their grass-roots experience of the barriers that disabled people are facing.

11:00

[194] **Mark Isherwood:** Very briefly, if I may, one of the issues that regularly comes up is the public sector equality duty in terms of local authorities and health boards. Even if they tick the box, the actual awareness, often, is missing, and it's missing because the training isn't being provided by the groups on the ground—local disability fora or race equality networks and what have you—who understand the issues because they're living it. This is a

matter I know we've been raising for well over a decade, in my experience. How can we better help those organisations understand better in order to deliver better the duty that they have?

[195] **Ms John:** I think Welsh Government absolutely recognises that and recognises that disabled people are best placed to say the barriers they're facing and how to overcome those. So, for example, we're funding Taking Flight Theatre company to go into schools to train not only pupils but also staff there about the experience of disability and harassment. It's something we discuss as part of the disability equality forum that the Minister chairs as well, and it regularly comes up within the strategic equality plan board and the budget advisory group on equality—just exactly that point about raising awareness and understanding about the barriers that disabled people face.

[196] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. Thank you. If we can move on now to the inquiry that the committee undertook of the home adaptations system—and this was towards the end of 2012—we have got some questions, Minister, on that. I know Gwyn has some of the questions. Gwyn.

[197] **Gwyn R. Price:** Yes. Good morning. What progress on improving the home adaptations system has been made since the committee published its report in 2013? Has there been an improvement since 2013 in the availability of information for disabled people and their families about help they may be able to get for adaptations?

[198] **Lesley Griffiths:** There has been some improvement; not enough, in my opinion. I think some people are still waiting far too long to have adaptations to their homes. What concerns me the most is that some authorities have got it down to double figures in days. I think Newport's probably the best, if I remember rightly—no, sorry, I think Conwy's the best; I think Newport's the worst, actually. Sorry. Some are in treble figures, and I'm not on about 100; I'm on about 500 days. There is a huge disparity between them. So, it really concerns me that, whilst we've seen the best performing local authorities working really hard to bring those numbers down, best practice doesn't seem to be shared. But we have seen an improvement. I'd like to—

[199] **Gwyn R. Price:** Excuse me, Minister. What are we doing to address that, then?

[200] **Lesley Griffiths:** Well, what we're doing is that we're working with local



authorities to find out why they're not sharing that best practice. We've also set up the taskforce to look at how we can enhance the delivery of adaptations, because, for instance, we know that bedblocking—although I don't like that term—. We know that people sometimes get stuck in hospitals because those adaptations aren't going forward. One of the things that's come forward is that they'd like to provide minor adaptations without a means test. So, if there is an adaptation that costs below a certain level, people will not have to be tested and it could just be provided. So, that's another area that we are looking at. In relation to your question about information, we've produced several leaflets that we're able to give to people. I know Care & Repair Cymru has worked very closely to develop those, and I think they're the best placed to do so, working with occupational therapists, for instance, to make sure that information gets out. We've got it available on websites, but, of course, not everybody has internet access, so it's really important we have the leaflets too.

[201] So, as I say, over the last 10 years, I would say—so, prior to your report, but I think your report's obviously highlighted it—there have been improvements, but not enough and not quickly enough. I'm certainly happy to work with the Minister for Public Services to make sure local authorities are addressing those concerns.

[202] **Gwyn R. Price:** I think if you could take on board, Minister, that the stakeholders said to us that, the smaller jobs, like a handrail or access to their house—they're so small, but they're waiting and waiting and waiting. The category, surely, could be closed up there to say, 'We don't have to apply for that sort of adaptation because it's so small.'

[203] **Lesley Griffiths:** Absolutely. Absolutely. In fact, I visited a lady—she won't mind me saying—in her 90s, actually with John Griffiths, a few months ago, and that's all she'd had. That's all she wanted—a handrail. It made her life completely different. She was able to stay in her own home, independently, for the provision of—I think it was two handrails; one downstairs and one upstairs. You're right, she shouldn't be waiting 500-plus days or however many days the waiting time is.

[204] **Gwyn R. Price:** Thank you very much.

[205] **Christine Chapman:** I know that John wants to come in, and then Peter. I just wanted to say that there's certainly been a lot of frustration from stakeholders, because I know that the committee has done a number of

things on this as well. Obviously, if you can bear that in mind, Minister. John, and then Peter.

[206] **John Griffiths:** In terms of the Government-commissioned review, which was published at the beginning of this year, I wonder if you could give the committee some further information on the recommendations that will be taken forward, and any that will not be taken forward.

[207] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes. I've asked officials to work with stakeholders so that we've got that enhanced adaptation system. One thing I'm very keen about is that we don't throw away all the good stuff, because there is some good stuff that is being done. Certainly, the rapid response adaptation scheme is very good. So, it's not all bad; but I think it's about picking up the good stuff and then taking forward the recommendations.

[208] So, I set up a group that will report by March of next year to inform the next Government. They've met once. I think they're due to meet again next month to talk about work streams. I wish it could be quicker. I want to see a bit of pace on this because there are too many people waiting. But it is important that we get it right and that we don't throw away all the good stuff that is being done.

[209] **John Griffiths:** Okay. Just on performance monitoring, Minister, I think this committee—it predates my membership—was concerned about the number of previous reviews and inquiries in this area of work and activity. I think that the idea that monitoring and evaluation perhaps hasn't always been as robust as it might have been has also been central to the committee's concerns. Could you give the committee confidence now that Welsh Government does have work in train to ensure that monitoring and evaluation is robust and, you know, that we can all be confident that necessary progress is being made?

[210] **Lesley Griffiths:** I think that's a very fair question. I think we're looking at the way that we measure performance. We need to get the best aspects of that, but also we've set up some work streams now to look at that very point. If John wants to add anything—.

[211] **Mr Howells:** We're very aware of the history of recommendations in this area that don't seem to have generated whole-scale improvement, although, as the Minister mentioned, things are better than they were five years ago. I don't think we are—. We haven't yet found a way of capturing

what this sector is doing for lots of vulnerable people around Wales. The disabled facilities grant statistics measure performance in relation to the hardest, most complicated cases that local authorities deal with. They don't reflect the long tail of simple handrail-type of jobs that aren't captured in the statistics. So, there's an awful lot of work going on that isn't captured in how well we are delivering the most complicated cases. So, we want to see whether we can both improve performance and find a way of measuring all the things that are happening that are making a real difference for vulnerable people.

[212] **John Griffiths:** That work is ongoing at the moment.

[213] **Mr Howells:** The Minister has given us a deadline of March for getting it all sorted.

[214] **Alun Davies:** Why don't we know that? That's pretty straightforward information. I'm surprised that we don't have that information available.

[215] **Mr Howells:** Because the official statistics measure the disabled facilities grants. We have, over recent years, invented a funding stream for smaller scale interventions, which aren't captured by the official statistics. So, there's activity going on that is making a difference, but it is not captured in the—

[216] **Alun Davies:** I understand that. The question was: why are those statistics gathered in such a way, and not in a more comprehensive fashion?

[217] **Mr Howells:** Because there is a statutory requirement to gather particular statistics and that challenge has not been sorted up until now. I am anxious is that we should try and sort it.

[218] **Alun Davies:** By when?

[219] **Mr Howells:** The Minister's asked for answers on this by March.

[220] **Alun Davies:** So, you'll be able to write to us in March with the answer to that question.

[221] **Mr Howells:** We'll write to you with the outcome of the working groups. I'm conscious that a number of people have looked at this over a long period, but I'm keen that we should crack it.

[222] **Christine Chapman:** Time is moving on, I think. So, it's really important that we get that information. Okay. I'll bring Peter in now.

[223] **Peter Black:** This was actually an issue that was raised in our last report in terms of the performance indicator, and we made a clear recommendation and yet the Minister rejected that recommendation. So, having rejected our recommendation, why wasn't the work done back when we made the recommendation?

[224] **Lesley Griffiths:** What number recommendation was that?

[225] **Peter Black:** Fourteen.

[226] **Lesley Griffiths:** Fourteen. Yes, I think this was done around not wanting to burden local authorities too much, but frankly—

[227] **Peter Black:** So, you've changed your mind on that, now.

