



**Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
(Y Cofnod)**

**The National Assembly for Wales
(The Record)**

Dydd Mawrth 6 Mawrth 2001

Tuesday 6 March 2001

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Cofnodir y trafodion hyn yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynnddi yn y Siambr. Yn ogystal, cynhwyswyd cyfieithiad Saesneg o eiriau a lefarwyd yn y Gymraeg. Bydd cofnod dwyieithog cyflawn ar gael bum niwrnod gwaith ar ôl cynnal y cyfarfod

These proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the Chamber. In addition, an English translation of Welsh speeches has been included. A fully bilingual record will be available five working days after the meeting.

*Cyfarfu'r Cynulliad am 2 p.m. gyda'r Llywydd yn y Gadair
The Assembly met at 2 p.m. with the Presiding Officer in the Chair*

**Ethol Ymddiriedolwyr i Gynllun Pensiwn Aelodau'r Cynulliad yn Unol â Rheol
Sefydlog Rhif 3.4**

**Election of Trustees to the Assembly Members' Pension Scheme in Accordance
with Standing Order No. 3.4**

Peter Black: I propose that

*the Assembly, acting under rule B2 of the National Assembly for Wales Members Pension Scheme Rules (available on the Intranet at :-
(<http://assembly/aegis/AssemblyGuidance/Fees%20Office%20New/Guidance%20&%20Forms/Pensions/Scheme%20Rules/Final%20version%20Pension%20Scheme%20Rules%2025%20May.doc>) made under the National Assembly for Wales (Assembly Members)(Pension Scheme) Direction 1999, elects John Marek and Peter Law as trustees of the pension scheme in place of Jane Davidson and Carwyn Jones who have resigned their trusteeship.*

Cynnig: O blaid 29, Ymatal 0, Yn erbyn 0.

Motion: For 29, Abstain 0, Against 0.

Pleidleisiodd yr Aelodau canlynol o blaid:
The following Members voted for:

Bates, Mick
Black, Peter
Bourne, Nick
Butler, Rosemary
Dafis, Cynog
Davies, Andrew
Davies, Jocelyn
Davies, Ron
Evans, Delyth
Gibbons, Brian
Graham, William
Griffiths, John
Hancock, Brian
Jones, Carwyn
Jones, Elin
Jones, Helen Mary
Jones, Ieuan Wyn
Law, Peter
Lloyd, David
Middlehurst, Tom
Morgan, Jonathan
Morgan, Rhodri
Pugh, Alun
Richards, Rod
Ryder, Janet
Thomas, Gwenda
Thomas, Owen John
Wigley, Dafydd
Williams, Phil

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig.
Motion adopted.*

Cwestiynau i Brif Weinidog Cymru Questions to the First Minister

Agenda Prif Weinidog Cymru The First Minister's Agenda

Q1 Brian Hancock: As Minister in charge of policy development and the co-ordination of cross-cutting issues, what mechanisms does the First Minister use to ensure all Members of the Assembly are aware of his agenda? (OAQ10065)

The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan): I do not have an agenda, but the administration does, as you realise, Brian. It is all included in 'Putting Wales First: a partnership for the people of Wales'. We use every available method, including the written word and websites, to ensure that all Assembly Members can access information about the agenda.

Brian Hancock: Bearing in mind the situation presently facing the manufacturing industry and agriculture in Wales, what cross-cutting policies will you bring forward to support small and medium sized companies which operate in those environments?

The First Minister: I am pleased to say that the general health of the economy in Wales is much better than it was, despite the problems in manufacturing and farming. As in all advanced economies, growth tends to come from the service industries, which need a healthy manufacturing industry to do well. Last year, there was a net rise of 5,000 in the total number of jobs in Wales. However, there was a decrease of 8,000 jobs overall in manufacturing and an increase of about 12,000 jobs overall in the non-manufacturing sector. That led to a rise of between 4,000 and 5,000 jobs overall.

The Leader of the Welsh Conservatives (Nick Bourne): In relation to policy development, you have a cross-cutting responsibility for policy presentation. The last set of published Cabinet minutes referred to the need to produce a jargon-free version of the NHS plan for Wales. When are we likely to see that? Why was it necessary to produce a jargon-laden version in the first place?

The First Minister: It is necessary to produce documents that are comprehensible to the general public who may not be as familiar with some of the complex management-type issues that tend to be included in NHS documents. Most people say that in comparison with those of most of the other British administrations, our documents are the most understandable and accessible to the general public. However, it is a continuous struggle. I would never seek to deny that, nor do I feel guilty about saying that the more jargon-free we can make these documents the better.

Nick Bourne: I am grateful for that clarification. In the jargon-free version, how will you present the policy on page 16 of the original plan, namely an overall reduction in the number of traditional hospitals, which the plan lays out as the administration's policy?

The First Minister: Some of the inherited stock of hospitals may not be as useful in the future as it was in the past. It is evident to everybody working in the profession that the concentration of new hospital stock will be on those hospitals that are closer to the primary care sector. It is at such hospitals that as much delivery of healthcare as possible will be carried out in terms of out-patient, diagnostic and telemedicine work. It will not necessarily be those hospitals that concentrate heavily on in-patient stays. It is clear that the changing pattern throughout Wales will gradually have a greater orientation towards community-based

hospitals.

Pwerau i Wneud Deddfwriaeth Sylfaenol ar gyfer y Cynulliad Cenedlaethol
Primary Legislative Powers for the National Assembly

Q2 Jocelyn Davies: Will the First Minister make a brief statement on any discussions between himself and the Secretary of State for Wales regarding the future development of the National Assembly for Wales with primary legislative powers? (OAQ10055)

The First Minister: I hold regular discussions with the Secretary of State for Wales about various detailed issues including new primary legislation which confers functions on the Assembly or which originates from the Assembly.