[228] **Lesley Griffiths:** Well, having been in post—. I picked up this report when I came in post, and having looked now at what we're trying to do to get an enhanced delivery—and one of your other recommendations, for instance, was having a single point of entry—I've asked officials to look at it much more holistically now. So, I think we will see—. Well, we need to get that activity, frankly. We do need that activity to be captured, now, and I think, if we get that enhanced delivery, we will be able to do that.

[229] **Peter Black:** I'm sure those of us who were involved in that report will be gratified at your late recognition that we were right. But the other point I wanted to make was that, although there has been improvement—I looked at the figures last week as it happens—there are still a large number of authorities where you're waiting more than six months to get a disabled facilities grant. I accept the issues about the different types of improvements, but the general performance indicator that we have now is more than six months. Is there any concerted effort by the Government to actually try to get everyone below six months, and does that involve any extra resources being made available to do that?

[230] **Lesley Griffiths:** I haven't got any extra resources, unfortunately.

[231] **Peter Black:** Well, it's capital. I'm sure you could find some resources

within the Welsh Government. It's not a great deal of money.

[232] **Lesley Griffiths:** I think one of the things that has helped bring the times down is Care & Repair. You'll be aware that they're going through some mergers. I spoke at the Care & Repair conference last week and they were telling me that the front-line services they have been able to protect much more than they thought they would be able to. There've been a couple of mergers that have been a little difficult, but I think they have gone very well, and it would be good to see the local authorities, perhaps, being able to work more closely together on this agenda too. But I'm hoping that, when the group reports to me in March, we will have a much better story to tell, because you're right: it's not acceptable that there is such disparity between the local authorities.

[233] **Peter Black:** It seems to me that what's missing here is a Government lead in terms of saying to local authorities, 'This is the target we want you to aim for in terms of doing that.' And, that seems to have been missing right from the very start.

[234] **Lesley Griffiths:** Well, once we've got the report, if we think that that would help—. And, certainly the Minister for Public Services is very happy to give that message also to local authorities. I did it in my previous portfolio, as well.

[235] **Peter Black:** Exactly, yes.

[236] **Lesley Griffiths:** And, maybe, if it's a target that we need to give them, then we can look at that when the report comes through in March.

[237] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. Did you want to come in, Mark?

[238] **Mark Isherwood:** On this, yes. It's several years since the College of Occupational Therapists highlighted good practice in this area, which wasn't about spending more money but about using resource better, and they referred to Conwy, where, many, many years ago, long before the credit crunch, the OTs were working closely with housing departments, thinking outside the box and using the resources they had far better, more effectively and more efficiently. This was also raised in the evidence to the committee for our report on this area.

[239] So, in addition to resource, what have you done or what will you now

do, given that it's years since this was highlighted, to identify that good practice and try and spread it? Unfortunately, I understand that the OT involved in Conwy has taken redundancy, which, again, perhaps, indicates a failing of awareness of benefit on the ground there. But if we look at what was achieved, how can we build on that?

[240] **Mr Howells:** The person from Conwy may have retired, but I'm happy to reassure the committee that there are an awful lot of committed occupational therapists who are seeking to influence us in sorting this area of business. They're a member of our working group, and they are frustrated by some of the working practices around Wales. They have taken me to see examples of excellent practice where the therapists are transforming what's made available for individuals, so we've been very anxious for them to be part of this discussion. There are lots of interesting models developing around Wales. Care & Repair Cymru is doing quite a lot to highlight those areas of good practice, but there's further to go.

[241] **Peter Black:** To what extent are local authorities following good practice in terms of using outside occupational therapists? Some of them insist on keeping all of this in-house, which means that big queues grow behind that. To what extent are local authorities actually being more creative in this particular field?

11:15

[242] **Mr Howells:** We've got 22 local authorities; we have 22 different approaches in this area. There's interesting activity within Care and Repair agencies to accredit people who aren't qualified occupational therapists but who are able to do low-level assessments without requiring professionally trained staff. There are all kinds of things that can be done to improve services in this area, but there's more to be done.

[243] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you. I want to move on now to the topic of affordable housing. There's been some activity from the committee on this, so I'm going to bring Mark in.

[244] **Mark Isherwood:** Thank you. I think it's six years since the Welsh Government commissioned an independent report on housing need in Wales up to 2026, indicating a need for somewhere between 14,000 and 15,000 units a year. I know, this year, the house builders commissioned a report from Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners validating a slightly higher, but similar

figure, and, more recently, the Chartered Institute of Housing have come up with a 15,000 figure, including 5,000 affordable houses per annum, against which we set a Welsh Government's only target, which is 10,000 affordable homes, whatever 'affordable' is defined as, over an Assembly term. What are your views, therefore, on whether your target is ambitious enough?

[245] **Lesley Griffiths:** Well, the initial target was 7,500 and then that was increased to 10,000, and I certainly think it was an ambitious target. We'd achieved 6,890 houses at the end of the third year of this Government. I'm expecting the updated figures for the end of the fourth year next month. I certainly expect to see a healthy increase in that, so I'm very confident we are going to achieve the target of 10,000, but we haven't just got that target, we have other schemes as well. You'll be aware of our empty houses into homes scheme; that target was 5,000. We are going to really exceed that very well. However, we're told there are 20,000 empty homes in Wales, so we need to be looking at what more we can do. So, I think we've absolutely exceeded that target, and I will be making a statement on that.

[246] You'll be aware that we also support market housing; it's not just affordable housing. So, we've got our help to buy scheme, which house builders really welcome. I launched a housing pact with the house builders on Monday; I think that showed the commitment from both sides to work in partnership to make sure that we provide the homes that the people of Wales need.

[247] **Mark Isherwood:** You add all those together in terms of targets, which your question was about, and it's barely one year of the five years of the need being identified by all these bodies, so, clearly, if we're going to address that need, we need to consider how we're going to change the way we do things. What steps have you taken to make more public land available for development, both personally and working with other Ministers?

[248] **Lesley Griffiths:** There's a great deal of work going on across Government. My portfolio's already brought forward a number of significant Welsh Government-owned sites for housing delivery. We've supported over 400 additional homes, and other areas across Government have carried out that. I've got a dedicated land release team that looks at these sites and at what can be done there. I work very closely with, obviously, the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport's department to identify that—always looking, you know, for further potential sites where we can have housing development. You may be aware that the First Minister commissioned a

public sector assets review, so we've contributed—or certainly my officials have contributed to that as well.

[249] We've got e-PIMs, which is the all-Wales public sector property database; that's captured all public sector property, and that means we can look at making sure that facilities and properties are well used. We've also worked very closely with other agencies and departments. So, for instance, the NHS estate is also on e-PIMs and, certainly, when I was health Minister, we were always looking at whether there was any land we could free up for housing, and that continues now. All registered social landlords have access to that system, so they use that also. Unitary authorities obviously place details of their property on it, and that allows the public—you know, that's publicly available, that platform, to access information.

[250] **Mark Isherwood:** In the last Assembly, the Welsh Government, with a similar agenda, announced it was going to release some Forestry Commission land, much of which turned out to be undevelopable, despite initial investment, because of lack of local services and access. Recently, a local authority in north Wales that was challenged over its five-year supply figure—which the Welsh Government required it to come up with—being delivered on green barrier land said it was because the other land, the brownfield or governmental land, didn't have the local service support necessarily available. How do you reconcile those two?

[251] **Lesley Griffiths:** I don't know about the forestry land. I don't know whether you can say anything.

[252] **Mr Howells:** By its nature, forestry land must be challenging for housing development purposes. Each local authority has got a different story to tell about five-year land supply. My planning colleagues have been maintaining significant pressure on local authorities to come forward with realistic plans in their local development plans. We've got pretty good coverage now across Wales, but it's for individual authorities to work out what's going to be the offer on their patch—is it brownfield; is it green belt? Those are really difficult local issues.

[253] **Mark Isherwood:** The point was to what extent would you expect the land made available to already be supported by local services, or to have local services added when that land became available?

[254] **Mr Howells:** It's up to the individual authority to decide what their



offer is to the market. Some of them have got sites that have been developed. There's a shortage of capital support available. Welsh Government has been putting money into bringing certain sites closer to being able to be used for housing.

[255] **Lesley Griffiths:** I know that Carl Sargeant, the Minister with responsibility for planning, has been looking into the viability question. I think he's commissioned some research into the viability of land, so I'm sure he'll be able to share that information with the committee.

[256] **Mark Isherwood:** Okay. Finally, given the reducing social housing grant and the reliance on capital grants since devolution, could you update us on your approach to more innovative forms of finance to fund affordable housing in Wales?

[257] **Lesley Griffiths:** Well, I should say that, over this term of government, we will have invested over £400 million in the social housing grant programme. We have had successful innovative funding—it's the housing finance grant, I think, that has been the most successful. That's delivered over 1,000 houses. But certainly we are seeing them doing it for themselves, if you like. They are coming forward with ideas themselves to fund developments. Certainly, I've seen quite a few developments that have been funded without Government funding. Officials are currently working on a second phase of an innovative grant, working very closely with the Minister for Finance and Government Business, too.

[258] **Mark Isherwood:** Obviously, the housing finance grant was welcome at a time of a general shortage of funding, but it's not long-term sustainable as a core supply because of its impact on gearing. What consideration are you currently giving to registered social landlords developing their own arm's-length companies as borrowing vehicles?

[259] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes, that's something we're looking at, because we know we've got to bring further private finance into this sector, so those conversations are ongoing. As I say, officials are currently working up the details around the next phase.

[260] **Christine Chapman:** Okay, I have a couple of supplementaries from some Members: Alun, then Mike, then Peter. So, Alun.

[261] **Alun Davies:** Yes, thank you very much. I'm interested in the e-PIMS

database, as it happens. It was established two years ago—something like that—by Government.

[262] **Lesley Griffiths:** Maybe three years, yes.

[263] **Alun Davies:** Maybe three years. Is it fully populated now?

[264] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes, there are about 22,000 entries on it. It's very big now.

[265] **Alun Davies:** So, do we understand the amount of land? There are 22,000 properties, or holdings, yes? That's a mixture of individual properties plus land available.

[266] **Mr Howells:** All sorts of land.

[267] **Lesley Griffiths:** All sorts.

[268] **Alun Davies:** Do we have a target for the release of that for housing?

[269] **Lesley Griffiths:** Not specifically, no.

[270] **Alun Davies:** You don't. Do you know how much has been released for housing?

[271] **Lesley Griffiths:** Not off the top of my head, but I'm sure we could—

[272] **Mr Howells:** Well, we've got the figure of 2,000 homes built on public land during the first three years of this Assembly.

[273] **Alun Davies:** Which predates the establishment of that database, of course.

[274] **Mr Howells:** Yes, it is not driven by the database, but it is part of local authorities using land where that's possible.

[275] **Alun Davies:** The reason I ask is that, in the response to the original committee report, the database was to be both the tool by which you would understand the extent of Government holdings and the tool by which you would then be able to release those holdings for the building of affordable homes. So, it strikes me then that, if you are to use that tool effectively, then

you'd have the understanding of the dimensions of the holdings it describes, which you appear to have, but you would also then have to drive that. I would anticipate a target or an annual basis, I assume, to actually release that land in a way that is targeted at areas where there is a shortage and where money is available to deliver, and that would then be used as a tool in managing the Welsh Government's intervention in the market.

[276] **Mr Howells:** e-PINS is a broader database than just Government holdings. My colleagues have had to work very hard to get all public sector agencies to agree to put their land holdings on the database. So, even generating a database was a bit of a triumph in itself. Now that we've got it, commercial builders should have easier access to where the public land sites are, but the next iteration for public sector organisations working together is 'Okay then, which are the key sites that offer prospect for housing?' At the moment, we feel we've done quite well to get the database launched, but now we've got to use it.

[277] **Alun Davies:** We've had to wait for two years now, John. How much land has been released in the two or three years that we've had this database, and how much do you propose to release in the next two years?

[278] **Lesley Griffiths:** As I say, I don't know those figures off the top of my head.

[279] **Christine Chapman:** Could you come back to us with that, then?

[280] **Lesley Griffiths:** I'm also just thinking of the report I mentioned that was commissioned by the First Minister that Chris Sutton undertook of all the public sector assets. I know the report has recently been given to the First Minister. It could be that we could link that into this and have a look at a target coming forward then.

[281] **Alun Davies:** It would be useful for us to understand how this is being used as a tool to push and promote the building of affordable homes, as Mark has—

[282] **Christine Chapman:** Minister, could you write to us with information on that? It's a really important point.

[283] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes, certainly, and I'm sure the First Minister will put out something about the report.

[284] **Christine Chapman:** Okay, thank you. Mike.

[285] **Mike Hedges:** Can I move on slightly to co-operative housing, which I talk about a lot, and council housing, which I also talk about a lot? They are two areas that do provide affordable housing. What progress has been made in both of those recently?

[286] **Lesley Griffiths:** I've got a of progress in relation to co-operative. I'm due to visit Cadwyn Housing Association in Cardiff. They've just opened, I think it might be 100 houses; I can't remember off the top of my head. And also we're now seeing local authorities building council houses for the first time for a long time; I know Flintshire are proposing to build. I think the fact that we went out to consultation on ending the right to buy and the right to acquire has really given local authorities the confidence. Certainly, when I was in a previous portfolio, local authorities were saying to me 'Why should we build council houses if then they're going to be sold two years down the line under right to buy?' So, you'll be aware we've halved the discount on right to buy, and there is legislation being prepared if the next Government wants to take that forward.

[287] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. Thank you. Peter.

[288] **Peter Black:** Just a quick question, Minister. Mark Isherwood at the very beginning referred to the Holmans report which was published in 2010 on the need for housing in Wales. Has the Welsh Government reviewed or commissioned research to review that report and to look at it again?

[289] **Mr Howells:** The answer is 'yes'. The Public Policy Institute for Wales has been commissioned and actually did some work with Professor Holmans. Unfortunately, Professor Holmans died earlier this year—

[290] **Peter Black:** I know, yes.

[291] **Mr Howells:** —before that report had been completed, and he has been acknowledged for a long time as the UK expert. So, we've been trying to see whether we can unpick that research to get something that's in a state to be published.

[292] **Peter Black:** So, you have no indication when you're likely to publish that at all?

[293] **Mr Howells:** PPIW are pushing to do it quite shortly.

[294] **Lesley Griffiths:** I think it's the autumn.

[295] **Peter Black:** The autumn of this year?

[296] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes.

[297] **Peter Black:** Okay, that's great, thanks.

[298] **Christine Chapman:** Okay, Mark, you had a very brief question.

[299] **Mark Isherwood:** You referred to Flintshire council housing, and clearly Flintshire needs more social housing. But, to what extent are you monitoring the use of running release from housing revenue, the housing revenue account subsidy system, which was primarily focused on achieving the Welsh housing quality standard? Of course, Flintshire was one of the three failing authorities that had to come up with a new business plan to achieve that. And second, with regard to the money released to build council housing, to what extent are they being required to show that they're maximising the resource to maximise the supply by working with partners to deliver, if, for instance, a housing association partner could deliver more than the council itself might?

11:30

[300] **Lesley Griffiths:** I'll let John answer that.

[301] **Mr Howells:** We shouldn't overstate the amount of money being released for construction from HRAS at the moment. However, given our desire that councils should be cranking up activity in this area, we've established a group, which is working with each of the authorities in Wales, that's now got flexibility it didn't have previously. The challenge locally is to develop sensible arrangements with local partners because there are often RSLs better placed than the council to engage in construction. I suspect the answer will be different in each part of Wales, but we've got to group together to try and identify opportunities moving forward.

[302] **Christine Chapman:** We've got less than quarter of an hour left and we've got a couple more items to cover. The next aspect of the Minister's

portfolio is home building, and the committee undertook a number of things on home building, so I'd like to move on to that now. Peter, you've got some questions on that.

[303] **Peter Black:** Yes, thank you. You issued a statement on this, Minister, last week, I think, which I've neglected to bring with me.

[304] **Lesley Griffiths:** And me.

[305] **Peter Black:** I seem to recall a couple of things from it. In terms of the removal of barriers, which, of course, was the focus of our report, and this question, what work is being done to identify and remove those barriers to house building in Wales, and what barriers have you identified?