Jocelyn Davies: Last week, the Minister for Assembly Business stated that there were five Welsh Bills in the last Queen's Speech, although he could only name one. Will you tell us what those five Bills are and can you call them Welsh Bills, when four of them apply to England and Wales?

The First Minister: I was not present when that statement was made. It is clear that there is one specifically Welsh Bill, but there are four other Bills that confer additional powers on this Assembly. It does not require a legal genius to work out that that is what the Minister for Assembly Business meant last week. I have been asked about this on many occasions. You have been responsible for many of those questions, Jocelyn. I hope that there is no argument between us, because we did extremely well in the last Queen's Speech. This number of Bills, namely a third of the Bills in the Queen's Speech, either originates from Wales or confer additional powers on this Assembly.

Peter Black: The partnership agreement makes a commitment to set up a commission to examine the Assembly's powers. It will report in 2003, after the Assembly elections. When will that commission be constituted?

The First Minister: It will probably be sometime during 2002.

Jonathan Morgan: The Assembly's future development must surely take into account the people of Wales. Therefore, if the Labour party decides to pursue a policy of primary law-making powers for the Assembly, will the people of Wales be consulted?

2:10 p.m.

The First Minister: I do not want to anticipate the content of any determination that we might make as an Assembly. The partnership agreement states that we would set up an independent commission, which would reach its conclusion some months after the first full term of this Assembly is completed, that is, in late 2003. The commission would put its recommendations to the Assembly—and I am glad to see that you think it will be Labour-controlled after the next elections—which would then decide on its attitude to the recommendations. Realistically, you cannot anticipate the outcome of the next Assembly elections, the independent commission's review, or the Assembly's considerations of that review. Therefore, you are jumping the gun on three separate counts.

Materion Polisi Cymru
Welsh Policy Matters

Q3 Janet Ryder: In his role as policy development co-ordinator, what actions has the First Minister taken to ensure the National Assembly is taking an holistic approach to all Welsh

policy matters? (OAQ10073)

The First Minister: I am in favour of a holistic approach, or ‘an holistic approach’ as you put it, Janet, rather than an unholistic one. Could you give me examples of where you believe that we have been anti-holistic or unholistic?

Janet Ryder: I am sure that you agree that many rural businesses are suffering because of the foot and mouth disease crisis. It is not only farmers who suffer, but also butchers, bed and breakfast proprietors and many other small rural businesses. A holistic approach will be needed to help them through this crisis. Bed and breakfast proprietors suffer especially because of cancelled bookings. What discussions or actions are you having or undertaking to help those businesses at this time?

The First Minister: We have moved from a general definition of what is holistic to the question of compensation for owners of bed and breakfast accommodation. I suppose it is a fair point to raise in a supplementary question. The question of compensation for agricultural businesses, other than for farmers who receive compensation when their infected herds or flocks are bought for the purposes of slaughter, has not been given the consideration that it could. We have not yet seen the disease begin to come to an end. We would like it to do so, but we are not at that stage yet. When it does, we can consider whether there is a case for compensation that, as far as we are aware, has not previously been paid, for the disease’s side effects on agriculture, tourism and rural small businesses, the incomes of which have been badly affected by it and by the necessity for rigorous control measures and instruction from governments overseas. For example, Austria has instructed tourists not to visit the UK and we had to make an arrangement with the Republic of Ireland to cancel last Saturday’s rugby international between Wales and Ireland. That would have had a knock-on effect on tourism as well as on rugby union.

Alun Pugh: One issue that calls out for a holistic approach, Rhodri, is poverty. Have you made an impact assessment of the effect of the substantial rise in the national minimum wage on poverty in Wales? Will you publish an estimate, per constituency, of the impact of the rise in the national minimum wage on the incomes of the poorest people in Welsh society?

The First Minister: The increase of 10 per cent in the national minimum wage, or slightly more than that mathematically, from £3.70 to £4.10, will have a dramatic impact on the incomes of those working for the minimum wage. In areas like Wales, where wages are probably among the lowest in the UK, the impact is proportionately much greater than in areas, such as the home counties or the south-east of England, where wages are higher and where, proportionately, fewer people work for the minimum wage. I will consider whether it is practical to make an early estimate of the impact of the increase in the minimum wage on the gross domestic product per capita in the different parts of Wales.

David Melding: I fear that this question is becoming eclectic if not random. However, I will ask about public appointments. Do you agree that organisations such as Mencap and MIND have much to teach us about how to involve people with learning disabilities and mental health problems and that we should follow their example when we consult on public policy and make public appointments?

The First Minister: I have been impressed with the work of various voluntary organisations in that sector. Whenever I meet people with learning disabilities, their interest in, and maturity of approach to, politics never ceases to amaze me. Therefore, I am happy to follow up some of the suggestions implicit in your question.

**Atal Toriadau Arfaethedig Corus
Averting Corus's Planned Cuts**

Q4 John Griffiths: Will the First Minister make a statement on the measures he is taking to avert the implementation by Corus of its planned cuts? (OAQ10062)

The First Minister: We have been working in close co-operation with the steel unions and the steel communities on this issue. Last Friday I attended—as you did, John—the meeting that was chaired by the Prime Minister on the fate of the four Welsh steel communities that will be affected. There are two intended outright closures and two areas of job-losses. One is at Shotton and the largest is at Newport.