[306] **Lesley Griffiths:** There's a great deal of work going on in relation to this. A lot of it does fall in Carl Sargeant's portfolio and I mentioned the research he's undertaken in relation to viability. He has building regulations. We do a lot of joint meetings with house builders; in fact, we've got a meeting on 22 October, which we'll both be attending, to talk to the house builders. You'll be aware that we launched a pact on Monday of this week in Barry, and I thought that showed really good partnership working between Government and the house builders. One of the things that we also think is helping is the local development plans. Obviously, local authorities have to come up with a five-year plan; I think that's really helping house builders too. I know that the Minister for Natural Resources has got sanctions that face local planning authorities if they don't come forward with an LDP.

[307] There are barriers, of course, but we've had some really good news. House building is really on the up now. In 2014-15, we saw a 20 per cent increase; that was the biggest increase we've seen since 2007, obviously before the recession. The first quarter of this year has shown a 10 per cent increase, so I think we are overcoming the barriers. Obviously, different parts of Wales have different barriers as well, and rural is obviously an issue. So, I announced funding to continue the rural housing enablers, and, again, that's gone down very well because that helps overcome the barriers in rural areas.

[308] **Peter Black:** I've found the statement now.

[309] **Lesley Griffiths:** Well done. [*Laughter.*]

[310] **Peter Black:** In terms of the barriers, the two that come up most often when I talk to builders are access to finance, and, apart from planning, which is also an issue which they raise often, the connection, particularly for small builders, to statutory undertakers, which are quite expensive. Have you done any work on either of those two issues?

[311] **Christine Chapman:** John.

[312] **Mr Howells:** We haven't got much money to magic away the financial challenges that small builders in particular face. But there's an interesting case study emerging from Finance Wales, who tell us that they've been told by small builders that the banks are resistant to funding small-scale developments all over Wales. Finance Wales have been utilising one of their development funds to put small builders in funds, which seems to be making a difference, even in rural areas. So, we're looking at that because we think it's a really interesting model. It's using loan finance and it seems to be getting things going at a time when the banks are very cautious.

[313] **Peter Black:** I was aware of that initiative. I've been told by house builders that that is useful, but it is still a bit restrictive in terms of how the finance is available.

[314] **Mr Howells:** Yes, there are strings attached.

[315] **Peter Black:** The Minister for economic development is about to make a statement on a development bank for Wales. I'm just wondering whether house building and the availability of finance is going to be incorporated in that particular statement.

[316] **Mr Howells:** I don't know, but Finance Wales are very attuned to the benefits that they derive from engagement with small builders. We have done some work with statutory undertakers, which concluded that a lot of it was down to communication and making sure that people understood the procedure they needed to go through. A lot of it was to do with the RSL focus rather than small builders, but that did serve to highlight the need for the undertakers to be slightly sharper in the way that they responded to development proposals. So, we've been trying to ginger up activity in this area, but it's a complicated area.

[317] **Peter Black:** I'll ask my last question because we are short of time, but the one thing that was missing from the statement, I think, was any target in

terms of how many private sector homes you'd be looking to come out of this particular pact with the house builders. We've seen what the Holmans requirement is. Do you have any targets at all in terms of new house building in Wales?

[318] **Lesley Griffiths:** No. The idea of the pact was just to—. It was the house builders who thought that that would be a useful thing to show the commitment of both that sector and the Government, but we didn't set a target. The main thing they want me to do is to extend help to buy, which I have said that I am happy to do beyond 2016, but I can't do anything until I know how much funding I've got and, unfortunately, because the comprehensive spending review is so late—. I was talking to the finance Minister before we came in. She was at a Confederation of British Industry event last night and she said that that was the one, single thing that came over: that we must extent help to buy beyond March 2016.

[319] **Peter Black:** As I understand it, help to buy is mostly around guarantees as opposed to direct funding and it's also a particular type of capital coming from the UK Government that requires repayment—

[320] **Mr Howells:** Equity loan.

[321] **Peter Black:** —so, the finance is not such a big issue in that regard, as I understand it.

[322] **Mr Howells:** We haven't got the money yet.

[323] **Christine Chapman:** Mark, you have a brief question before we move on.

[324] **Mark Isherwood:** Yes. You talk about funding sources and the problem with banks and the role of Finance Wales or its successor. Have you had any dialogue with social equity funders because there are funds specifically targeted at housing schemes, particularly where those schemes may have added value in other ways?

[325] **Mr Howells:** We've had discussions with big city finance operations about them becoming more active in Wales, but we need good schemes to take to them and there are a number of RSLs at the moment developing interesting schemes, where they're trying to seek city finance, which may be a slightly different category from what you're thinking about but it's in the



same kind of space. You need a smart scheme that stacks up economically.

[326] **Mark Isherwood:** Yes, and which meets the social objectives of the fund, but there are growing schemes out there with big pots of money potentially available.

[327] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. John, you had a short question.

[328] **John Griffiths:** I've got a question on self-build schemes. In my constituency, and I'm sure it's the case in constituencies across Wales, there are existing developments that have been in place for quite some time, which involved self-build and enabled people to purchase property affordably—people who perhaps wouldn't have been able to afford those homes other than through those schemes. Nothing much has happened in recent times in terms of those sorts of schemes and I just wonder whether Welsh Government might be considering what more it can do to encourage them.

[329] **Lesley Griffiths:** I think it should be available if people do want to self-build. I think there should be the availability within the LDP, if people do want to self-build. I haven't had much to do with self-build actually; I haven't had many queries around self-build, but I think that choice needs to be there, if somebody wants to do it.

[330] **Mr Howells:** We've left it to local authorities. There's an interesting model coming out of Stoke, where people are allowed to buy empty properties for a token amount of money and then they do them up. Given the information that we have about the number of empty properties in Wales, I suspect that there are some things to explore there as well.

[331] **Christine Chapman:** Interesting. Okay, thank you. If we can finally move on now—we've got about six minutes left—to the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013 and the Housing (Wales) Act 2014. I know that Alun has some questions and there may be some supplementaries. Alun.

[332] **Alun Davies:** Yes, thank you. Just very quickly, Minister, I'd be grateful if you could outline to us the steps that you are taking to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Mobile Homes Act and also the steps you've taken to ensure that mobile home owners are aware of their new rights and responsibilities.

[333] **Lesley Griffiths:** All the necessary legislative steps have been taken. My

officials monitor the implementation of the legislation by local authorities. I think we've got three local authorities in Wales that haven't got any sites at all, but, of the 19 authorities that have, 50 per cent of them are now licensed. It's very important that the other 50 per cent are licensed in the very near future.

[334] I'm undertaking a review of the economies of the park home industry. I think it's a fascinating sector; I can see why Peter did it. I've got one in my constituency that keeps me busy, shall I say? We've done a great deal of training, and we've held workshops with park home residents and other stakeholders, and that includes local authorities right across Wales, to make sure they're aware of their duties and responsibilities. We've had a lot of information sheets. Local authorities are currently implementing their duties to issue site licenses to all of the sites within their areas that are covered by the legislation.

[335] **Alun Davies:** I don't have any further questions on that.

[336] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. Any other questions on housing? No? Peter.

[337] **Peter Black:** I should record—I may have mentioned it earlier—that I am a member of a local council, which I think needs to be put in the minutes. I don't think we really touched much on local councils, but perhaps it needs to be recorded.

[338] **Christine Chapman:** Right, okay. Any other questions at all? No? Okay. Well, can I thank you, Minister, and both John and Amelia, for attending today. We'll send you a transcript of the meeting so that you can check for any inaccuracies.

[339] **Lesley Griffiths:** Thank you very much.

[340] **Christine Chapman:** Okay, thank you, Minister.

11:41

**Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42 i Benderfynu Gwahardd y Cyhoedd  
o'r Cyfarfod**

**Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to Resolve to Exclude the Public  
from the Meeting**

*Cynnig:*

*Motion:*

*bod y pwyllgor yn penderfynu that the committee resolves to  
gwahardd y cyhoedd o'r cyfarfod ar exclude the public from the meeting  
gyfer eitem 5 yn unol â Rheol for item 5 in accordance with  
Sefydlog 17.42(vi). Standing Order 17.42(vi).*

*Cynigiwyd y cynnig.*

*Motion moved.*

[341] **Christine Chapman:** Could I now invite the committee to go into private session to discuss the evidence? Are you content? Yes. Okay.