The issue of what we can do about these losses will be deferred at least until 27 March. We were told previously that the 30 days' grace period would run out on 15 March. However, Corus's annual general meeting will be held on that date, and it does not want any diversions at that time. Therefore, it has asked the unions to extend the period of 30 days' grace to some 45 days, through to 27 March. A meeting will be held on that date at which we will find out whether Corus intends to implement the measures it announced on 1 February in full, in part, or whether it will reverse them in toto. We will have a better idea of how its shareholders are reacting to the proposals when the annual general meeting takes place on 15 March.

In the meantime we are working on various suites of proposals to meet eventualities if Corus implements its plans in full, or if it implements one closure but not another. We suspect that the numbers involved may change considerably between now and 27 March.

John Griffiths: Corus's management—including Brian Moffat—has been the subject of heavy criticism from the workforce, local communities, trade unions, politicians, the public, the media, and so on. Are you aware that there is growing criticism of Corus by industrialists and the business community? For example, I recently met a representative from industry who said that he was concerned that Corus's actions gave business a bad name. He was worried about the possible repercussions for business of Corus's actions and the consequent public outcry. Are you aware of the general concern that is spreading among the business community and fellow industrialists?

The First Minister: I have heard from other big businesses the criticism that the way that Corus has acted gives big business a bad name. There are ways of conducting your affairs when going through a financial crisis and getting rid of two chief executives—as Corus was—and proposing outright closures in high-unemployment areas. There is what is known as an exit strategy. BP Amoco plc's plant in Baglan Bay offers the outstanding example of this. Over a six or seven years, it has planned exactly how it will bring its ethanol and hydrochlorine—or whatever it is—production processes to end, while working with the community and workforce to create alternative jobs. More of that would not have gone amiss in Corus's case. I have heard the criticism that this gives big employers a Victorian mill-owner image again, when they have, in general, worked hard to establish a partnership with unions and communities when difficult decisions need to be made.

The Leader of the Opposition (Ieuan Wyn Jones): While we all agree with John's comments about the criticism of Corus, I am sure that it will not have escaped your notice, Rhodri, that a recent HTV opinion poll indicated that 75 per cent of the people of Wales believe that neither the National Assembly nor the Westminster Government has done enough to deal with the situation at Corus. Will you tell us what practical steps you can take to support the unions' measures to save the plant at Ebbw Vale and some of those jobs? Can you make it clear to Corus that it cannot stand back from this? You, as First Minister, have a responsibility to ensure that Corus listens this time.

2:20 p.m.

The First Minister: You are trying to live by opinion polls instead of making practical suggestions. If you have any practical suggestions, please mail them to me. We are working closely with the unions because some of their proposals involve what the Assembly needs to do, what the UK Government needs to do and what the European Commission needs to do, in particular, as regards some of the proposals for Llanwern. However, it may involve some of the other works as well, where they can engage the workforce in training activities on rota. That would allow a longer period for people to prepare for life outside the steel industry than is envisaged at the moment. All of those possibilities are being investigated to see if they are compatible with the state aids code and that work has been ongoing for the past fortnight and will continue over the next three weeks. Any further suggestions that you might have to contribute constructively to the debate on how to save these jobs would be gratefully received.

Cydlynu Polisiâu Co-ordination of Policies

Q5 Kirsty Williams: Will the First Minister make a statement on co-ordination of policies between Westminster departments and the Assembly? (OAQ10074)

The First Minister: It is appropriate to highlight a particular area of co-ordination and co-operation between Westminster departments and ourselves. That is the response to the foot and mouth disease outbreak. Nick Brown, Carwyn Jones and their opposite numbers in Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland have worked together closely. An example of the administrations working together can be seen in some of the new legislation that has been framed in response to the crisis. The Assembly took the lead in such matters as the foot and mouth disease amendment Order on controlling access to the countryside. The Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food borrowed that idea and issued an Order in England. Similarly, we have sometimes adapted a MAFF Order in Wales. That is a sensible example of how you can utilise MAFF's and the Assembly's legal and administrative expertise. It can be put together so that the wheel is not reinvented and the same work redone. We work closely together as departments, all of which have to deal with the suffering caused by the foot and mouth disease outbreak.

Kirsty Williams: You chose your example well. Will this Assembly take a lead in developing a licensing scheme to move stock around the country on animal welfare grounds? There are many farmers in my constituency that have stock away on tack. They desperately need for that stock to be returned to Welsh farms. Will your colleague, Carwyn Jones, discuss these matters in Westminster to find a scheme that will safely allow stock to be returned to Wales?

The First Minister: I would not wish to raise hopes prematurely that that will be possible if the tack is a considerable distance away from the home farms. Urgent discussions are taking place now on where the tack is local—on the other side of the road, for example—to see if that can be done without breaching the livestock control restrictions and affecting the sterilising measures and isolating the disease by movement around the countryside. If the tack was 15 or 20 miles away on lower ground as a winter pasture, we would not be keen on lifting that kind of order in the short term. However, it may be possible where a tack is close by. Urgent work is ongoing on this issue.

Rod Richards: Has the Minister made any direct representations to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on what Wales needs in tomorrow's budget?

The First Minister: We had a meeting with Gordon Brown last week, but our discussions must remain confidential.