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig.*

*Motion agreed.*

*Daeth rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod i ben am 11:41.*

*The public part of the meeting ended at 11:41.*

*Ailymgynullodd y pwyllgor yn gyhoeddus am 12:47.*

*The committee reconvened in public at 12:47.*

**Ymchwiliad Etifeddiaeth: Y Gweinidog Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus  
Legacy Inquiry: Minister for Public Services**

[342] **Christine Chapman:** Welcome back, everyone. The next item today is the legacy inquiry. Today, we are taking evidence from the Minister for Public Services. First of all, can I give a very warm welcome to Minister Leighton Andrews, the Minister for Public Services, and your two officials, Owain Lloyd, deputy director, reforming local government, and Bon Westcott, deputy head of community safety? Welcome to you all. Minister, we've got—

[343] **Peter Black:** Chair, can I just say that I'm a member of a local council?

[344] **Christine Chapman:** Right, okay. Thank you, Peter. There are a number

of areas we want to cover, Minister, so we will take them in turn. The first aspect of the scrutiny session is on community safety. The committee has undertaken a number of activities, scrutiny sessions and inquiries into community safety. So, we want to start off with that. I just want to ask my question. You say, Minister, in your evidence, that significant progress has been made with regard to the Welsh Government's community safety agenda. I just wonder—could you say a little bit more about that?

[345] **The Minister for Public Services (Leighton Andrews):** Yes. Over the period of this Assembly, we've seen a very significant improvement in respect of fire. If you look at fire over the last 10 years, the number of fires has fallen by 56 per cent, fire casualties by 58 per cent and the number of deliberate fires by 67 per cent. Since April 2011 alone, fires have fallen by 44 per cent, fire casualties by 23 per cent, and deliberate fires by 55 per cent. This year, we have passed the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015, which means we have statutory powers that will ensure stronger leadership. The new national adviser starts next week, 96 new independent domestic violence advocates are being trained, and we have exceeded our 10,000 Safer Lives commitment, with over 14,000 individuals reporting being or feeling safer as a result of the support provided. Of course, we've implemented our commitment in respect of the 500 additional full-time equivalent Welsh Government-funded community support officers. The research we have indicates that an increased presence of CSOs in Welsh communities has been observed by people in Wales.

[346] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. Thank you, Minister. Alun, did you have a question?

[347] **Alun Davies:** Yes, I think that what the Minister's just said in response to that previous question does reflect my experience in Blaenau Gwent, where the community support officers are having a significant impact and where, I think, senior officers compare the situation to that across the border in England. But, I wonder if we could discuss more widely some of the services that the Welsh Government provide—or fund, should I say—in terms of youth intervention and prevention projects in Wales. Some concerns have been expressed to this committee that the UK Government's cuts programme is going to have a significant impact on the Welsh Government's ability to maintain funding for these individual programmes. Could you perhaps outline to us how you see the future of these programmes?

[348] **Leighton Andrews:** Well, I certainly agree with that observation, and I

share your concerns around the reduction in funding from the UK Government. I've expressed my concerns on these issues to the Secretary of State for Justice and the chair of the Youth Justice Board. It's worth putting on the record, of course, that the whole area of youth justice has been a significant success. The number of first-time entrants into the youth justice system continues to fall. We've had a 54 per cent reduction in those entering the system between 2010–11 and 2013–14. In addition, between November 2010 and November 2014, the number of young people in custody attached to Welsh youth offending teams fell by 57 per cent from 119 to 51. So, we know we are having successes, but we are concerned about the impact of planned cutbacks by the justice department in London.

[349] **Alun Davies:** In terms of moving forward, you said in response to the Chair's opening question that you would be announcing the appointment of the violence against women adviser—I think you said next week. I think many people were surprised that that's a part-time role. It would be useful if you could explain your thinking behind that and, at the same time, perhaps, outline when you expect to publish the national strategy that is required under the Act.

[350] **Leighton Andrews:** Yes. I'm very pleased that Rhian Bowen–Davies starts in post on Monday. We advertised, seeking to recruit a wide range of candidates for the post. The specific arrangements of the part-time appointment were kept as flexible as possible to ensure we could offer the position to accommodate the best candidate available. Rhian obviously brings huge expertise in the field of violence against women and strong leadership and communication skills. The commencement Order for the national strategy has been made, and this will come into force on 5 October. The first national strategy will be published by November 2016.

[351] **Alun Davies:** 2016?

[352] **Leighton Andrews:** That was the original date, if you remember. The Act requires that the first national strategy is published no later than six months after the date on which the first Assembly election is held following the commencement.

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

[354] **Christine Chapman:** Okay? Thank you. Rhodri, did you have any questions on community safety?

[355] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Diolch yn fawr iawn, Gadeirydd. Ymddiheuriadau am fod yn hwyr. Roeddwn yn gorfod cwrdd â llysgennad Lwcsembwrg, sydd newid gymryd drosodd ei chyfnod yn llywyddu Cyngor yr Undeb Ewropeaidd.

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Thank you very much, Chair. Apologies for being late. I had to meet the ambassador of Luxembourg, which has just taken over the presidency of the Council of the European Union.

[356] Weinidog, ni fyddwch yn synnu fy mod i'n gofyn cwestiynau ynglŷn â chomisiynwyr heddlu a throsedd. Rwy'n credu bod gennym ni deimladau digon tebyg ynglŷn â'u penodiad a'u heffeithiolrwydd. A oes unrhyw dystiolaeth o gwbl eu bod nhw wedi cael unrhyw fath o effaith gadarnhaol neu adeiladol ar ddiogelwch cymunedau ers eu hethol?

Minister, you won't be surprised that I'm asking questions about police and crime commissioners. I think we have quite similar feelings about their appointment and their effectiveness. Is there any evidence to show that they've had a positive or constructive impact on community safety since they were elected?

[357] **Leighton Andrews:** Well, I think there is some good work that is being done by some of the police and crime commissioners. For example, there is the work that's been done in south Wales in respect of the night-time economy, and the way in which they have managed to divert people from accident and emergency, and the work that they've been doing on violence against women, and I think that that work is commendable. That is not to say, of course, that that work couldn't carry on under different arrangements.

[358] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Ac, wrth gwrs, mae eu prif gyfrifoldeb nhw ynglŷn ag ariannu gwasanaethau. A ydy'r sefyllfa honno wedi gwella yn ystod eu tymor nhw?

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** And, of course, their main responsibility is in relation to funding services. Has that situation improved during their term?

[359] **Leighton Andrews:** I don't think, in general, there have been significant changes in respect of what they're funding, though I'm sure that Members representing specific parts of Wales will have views on services that are being provided in their own areas.

[360] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Mae Llywodraeth Cymru, Weinidog, wedi bod yn gadarnhaol iawn ynglŷn â'r ffaith bod yna 500 o swyddogion cymorth cymunedol ychwanegol wedi eu penodi. Be wnewch chi o gasgliad Sefydliad y Prifysgolion ar Wyddorau'r Heddlu nad yw hi'n bosibl i ddod i'r casgliad fod y penodiadau yma wedi cael effaith ar gyfraddau troseddau, ac i ba raddau yr ŷch chi'n credu bod y swyddogion yma'n cyfrannu at werth am arian i'r trethdalwyr?

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** The Welsh Government, Minister, has been very positive about the fact that 500 new community support officers have been appointed. What do you make of the conclusion of the Universities' Police Science Institute that it is not possible to conclude that those appointments have had an impact on crime rates, and to what extent do you think that those officers are contributing to value for money for taxpayers?

[361] **Leighton Andrews:** Before you came in, I gave some evidence in respect of how people in the community felt about the availability of CSOs on patrol and that they'd noted an increase in Welsh communities from around 76 per cent in 2012 perceiving CSOs on patrol to 90 per cent in 2014. So, I think we've got evidence that the community is aware of the increased presence. Certainly, we know from our discussions with the chief constables that the provision is very much welcomed by the police. We know that CSOs are very heavily involved in their local communities and I think that they're clearly having an impact on perceptions of community safety overall.

[362] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** A dweud y gwir, mi fyddwn i'n cydsynio â hynny, Weinidog. Mae'r rhaid i mi ddweud bod yr adroddiadau yr wyf yn eu derbyn o fewn fy etholaeth yn rhai cadarnhaol iawn. Serch hynny, mae Sefydliad y Prifysgolion ar Wyddorau'r Heddlu yn dadlau bod yr amrywiaethau ynglŷn â'r ffordd y maen nhw'n cael eu defnyddio ledled Cymru yn golygu ei bod hi'n anodd iawn asesu'r effaith y maen nhw'n ei chael a'r llwyddiant sydd yn dod yn eu sgil nhw. A fyddech chi'n cytuno â hynny?