Ieuan Wyn Jones: Dilynaf gwestiwn Kirsty a dweud bod nifer o ffermwyr yn pryderu ynglŷn â lles anifeiliaid ar hyn o bryd. Yn ogystal â'r cwestiwn ar 'tack', mae sefyllfaoedd yn codi lle y mae un rhan o dir ffermwr ar un ochr y ffordd fawr a'r gweddill ar y ffordd arall. Efallai fod defaid yn wyna mewn cae ar un ochr y ffordd a bod angen eu symud i dir arall wedyn. Sefyllfa arall yw porfa'n cael ei ddefnyddio ar un ochr i'r ffordd a heb eu ddefnyddio ar y llall. Mater o les yr anifeiliaid yw hynny. Os na allwch fynd mor bell a delio â'r mater o stoc 'tack' lle y mae'r anifeiliaid filltiroedd i ffwrdd, a wnewch chi ddylanwadu ar y Weinyddiaeth Amaethyddiaeth, Pysgodfeydd a Bwyd i greu cynllun trwyddedu a fyddai'n caniatáu i ffermwyr symud o un rhan o'r tir i'r llall?

Prif Weinidog Cymru: Lles yr anifeiliaid a'r angen i beidio â gwasgaru'r clefyd yw'r ddwy egwyddor holl bwysig yn y mater hwn. Yr wyf yn ddiolchgar i Ieuan am ei rybudd ynglŷn â'r cwestiwn hwn. Mae'n gwestiwn pwysig ac amserol ac fe'i hystyrir ar frys. Yr wyf hefyd yn falch eich bod yn cydnabod nad yw'n fater a ddatganolwyd. Mae'r Weinyddiaeth Amaethyddiaeth, Pysgodfeydd a Bwyd yn parhau i fod yn gyfrifol am les anifeiliaid. Mae gwaharddiadau cyffredinol yn bodoli ar draws Cymru a Lloegr. Yr unig symudiadau a ganiateir ar hyn o bryd yw mynd ag anifeiliaid yn syth i'r lladd-dy i'w lladd. Mae'r trwyddedau newydd yn caniatáu ail-ddechrau'r llif i'r farchnad gig.

Mae ein swyddogion yn cynnal cyfarfodydd bob dydd i ddylanwadu ar y Weinyddiaeth Amaethyddiaeth, Pysgodfeydd a Bwyd er mwyn gallu symud anifeiliaid er eu lles eu hunain oherwydd bod defaid yn wyna yn awr. Maent yn parhau i gael eu bwydo gan y ffermwr â grawn allan yn y caeau oherwydd bod y borfa ar fin dod i ben gan nad yw'n tyfu'n dda ar ddechrau mis Mawrth. Mae'n bosibl y bydd gennym newyddion da erbyn diwedd yr wythnos. Fodd bynnag, mae'n fater a ystyrir ar frys.

Ieuan Wyn Jones: I will follow Kirsty's question and say that a number of farmers are greatly concerned about the welfare of animals at this time. In addition to the tack question, a situation also arises where a farmer may have one part of his land on one side of the main road and the remainder of his land on the opposite side. Perhaps there are sheep lambing in a field on one side of the road that need to be moved to other land. Another scenario is where pasture has been used on one side of the road and has not been used on the opposite side. That is an animal welfare issue. If you cannot go as far as to deal with the issue of tack stock, where the animals are miles away, will you influence MAFF to create a licensing scheme to enable farmers to move animals from one part of the land to another?

The First Minister: The welfare of the animals and not spreading the disease are the two most important principles in this issue. I am grateful to Ieuan for notice of this question. It is an important and timely question and will be considered urgently. I am also pleased that you acknowledge that it is not a devolved matter. The Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food is still responsible for animal welfare. There are blanket prohibitions in existence across England and Wales. The only movement allowed at present is to take animals directly to the abattoir to be slaughtered. The new licences allow the restarting of the flow into the meat market.

Our officials hold meetings every day to influence MAFF regarding the ability to move animals for their own benefit because sheep are lambing at the moment. They continue to be fed by the farmer with grain out in the fields because the pasture is about to run out because it does not grow well at the beginning of March. It is possible that we will have good news by the end of the week. However, it is a matter that is being considered urgently.

**Polisi'r Cynulliad ar Gwm Cynon
Assembly Policy on Cynon Valley**

Q6 Christine Chapman: What assessment has been made of the effect of Assembly policy on the Cynon Valley? (OAQ10076)

The First Minister: You represent one of the most deprived constituencies in Wales and the Assembly's policies target the most deprived areas. In response to Alun Pugh's earlier supplementary question about the minimum wage, I mentioned some issues, which are not Assembly responsibilities, that could have a beneficial effect on the Cynon Valley. For example, in the recent transport grant settlement, Sue Essex announced that further work would be carried out at Mountain Ash station to double the frequency of service from Mountain Ash on the Cynon Valley railway line and likewise on the safer routes to school at Mountain Ash County School. There are many other similar examples where Assembly decisions will benefit, or are already benefiting, deprived communities such as the Cynon Valley.

Christine Chapman: As you said, Cynon Valley is a deprived constituency. It has an unemployment rate of 9.6 per cent, which is the highest rate in Wales. As you know, Rhodri, I have recently written to you about the redundancies announced by AB Connectors and the possibility of imminent problems faced by Aman Metal Spinners Limited in the Cynon Valley. What immediate help is the Assembly giving to long-standing indigenous businesses and their workers to minimise the impact of such job losses on the wider economy? How will initiatives such as Communities First help in such circumstances?

The First Minister: Assembly Members, like Christine and I, will be aware that the world of small businesses is one of continuous ups and downs: you get markets or contracts, you lose them and tend to take staff on or lay them off according to the health of your business. Christine mentioned two firms, AB Connectors and Aman Metal Spinners Ltd, which face difficulties at present. The health of the market and demand for the manufacturing industry is not as good as it could be at the moment because of the high pound, or the low euro, and its effects on manufacturing.