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** I would agree with that, Minister. The reports that I have had within my constituency are very positive. However, the Universities' Police Science Institute does argue that the variations in terms of the way that they are used across Wales does mean that it is very difficult to assess the impact that they have and the success that comes from using them. Would you agree with that?

[363] **Leighton Andrews:** These are operational matters, and how they are deployed are clearly operational matters for the chief constables in particular areas. They will make assessments of the needs. The needs in Carmarthenshire might be different from the needs in inner-city Swansea or Cardiff. I think that is an operational matter that we need to leave to them.

[364] I think the reality is that there are a variety of policies contributing to a reduction in crime rates overall. There are certain areas where we know that certain kinds of crime have increased. I don't think that the CSOs on their own can be isolated from the overall work of the police.

[365] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Diolch yn fawr. **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Thank you very much.

[366] **Christine Chapman:** If we haven't got any other questions—

[367] **Peter Black:** Can I ask one?

[368] **Christine Chapman:** Sorry, Peter; I apologise, because you did ask.

[369] **Peter Black:** Can I just say from the outset that I think that the work of the CSOs is absolutely outstanding and I think that the additional money that the Welsh Government has put into that has been well worth spending and has had a significant impact on local communities? Nevertheless, the Home Office figures show that, at its peak, since 2011, we actually only have 460 extra CSOs, but I'm not going to quibble over 40 because we're close enough. But the issue, since that time, is that the number of CSOs has actually declined. So, we are now in a situation whereby, instead of those CSOs being additional, which was the original intention, they are effectively replacing CSOs who are leaving the force. So, we are effectively subsidising the Home Office. Are you comfortable with that?

[370] **Leighton Andrews:** Can I first of all correct the factual position? The principle that we have always applied from the beginning is that there should be 500 more officers on the street than there would have been without this funding. We are clear, from the work that we have done to ensure the effective use of our money, that that is the case, and I think that that will be acknowledged by the police forces in Wales.

13:00



[371] I've made a commitment, obviously, to the future funding of this programme into 2017. Clearly, there are public spending decisions that are pending. We will get the comprehensive spending review at the end of November. There have been a number of recent reports suggesting that there will be deep cuts in police services as a result of the comprehensive spending review of the Conservative Government.

[372] **Peter Black:** Well, the actual Home Office figures don't support the fact that there are 500. They say 460.

[373] **Leighton Andrews:** So, you're misinterpreting what we've said. What we have said—let me repeat it—

[374] **Peter Black:** The figures don't support it.

[375] **Leighton Andrews:** Sorry; what we have said from the beginning is that there should be 500 more officers on the street than there would have been without this funding. That has been accomplished.

[376] **Peter Black:** No, the Home Office figures—

[377] **Leighton Andrews:** Sorry; you are misinterpreting the figures, and you're misinterpreting what I am saying.

[378] **Peter Black:** No, the figures are quite clear. It's quite clear; there are 460 extra. But the point of my question was that the number of CSOs has declined since that high point and, effectively, these extra CSOs are no longer additional, but they are replacing CSOs that are leaving the force. Would you acknowledge that that is the case?

[379] **Leighton Andrews:** There are 500 more officers on the street—

[380] **Peter Black:** Sorry, that's not the case.

[381] **Christine Chapman:** Hang on a minute. We can only—

[382] **Leighton Andrews:** [*Continues.*]  
—than there would have been without this funding.

[383] **Peter Black:** That doesn't match up with that figure.

[384] **Leighton Andrews:** Sorry; you are wilfully misunderstanding the figures, and you're wilfully misunderstanding—

[385] **Peter Black:** No, the figures are quite clear on this.

[386] **Leighton Andrews:** You are wilfully misunderstanding the policy that we have adopted from the outset.

[387] **Peter Black:** The figures are very clear.

[388] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. Look, I don't think we can continue with this.

[389] **Peter Black:** I still want an answer to my question about the decline in the number of CSOs and the fact that you're actually—

[390] **Christine Chapman:** Well, the Minister has answered that.

[391] **Leighton Andrews:** Well, I'm very happy to say that I deeply regret the draconian cuts on the police force, imposed by the Conservative Government and previously by the Conservative–Liberal Democrat coalition.

[392] **Peter Black:** And previously by the Labour Party in the last year of your administration, as it happens. But do you not agree that you are effectively funding replacements to the Home Office cuts and actually subsidising the Home Office?

[393] **Leighton Andrews:** What I'm clear about is that there are 500 additional CSOs on the streets as a result of the funding that we have put in place.

[394] **Peter Black:** No, it's not—

[395] **Christine Chapman:** Peter.

[396] **Peter Black:** I'm sorry, but I'm not misinterpreting the figures. The figures are very clear: there are 460. I can show the figures if you want.

[397] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. Peter, listen to the Minister's answer. It will remain as that, and you'll have to take it up outside.

[398] **Peter Black:** Well, clearly, he's wrong.

[399] **Christine Chapman:** Minister, can you just qualify?

[400] **Leighton Andrews:** As I have said, our commitment was to ensure that there would be 500 additional CSOs other than those funded elsewhere, and we've done that.

[401] **Peter Black:** And the figures don't match to support that.

[402] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. Mark.

[403] **Mark Isherwood:** First of all, I would like to ask the Minister whether he could supply the committee with evidence to support his statement on that point. I just want to ask one short question.

[404] **Christine Chapman:** Can you send us something in writing on that, Minister?

[405] **Leighton Andrews:** Well, I've made statements in the Assembly on this matter, Chair.

[406] **Christine Chapman:** Well, if you could send—

[407] **Leighton Andrews:** I'm happy to write to you on this.

[408] **Christine Chapman:** Yes, if you could write to the committee so that we can be absolutely clear, then, on that. Thank you. Mark.

[409] **Mark Isherwood:** Evidence previously taken by the committee over the years highlighted north Wales as having CSO max, which, in other words, is maximising the powers that a CSO could use. To what extent have you ensured that all the forces in Wales are applying CSO max?

[410] **Leighton Andrews:** Well, these are operational matters for chief constables. We have obviously had discussions with them, but, at the end of the day, how they are deployed, I think, is a matter for the chief constables, not for us.

[411] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. Thank you. We're now going to move on to another part of the Minister's portfolio, and that's local government

collaboration. Again, the committee has undertaken a number of activities around this. So, Mark, you've got some questions on this first of all.

[412] **Mark Isherwood:** Thank you, yes. A study you commissioned in June this year showed that collaboration could contribute significantly to local authority savings, which I think your report said could achieve £151 million per annum. Given the developments since the committee's report, what role do you envisage local government collaboration playing during and after mergers, if they take place or otherwise regardless?

[413] **Leighton Andrews:** Well, I think it's down to leadership of local authorities as to whether collaboration takes place.

[414] **Mark Isherwood:** So, you don't have a view on this.

[415] **Leighton Andrews:** I'm very much in favour of collaboration by local authorities. This Government has been in favour and has undertaken a number of steps over the years to encourage collaboration by local authorities. As this committee has previously reported, some of those collaborative activities have been successful. Others have been less successful. I think that it is incumbent upon local government to seek the best route to delivering services for their communities. Very often, that will be better pursued through collaboration.

[416] **Mark Isherwood:** The committee took evidence, prior to the committee's report, from local government both collectively or individually, arguing that they were developing effectively collaboration within the restrictions placed upon them, by the duty to show value for public purse and do cost-value analysis in advance. What dialogue, therefore, have you had with them over barriers they might be encountering, with or without the merger agenda, that the Welsh Government might help them overcome to drive their and your objectives?

[417] **Leighton Andrews:** I think there are a number of barriers that we will need to look at in the next Assembly. In fact, we've already started looking at them ourselves. I think we need to look at performance and improvement regime. I think we need to look at the role of the Wales Audit Office. I'm not satisfied that the work of the Wales Audit Office is fit for purpose in respect of the duties and services provided to local authorities. I think we will have to return to look at the role of the Wales Audit Office in the next Assembly. I think that a move such as that would be widely welcomed by local

government. We're going to have to look very carefully at what we ask the Wales Audit Office to do for us in future. I think there may be better ways of achieving the necessary transformation of delivery of public services, rather than an over-rigorous programme of audit and improvement.

[418] **Mark Isherwood:** Local authorities gave evidence that the merger agenda and indicative maps—of course, then we didn't have one, or we didn't have the final one you produced—were delaying collaboration because they didn't wish to invest in service delivery that might subsequently be changed. So, how are you ensuring that collaborations in local governments are aligned with the future configuration proposed?

[419] **Leighton Andrews:** People will always find excuses not to do things, Chair. That's my experience. We have tried very hard over the period of this Assembly to encourage collaboration. We had the Simpson review and subsequent compact. This committee reviewed that in some detail in 2013–14. You're well aware of your own conclusions on that subject. I think that there will be a number of drivers as we go forward that will force local government to look at new ways of doing things. I think that the likely outcome of the current chancellor's comprehensive spending review in November will have a very serious impact on local authority budgets. We know what the areas are that are not protected in the plans of the Conservative Government. We are therefore anticipating very significant reductions in spending in areas such as communities and local government at the central Government level. This will be likely to have an impact on our own budgets as we go forward. It's very important that local authorities are modelling all options currently for better delivery of services on the basis of the likely cuts that they will face.

[420] **Mark Isherwood:** Drawing again from the party political point, I can assure you the chief executives, council leaders and others that I've sat with privately in meetings are not making excuses. They cannot invest public money in collaborations that may not ultimately be sustained if they're required to follow a different map. I hope that you would indicate how you're working to help them develop collaboration in those circumstances.

[421] **Leighton Andrews:** I think the Member is aware that we will be publishing the map and draft Bill later this year. Clearly, we will make progress, after the 2016 election, on the new map and the reform of local government programme. Once we have moved into 2016, people will be clearer about the likely outcome of the programme and, therefore, it will be

open to them to align their services accordingly. However, I have to say that there have been ample opportunities not just over the last five years, but the last 10 years, for local authorities to collaborate. The picture on collaboration is mixed.

[422] **Mark Isherwood:** I'll finish on this. If local authorities enter into collaborations and partnerships that work and which are effective and deliver good services, and potentially more efficiently and effectively, but they don't ultimately match the map that goes forward, would you envisage, whether or not you're the Minister, that those collaborations should continue outside the boundaries specified by Government?

[423] **Leighton Andrews:** Well, the collaborations may well be relevant regardless of the map. Not every service is going to need to be delivered on the basis of a single authority. So, you know, inevitably, I would expect there to be further collaborations in the future, and many of those collaborations that might be developed now might well continue past any reorganisation of local government.

[424] **Mark Isherwood:** Okay.

[425] **Christine Chapman:** Okay, thank you. Rhodri.

[426] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Diolch yn fawr iawn, Gadeirydd. Fel yr ydych chi newydd ei ddweud, Weinidog, fe fydd y drefn newydd yn cael ei ffurfio wedi'r etholiad nesaf, ond, yn y cyfnod sy'n arwain at hynny, pa ystyriaeth ych chi wedi ei rhoi, wrth feddwl am gyfuno awdurdodau ac wrth feddwl am ddiwygio gwasanaethau, i hyrwyddo'r defnydd o'r Gymraeg fel iaith weinyddol gan gynghorau? Ar hyn o bryd, yr unig gyngor sydd yn gweithredu yn gwbl ddwyieithog, lle mae'r ddwy iaith yn cael eu defnyddio'n naturiol yng ngweinyddiaeth yr awdurdod, yw awdurdod Gwynedd. Mae yna ymdrechion yn cael eu gwneud yng

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Thank you very much, Chair. As you've just said, Minister, the new system will be formed following the next election, but, in the period leading up to that, what consideration have you given, in thinking about merging authorities and reforming services, to promoting the use of the Welsh language as an administrative language by councils? At present, the only council that operates entirely bilingually, where both languages are used naturally in the administration of the authority, is Gwynedd. There are efforts being made in Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Denbigh, Conwy and Anglesey, but not to the same extent

Nghaerfyrddin, Ceredigion, Dinbych, Conwy a Môn, ond nid i'r un graddau ag yng Ngwynedd. A ydych chi'n credu bod model Gwynedd, neu hyd yn oed fodel Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru, yn rhywbeth y gellir ei hyrwyddo wrth feddwl am y newidiadau hyn ar ôl yr etholiad nesaf yn yr awdurdodau hynny lle mae'r Gymraeg yn iaith feunyddiol?

[427] **Leighton Andrews:** Rydym ni wedi trafod y pwnc yn y gorffennol, wrth gwrs, yn y pwyllgor yma. Rwy'n hapus i ystyried beth yw'r ffordd orau o sicrhau bod yr iaith Gymraeg yn cael ei defnyddio yn y gweithle. Rwy'n gwybod, wrth gwrs, am brofiad Cyngor Gwynedd, ac rwyf wedi clywed un neu ddau o gynigion i aildrefnu'r cynghorau yn y gorllewin a'r gogledd-orllewin i sicrhau dyfodol yr iaith Gymraeg yn y gweithle. Rwy'n hapus i barhau â'r drafodaeth ar y pwnc; rwy'n hapus i glywed oddi wrth yr Aelod ar y pwnc.

[428] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Diolch yn fawr.

[429] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you. Peter.

[430] **Peter Black:** Thank you, Chair. Your administrative costs review, published in June of this year, particularly called for a platform from which authorities could collaborate, and I think the idea was that the review would be a basis for that. Can I ask you how you intend to implement the recommendations in the report, particularly in relation to ICT, accountancy and HR?

[431] **Leighton Andrews:** We've published the report—obviously, I commissioned the report—and it's been discussed in considerable detail by

as in Gwynedd. Do you believe that the Gwynedd model, or perhaps even the National Assembly for Wales model, is something that we could promote in thinking about these changes after the next election in those authorities where Welsh is used on a daily basis?

**Leighton Andrews:** We've discussed this subject in the past, of course, in this committee. I'm happy to consider what would be the best way of ensuring that the Welsh language is used in the workplace. I know, of course, about Gwynedd Council's experience, and I have heard a couple of proposals to reorganise the councils in west Wales and north-west Wales to ensure the future of the Welsh language in the workplace. I'm happy to continue discussions on that subject and to hear from the Member on that subject.

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Thank you very much.

the report team with senior officers in authorities across Wales at a number of different events. The opportunity for savings that the report creates is, ultimately, in the region of £151 million per annum, if the best practice available to us in the whole of the UK were to be adopted, and there are some staging posts on the route to that. The report itself outlines specifically opportunities within a number of fields—ICT and human resources are two. We have commissioned some work ourselves in respect of digital delivery in local authorities on the basis of the work that I've seen over the last couple of weeks. It seems to me that there are few local authorities in Wales that we would see as being, for example, in the leadership position in respect of digital delivery of services, but there are some interesting developments in some places. So, I think there is quite a long way to go. Now, it is, I think, for us, obviously, to establish some of the best practice that is out there, but I would hope that local authorities themselves would be motivated and ambitious enough to be looking for that best practice themselves already.

13:15

[432] **Peter Black:** Do you think that, given the proposals to reorganise local authorities after the next Assembly elections, many of them are actually interested anymore?

[433] **Leighton Andrews:** I think that it would be a desertion of leadership if they were not.

[434] **Peter Black:** Okay. In your White Paper on local government reform in July 2014, you talked about an evaluation that the Welsh Government has commissioned on the funding streams that supported collaboration. Can you give us more details about that?

[435] **Leighton Andrews:** We've taken that forward, I think, in the materials that we've provided to the committee in the past. We undertook an evaluation of regional collaborative working; we have looked specifically through the ways in which European funding have been used and we will be reporting on that work early in 2016.

[436] **Peter Black:** Will you be taking that into account in terms of your reform and merger programme?

[437] **Leighton Andrews:** If there are lessons to be learnt from it, then, yes.



[438] **Peter Black:** Okay. Are there lessons?

[439] **Leighton Andrews:** As I said, we'll be reporting in early 2016 on this. We're still working through this work.

[440] **Peter Black:** Which will be a few months after, of course, you publish the draft Bill.

[441] **Leighton Andrews:** But still during the process of consultation, I expect. And, as the Member is well aware, there will be no legislation before May 2016 on this matter.

[442] **Peter Black:** Okay.

[443] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. Gwyn.