Valleys areas such as Blaenau Gwent, Merthyr Tydfil and the Cynon Valley have a high degree of dependency on manufacturing because they have not yet developed alternative service industries. However, Merthyr Tydfil has now got the One-to-One call centre. When manufacturing is under pressure but services are doing well, which is the state of the economy now, it tends to impact on the Valleys communities disproportionately because of their absence of service industries. As well as helping the manufacturing industries, we need to diversify the economies of the Valleys so that they have a better balance between manufacturing and service industries.

Y Llywydd: Tynnwyd cwestiwn 7 yn ôl.

The Presiding Officer: Question 7 has been withdrawn.

2:30 p.m.

**Rhagolygon Cyflogaeth (Polisi Llywodraeth y DU)
Employment Prospects (UK Government Policy)**

Q8 David Davies: Has the First Minister met or does he plan to meet with his counterparts in the other devolved bodies to discuss United Kingdom Government policy and its effects in Wales, with regard to employment prospects in each of the devolved administrations? (OAQ10053)

The First Minister: A meeting of the Joint Ministerial Committee on Europe was held last Thursday, 1 March. I could only participate by video-conference, as I could not be outside of Wales on St David's Day. The meeting was chaired by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and attended by David Trimble on behalf of the Northern Ireland Executive Committee and Jack McConnell on behalf of the Scottish Executive. The meeting was to discuss preparations for the Stockholm summit meeting of European heads of state later this month, where the agenda will be dominated by employment-related issues.

Last Wednesday, I addressed the five nations conference at the Copthorne Hotel. Although none of my political opposite numbers were present, there were representatives from Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, England and the Republic of Ireland.

David Davies: Will the Minister investigate the effects of current Government policy on employment in companies such as Abergavenny Fine Foods Limited? The company recently spent thousands of pounds on a trade mission to Japan, only to be obstructed by officials in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, and not by Assembly officials? Does the Minister agree that MAFF should use the letter of the law to promote British and Welsh food exports, rather than find every possible reason to hinder them? If I send him the details, will the First Minister investigate MAFF's actions and make representations at an appropriate level to stop this from happening again?

The First Minister: Yes.

Phil Williams: In your discussions with other devolved administrations, have you taken the opportunity to press the strong case for replacing the out-of-date Barnett formula for funding devolved administrations with a needs-based formula, which would provide the extra resources necessary to tackle structural employment problems with a well-funded economic development strategy?

The First Minister: Although that view would get some sympathy in Northern Ireland, it would go down like a lead balloon in Scotland, as Ron Davies would confirm from his experiences as Secretary of State for Wales. That is a major problem in considering whether the Pandora's box of the Barnett formula could be reopened. Scotland would be unwilling to consider it at present for fear that it may result in a reduced allocation. As such a discussion would require the participation of all the devolved administrations, the meeting would not last long. There are other avenues by which this issue can be considered, but not only in relation to one devolved administration.

Ron Davies: I can confirm Rhodri's recollection. As Secretary of State, I believed that the Barnett formula should be reformed. Rhodri is correct that Scotland opposed it. The experience of the last two years, particularly since the establishment of the National Assembly, is that resources are distributed to local authorities and health authorities, for example, on the basis of need while we receive resources on a per capita basis. That system cannot be sustained for long. As the National Assembly does not have tax-raising powers, I hope that Rhodri will consider the only mechanism available to increase our resources, which is to seek a re-negotiation of the Barnett formula. That is the right way for us to proceed.

The First Minister: That is not the only method. One of the National Assembly's greatest achievements is that we received money over and above the Barnett formula as part of the Objective 1 negotiations.

Cydbwyso Twristiaeth â Chynaliadwyedd a Datblygu Economaidd Balancing Tourism with Sustainability and Economic Development

C9 Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Sut y bydd Prif **Q9 Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** How will the

Weinidog Cymru yn parhau i gydbwysu galwadau cystadleuol twristiaeth â chynaliadwyedd a datblygu economaidd? (OAQ10054)

Prif Weinidog Cymru: Nid wyf yn siŵr faint o gystadleuaeth sydd rhwng twristiaeth a chynaliadwyedd a datblygu economaidd. Mae patrwm i'r cwestiynau hyn, gydag Aelodau fel arfer yn dadlau bod cystadleuaeth rhwng datblygu economaidd ac egwyddorion trawsbynciol y Cynulliad neu, yn fwy penodol, rhwng twristiaeth a'r egwyddorion hynny. Efallai y gallwn ateb y cwestiwn pe bai Rhodri'n rhoi esiampl o gystadleuaeth imi.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Gallai twristiaeth ddiwylliannol greu cyfoeth i Gymru a sicrhau ein bod yn gallu datblygu delwedd gadarnhaol o'n gwlad. A gytunwch er mwyn gwneud y gorau o dwristiaeth ddiwylliannol bod angen ffurf briodol o gynnyrch mewnwladol crynswth i fesur hyn?

Prif Weinidog Cymru: Yr oedd eich cwestiwn yn honni bod elfen o gystadleuaeth rhwng twristiaeth a chynaliadwyedd. Dywedwch fod ffurf ar dwristiaeth sydd yn creu llai o gystadleuaeth â chynaliadwyedd. Nid wyf yn siŵr o ble yr oedd y cwestiwn gwreiddiol yn dod, neu a dderbyniwch nad oes cystadleuaeth rhwng twristiaeth a chynaliadwyedd? Derbyniaf fod dadl gref o blaid mwy o dwristiaeth ddiwylliannol. Nid oes dim i'n gwahardd rhag cefnogi twristiaeth o'r fath. Credaf mai'r hyn yr oeddech yn ceisio ei ofyn oedd a oes cystadleuaeth rhwng y math arall o dwristiaeth a chynaliadwyedd. Dyna lle nad wyf yn clywed yr esiampl yr oeddwn yn meddwl y gallech ei rhoi.

Glyn Davies: Do you accept that the balance between economic development and the environment is often difficult, and that economic development should sometimes win? Do you believe that the GDP per capita levels that your Minister for Economic Development has included in the national economic development strategy that he is circulating can be achieved without having an adverse affect on the environment and meeting our sustainable development objectives, or are you depending on the failure of the Minister for Economic Development to take this issue away?

The First Minister: No, not at all. We would be open to enormous criticism if we had opted for a 10-year strategy target the aim of which would leave us relatively poorer than the average northern and midland regions of England, and still further behind the southern, south-western and eastern regions of England. I cannot fault the 90 per cent target. If you mean that

First Minister continue to balance the competing demands of tourism with sustainability and economic development? (OAQ10054)

The First Minister: I am not sure how much competition exists between tourism and sustainability and economic development. There is a pattern to these questions, with Members usually arguing that there is competition between economic development and the Assembly's cross-cutting principles or, more specifically, between tourism and those principles. Perhaps I could answer the question if Rhodri were to give me an example of competition.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Cultural tourism could create wealth for Wales and ensure that we could develop a positive image of our country. Do you agree that in order to get the best out of cultural tourism that we need an appropriate form of GDP to measure this?

The First Minister: Your question claimed that there was an element of competition between tourism and sustainability. You say that there is a form of tourism that creates less competition with sustainability. I am not sure from where the original question came from, or do you accept that there is no competition between tourism and sustainability? I accept that there is a strong argument in favour of more cultural tourism. There is nothing to prevent us from supporting that kind of tourism. I think that what you were trying to ask was whether there is competition between the other kind of tourism and sustainability. That is where I have not heard the example that I thought you could provide.

that involves, on the tourism side, or on other aspects of economic development, laying waste to our beautiful environment, that would be a dangerous path to follow. There is no conflict between reaching a 90 per cent target of GDP per head relative to the UK average in 10 years' time, and preventing the wrecking of our environmental heritage. We are fortunate to live in such a beautiful country.

Hybu Cymru yn Ewrop Promoting Wales in Europe

Q10 William Graham: Will the First Minister make a statement concerning the measures he has taken to promote Wales in Europe? (OAQ10063)

The First Minister: On 28 February, I attended a reception hosted by the Wales European Centre to promote Wales's profile in Europe and Europe's headquarters—Brussels. On St David's day, we launched the Wales World Nation package of quality promotional material, which includes the latest technology by way of a CD-ROM and website, at the forum on Wales, Europe and the world held at the Celtic Manor. The forum was addressed by Bertie Ahern, An Taoiseach of the Republic of Ireland, Brian Wilson, the Minister of State at the Foreign Office, and myself.

William Graham: Do you believe that the Wales week held at the Wales European Centre was a success, and do you intend for it to become an annual event?

The First Minister: It has been held on two occasions. It is not yet possible to say whether we intend this to become an annual event. The Wales week is regarded as a success, but we need to evaluate it. I will write to you on this issue.

Elin Jones: Mewn Ewrop sydd yn weithredol amlieithog, a da o beth yw hynny, a gytunwch fod y ddelwedd dros y penwythnos o gynhadledd uniaith y blaid Lafur heb offer cyfieithu, lle roedd cyfraniadau yn y Gymraeg yn cau allan y di-Gymraeg, yn adlewyrchiad siomedig o ymrwymiad—

Elin Jones: In a Europe that operates multilingually, which is a good thing, do you agree that the image over the weekend of a monolingual Labour party conference without translation equipment, where Welsh language contributions closed out non-Welsh speakers, is a disappointing reflection of the commitment—

Y Llywydd: Nid cwestiwn ynglŷn â'r Blaid Lafur yw hwn. Mae'r cwestiwn hwn yn ymwneud ag Ewrop. Nid oes yn rhaid i Brif Weinidog Cymru ateb y cwestiwn hwnnw.

The Presiding Officer: This question is not about the Labour Party. This question is about Europe. The First Minister does not have to answer that question.

2:40 p.m.

Cyngor Partneriaeth Busnes (Cyfarfod Diwethaf) Business Partnership Council (Latest Meeting)

Q11 Alun Cairns: Will the First Minister make a statement on his actions following the latest Business Partnership Council meeting? (OAQ10069)

The First Minister: The last Business Partnership Council meeting was held on 15 February. In it four consultation papers, issued recently by the Assembly, were discussed. Business representatives at the meeting made many comments, which have been noted and will be taken into account along with the consultative contributions that we expect to receive from other bodies during the consultation period, which is still ongoing.

Alun Cairns: The powers of the Assembly are often criticised by a range of organisations, including businesses. Will you heed the comments made at the Business Partnership Council that called for Wales to become a toll-free zone?

The First Minister: Tory-free zone? [*Laughter.*]

The Presiding Officer: Order. Alun Cairns's enunciation was clear.

The First Minister: It was still tempting.

The Business Partnership Council will meet again in a fortnight to discuss the reorganisation of training services, information and communications technology and the general state of trade. I do not recall a contribution that mentioned becoming a toll-free zone. Governments of both parties have tried to find a method to avoid having to charge tolls on the Severn and Cleddau bridges, on key trunk roads and charging 5p to cross the Cob in Porthmadog. Having to pay to get into Wales does not lead people to believe that Wales is a wonderful country. That is not our view either. Many people do not want tolls. However, we need a solution as to how to write off the debts incurred by the building of the Severn Bridge. This goes back to the agreement in 1965-66 to build the first bridge, which was rehashed by Peter Walker in order to build the second Severn crossing in the early 1990s. This is an item that is permanently on the shopping list. However, you cannot always turn a shopping list into reality, unless you have a large amount of money that allows you to repay original debts, about which you would then not have to worry.