[444] **Gwyn R. Price:** The scrutiny of collaborative arrangements: if collaboration remains a goal, could you give us more details about how the Welsh Government intends to strengthen the security of collaboration arrangements, particularly by backbench members?

[445] **Leighton Andrews:** It's worth saying that collaboration is still very much a goal. We've seen some good examples in respect of work around Communities First; some work in Caerphilly in respect of their passport programme, which was a collaboration between the council, the local health board and Jobcentre Plus, to address challenges faced by young people unable to get work experience. We have the Connecting Families project in Bridgend, which has been valuable and has also produced cost savings in respect of children and families.

[446] Specifically on scrutiny, I've invested £400,000 in strengthening scrutiny capacity and capability over the last three years. The Wales scrutiny support programme for local authorities was concluded in March 2015, and I think has had a significant impact on scrutiny performance across the piece, and there has been specific support in some individual councils as well. There's also been specific support in certain specialist areas, such as financial scrutiny.

[447] **Gwyn R. Price:** Thank you for that. Co-operatives and mutuals: could you give us more detail about the action plan that Welsh Government is developing for the role of co-operatives and mutuals in public service

delivery?

[448] **Leighton Andrews:** Yes. There's no question that we have seen a number of local authorities, over the last decade, moving towards co-operative and social enterprise solutions in some areas; housing would be one of the most obvious examples, where we have a very significant number of community mutual or social enterprise approaches that have been undertaken by local authorities seeking to achieve the Welsh housing quality standard. But, on top of that, there have been approaches in a variety of other fields, and, as you'll be aware, the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 specifically references co-operative and social enterprise approaches in the legislation. With the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport, I commissioned the report, 'Is the Feeling Mutual?', to explore the scope for further development of social enterprise and mutual solutions.

[449] Now, I think we're clear as a Government that we would prefer local authorities to look to these routes where they are the only way, really, of preserving public services in a shape that the community would recognise them, and there would be certain kinds of guarantees that we want to see in respect of staff, in respect of trades union recognition and so on and so forth. But we've published that report. There is further work going on at the present time. We want to see—. We know that there has been a considerable amount of interest from local authorities. We also know, of course, that local authorities themselves are very actively pursuing community routes for the running of services, the transfer of assets and so on at the present time.

[450] **Gwyn R. Price:** Thank you.

[451] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. Mark.

[452] **Mark Isherwood:** You referred to co-operatives and mutuals in the context of the Social Services and Well-being Act. You may recall that a backbench Bill that I proposed and then withdrew in order to work with the Minister initially proposed that, but the intention—the wording wasn't in the Act— was that, wherever practical, these should be citizen-directed, based upon the Scandinavian model, particularly around disability and support. To what extent, if any, have you given consideration to the role that, not simply being co-operative and mutual, but being citizen directed, should play?

[453] **Leighton Andrews:** I think the work that Keith Edwards did on behalf of myself and the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport has looked at a

number of models where a citizen-directed approach has been undertaken, and I think you'll find that covered in his report.

[454] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. We move on now to human trafficking, and, again, Minister, the committee has undertaken a number of activities in this area in relation to your portfolio. So, there's some—

[455] **Peter Black:** We haven't actually been trafficking people.

[456] **Christine Chapman:** No, no. [*Laughter.*]

[457] I've got some questions here from John, first of all.

[458] **John Griffiths:** Yes. Minister, could you tell the committee how, in your view, the Wales anti-slavery co-ordinator has worked with the UK commissioner, whether they've worked well together, and whether there is any duplication between their respective roles?

[459] **Leighton Andrews:** Clearly, we had our anti-slavery co-ordinator in place before the UK anti-slavery commissioner was appointed, and I think that the work that we've done in Wales has been recognised by the Home Office and by the UK anti-slavery commissioner as he's moved into his role. There have been regular discussions between our anti-slavery co-ordinator and the UK anti-slavery commissioner, and I've also met the anti-slavery commissioner. He intends to develop a memorandum of understanding in consultation with the Welsh Government, and this will, I think, help us to define roles and responsibilities and avoid duplication.

[460] **John Griffiths:** That's fine, thanks Minister. On the national referral mechanism, and first responders in Wales, do you believe those first responders have used that mechanism as it's intended to be used consistently?

[461] **Leighton Andrews:** Again, I think this is somewhere Wales has been in the lead. The Wales anti-slavery leadership group has developed a one-day first responder training course, and in fact this is the only first responder training course being delivered consistently in the UK. The training equips first responders with the skills, the abilities and, I think, the confidence to use the national referral mechanism more consistently. What we do know is that national referral mechanism referrals have increased from 34 in 2012 to 71 in 2014, which I think does suggest that we're seeing more consistency.

[462] **John Griffiths:** Okay. Moving on to the evidence base, Minister, are you content that an adequate evidence base now exists to identify victims of trafficking and slavery in Wales? Have you taken any recent action to improve that evidence base, or indeed do you have steps that will shortly be taken to do that?

[463] **Leighton Andrews:** Well, we're collecting primary and secondary data from survivors of slavery so that we can get a better understanding of the level of slavery in Wales, and Wales is currently the only UK Government to be collecting secondary data. We receive that data on a quarterly basis, and it's also shared with the Wales anti-slavery leadership group and it's published in the anti-slavery co-ordinator's annual report. We've also commissioned now an independent evaluation of our survivor care pathway, which provides a plan for wraparound support services for providers. I think that will be useful to us in strengthening that evidence base.

[464] **John Griffiths:** Okay. One final matter, Chair: in terms of relationships with law enforcement agencies, are you content that the strengthening that has taken place has produced the desired outcomes, particularly with regard numbers of prosecutions?

[465] **Leighton Andrews:** I think that it's likely that the action we've taken will result in more prosecutions. I think it's reasonable to expect a lag in increased prosecutions due to the time it can take for perpetrators to be brought to justice and for the case to work its way through the system, and, as you'll be aware, investigating and prosecuting slavery is complex. Our Wales anti-slavery leadership group has established a three-day course for senior investigating officers and for crown prosecutors, and, again, this is the only course of its kind in the UK. We're now sharing some of this training with, for example, police forces in England, such as Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, Avon and Somerset Police, Kent Police and Greater Manchester Police. So, again, I think this is an area where, in Wales, we have led.

[466] **John Griffiths:** Thanks very much.

[467] **Christine Chapman:** Mike, you had some questions.

[468] **Mike Hedges:** I have two questions. The first one is about the provision of accommodation for survivors of slavery—has it improved?

[469] **Leighton Andrews:** Well, initially, the accommodation that we had was only for female survivors. We made representations to the Home Office and now we have accommodation for male survivors as well. Now, the accommodation, of course, is funded by the Home Office.

[470] **Mike Hedges:** Can we link this to local government? Do you see a role for local authorities having a lead member for anti-slavery in the way they have lead members for a whole range of other services, and do you see an advantage in it being the leader of the council in order to raise its profile within the local authority and with the bodies the local authority deals with?

[471] **Leighton Andrews:** Well, I think you can certainly make the case for that. I think, when we move into a new area of policy that requires greater political understanding than there's been in the past, obviously, having that responsibility and a leadership role is valuable.

[472] **Christine Chapman:** I don't think there are any other questions, Minister, so can I thank you for attending today? There was the issue of the police support officers and the figures, so, if you'd like to come back to us in writing—. We will send you a transcript of the meeting so that you can check for any inaccuracies, but thank you for attending.

[473] **Leighton Andrews:** Thank you very much.

[474] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you.

13:27

### **Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42 i Benderfynu Gwahardd y Cyhoedd o Weddill y Cyfarfod**

#### **Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to Resolve to Exclude the Public from the Remainder Meeting**

*Cynnig:*

*Motion:*

*bod y pwyllgor yn penderfynu that the committee resolves to gwahardd y cyhoedd o weddill y exclude the public from the cyfarfod yn unol â Rheol Sefydlog remainder of the meeting in 17.42(vi) a (ix).*

*accordance with Standing Order 17.42(vi) and (xi).*

*Cynigiwyd y cynnig.*

*Motion moved.*

[475] **Christine Chapman:** Could I now invite the committee to move into private session to discuss the evidence? Yes, okay.

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig.*

*Motion agreed.*

*Daeth rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod i ben am 13:27.*

*The public part of the meeting ended at 13:27.*