Brian Hancock: The Business Partnership Council and the Economic Development Committee's business support review has brought many organisations together, such as Chamber Wales, the Federation of Small Businesses, the Confederation of British Industry and the Trades Union Congress. What is the latest on a business support unit, which was mentioned in paragraph 18 of the written evidence from Chamber Wales, FSB and CBI, to act as a link between the Assembly and business? Do you have any relevant dates?

The First Minister: No. That is too detailed a question. I will have to write to you about that, Brian. The general principle of closer links between the Assembly and business is widely understood. Many Members are keen to establish those links. However, it is a matter on which the Presiding Office must take a lead. Such links would enable us to arrange secondments to business, like those the Industry and Parliament Trust organises for the UK Parliament, to break down the barriers between elected politicians and business.

Cwestiwn Brys Urgent Question

Tablau Perfformiad Ysgolion School Performance Tables

Jonathan Morgan: Will the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning make a statement on the policy of the Liberal Democrat and Labour administration on the issuing of school performance tables, in light of her speech to the Wales Labour Party conference on Friday, 2 March? (EAQ10382)

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning (Jane Davidson): Your question asks me to account for what it is claimed that I said at the Labour Party conference last Friday. Only those who were at the conference know exactly what I said. Some of you have a draft copy of my speech, which was made available to journalists with the proviso that they should

check against delivery. Journalists honour the convention of quoting what is said, not what is in draft form. I suggest that the Assembly operates on the same convention; we should be accountable for what we say, not for what it is assumed that we have said.

My speech to the conference was entirely consistent with what I have told the Assembly on several occasions. I do not believe that the Tory league table approach achieves our objective of raising standards in all our schools. I will consult on developing better ways of providing information. I have said that to the Assembly, I have said it to the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee, I said it to the Labour Party Conference and I say it again to you now.

Jonathan Morgan: I thank the Minister for that statement. I have a copy of the speech here, and we all saw the front page of *The Western Mail* on Saturday. The confused message was that you want to abolish league tables. We know that you do not like league tables because you said so last November and added that there would be a consultation. Your speech suggested that the consultation has been concluded. That shows contempt for the Assembly and our processes. Discussion in Committee or a statement or debate in Plenary should have preceded a concrete policy announcement such as this. The Assembly has processes and courtesy should be observed.

Jane Davidson: I assure you that courtesy has been observed in this instance and has always been observed since I became Minister. My Cabinet colleagues also observe courtesy. I quote from my speech as I delivered it at the conference:

‘We will work with teachers, parents and local communities to identify the best ways of providing public information about our schools, ways which celebrate what schools achieve, so that parents can be confident about choosing their local school.’

I also quote what I said in *The Western Mail*. It is important that quotes in newspapers are within quotation marks. *The Western Mail* reads as follows:

‘ “This is not about removing information from the public domain. It is about publishing it in a way which is useful for parents.”... The minister said she would be consulting groups such as parents, employers, schools councils (of pupils), teachers and head teachers about the information that should be provided.’

There is no change in policy. I am delivering the consultation paper as promised to the Committee and to the Assembly. I am happy to reaffirm our commitment to every school in Wales and to improving their standards. The consultation paper will be issued shortly.

Ieuan Wyn Jones: That was a spirited performance, Jane, and I do not disagree with what you said. However, do you not think that as a matter of courtesy the Assembly should have heard it first?

Jane Davidson: The Assembly heard it first on 31 October when I announced a review of school performance data because I was not satisfied with it. I quote my announcement at that time:

‘We need now to reflect on whether the tables are the most effective and distinctive means of putting this information in the public domain, not least because they measure performance in terms of external exam results and do not recognise year on year improvement in schools. I am preparing a consultation paper which I shall put to the Assembly and to the public, for comment on development in 2001.’

The Assembly has been informed about the consultation on several occasions. It is an open consultation, and the consultation paper will come out in early April. I look forward to

Members considering the most important and effective ways of putting information into the public domain, rather than using a propagandist notion that suggests that the current tables assist parents who will need to express a preference for a secondary school. Members, particularly those who represent rural areas, know that the preference for a secondary school is related to the school in the local community. Our ambition is to make those local community schools excellent. We will take a number of steps, not only looking at public performance information but also working with the inspection service to ensure that schools in Wales are excellent. I refute any notion that we have not informed the Assembly about this consultation. We have done so on four separate occasions and the consultation paper will be issued shortly.

Nick Bourne: We have had a more sanitised version of your speech to the Labour conference. I remind you what you said:

‘We will abolish the divisive Tory league tables’.

You said that at the conference.

Jane Davidson: Yes.

2:50 p.m.

Nick Bourne: That should not be announced at the conference before it is announced to the Assembly. I do not mind if the Liberal Democrats are told in advance because they are a wholly-owned subsidiary of yours these days. However, I object to other Members of this Assembly finding out what the Assembly’s policy will be in the Labour Party conference at Swansea and not in this Assembly. Will you apologise?

Jane Davidson: I will not apologise, for the reasons that I have just given. When I made the statement in the autumn, I expressed my concern—the proper concern of an Assembly Minister—that the tables did not measure performance in terms of recognising year-on-year improvement in schools. That is why we are consulting on them. I find it extraordinary to be defending a political position that demonstrates our wish to have available the right kind of public information in terms of schools, employers, teachers, Assembly Members and anyone who wants to participate, against those who suggest that that is not the way forward. I have not said anything more than that we will consult on this issue. I used party political language in the Labour Party conference and I am happy to use it here now. I do not believe that the divisive Tory league tables, which turned school against school, reflect the quality of education being delivered across Wales. We need to consult to ensure that public information reflects the quality of education being delivered across Wales. I hope that every other Member of the Assembly will support me in that.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Pan welais y penawdau yn *The Western Mail*, dechreuais feddwl ein bod ar fin cael polisi addysg a wnaethpwyd yng Nghymru ar gyfer anghenion Cymru. Mae’n amlwg yn awr nad oedd ond datganiad ar gyfer cynhadledd y Blaid Lafur. Ar ôl dweud y byddai’n cael gwared o’r cynghreiriau hyn—mae’n hen bryd gwneud hynny a byddwn yn croesawu hynny—dywed y Gweinidog yn awr y bydd yn ymgynghori ar y mater. Ar ôl hynny, mae’n siŵr y bydd yn sefydlu tasglu i ystyried y mater eto a bydd y cynghreiriau

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: When I saw the headlines in *The Western Mail*, I began to think that we were about to have an education policy made in Wales to meet Wales’s needs. It is evident now that it was only a statement for the Labour Party conference. After saying that she would get rid these league tables—it is high time that we did so and I would welcome that—the Minister now says that she will do doubt consult on the matter. After that, no doubt she will establish a taskforce to consider the matter again and we will have the league tables for the next 10 years. Does

gyda ni am y 10 mlynedd nesaf. A yw'r the Minister intend to get rid of these or were
Gweinidog yn bwriadu cael gwared arnynt they empty words at the Labour Party
ynteu a oedd hyn yn siarad gwag yng conference?
nghynhadledd y Blaid Lafur?

Jane Davidson: Presiding Officer, is this now a debate on the merits of the league tables or is this a question? [OPPOSITION ASSEMBLY MEMBERS: 'Answer the question'.]

I am happy to respond to your questions. As I said, we will abolish the divisive Tory league tables in their current form. They are not effective. We are consulting on what the right information to go into the public domain is. The consultation paper will be issued in early April, as I have said. Every Assembly Member and every member of the public sitting in this Chamber or listening to this debate throughout Wales will be able to input their views on this important issue of how we reflect our schools' contribution to the education system and the education of pupils in Wales.

David Melding: Do you not think that you would have been better advised to have followed the example of your colleague, Jane Hutt? When she decided that health authorities were to be abolished, she announced the decision in the Assembly and said that she would consult on what should succeed them. Six months ago, you mentioned a vague consultation process on how information reaches parents, but you did not say that you would abolish the tables. You told a Labour Party conference that you would do that. What on earth is there left to consult upon?

Jane Davidson: All I said at the Labour Party conference is, I repeat, 'we will abolish the divisive Tory league tables'. That is all that we will abolish. We will not abolish the right of people in Wales to have proper information and not be propagandist information. Your schools performance booklet states that tables

'are also for young people aged 16 and over who are considering course options'.

No courses are included in it. It does not tell you anything about the courses available to young people. What use is that to a person of 16 or older who wants to choose a course?

I want the Assembly to produce quality information and I want the help of Assembly Members and the people of Wales on how we provide that.

Pwyntiau o Drefn Points of Order

The Presiding Officer: I call the Leader of the Welsh Conservatives.

David Davies *rose*—

Mick Bates: Has David been promoted?

Nick Bourne: Not yet. [*Laughter.*] I raise this point of order under Standing Orders Nos. 6.33 and 6.34 on written questions. Could we have a statement on the time taken to answer written questions? I have at least 10 questions the answers to which have been outstanding for over a fortnight. It is a matter of concern when one is trying to deal with constituents' questions and matters in Plenary. It is a problem across the board, not just with questions to one Minister. Could we have a target time for how long it should take to reply to questions?

Alun Cairns: Further to that point of order, when you consider the timetabling of the answering of questions, will you consider the date given on the answer itself. On several occasions, I have received answers to written questions the date on which preceded the date on which I received them by up to five working days. Will you analyse that?

The Minister for Assembly Business (Andrew Davies): If Nick will give me examples, I will take them up. We will consider this issue as a Cabinet. Perhaps we could discuss with you, Presiding Officer, the appropriate guidelines on that.

The Presiding Officer: I am grateful for your positive response. It is important that replies to questions are given within the timeframe provided in the guidance on this matter for Assembly Members.

David Davies: I raise a point of order under Standing Order No. 19.2, relating to the need for the Minister for Finance, Local Government and Communities to produce a proper budget. Our group has already queried the fact that this administration has spent over £10,000 on employing two Liberal spin-doctors. What was not made clear to us at the time was that over £1,000 was spent on placing a large advertisement in the *Liberal Democrat News*. Does that breach the rules of spending on political parties and, if not, given that the Liberal Democrats only managed 22 votes in a recent by-election in Abergavenny, how does it tie in with Best Value?

The Presiding Officer: Order. By-elections in Abergavenny are not a matter for me.

The Minister for Finance, Local Government and Communities (Edwina Hart): I have answered in full the written questions put to me on this matter by David Davies, but if he wants to query me through questions in this Chamber, he may do so.

The Presiding Officer: If Assembly Members are ingeniously seeking to use points of order in Plenary sessions to further written questions by other means, I do not look favourably upon it.

Glyn Davies: Point of order. Earlier today, I contacted your office because I wished to raise a point of order similar to that which David Davies has raised. I was told that it was not appropriate to raise the matter and that I could not do so. I was not prepared to raise it having received that advice. However, the question has now been raised and answered. What advice are you giving us if we want to raise a point of order? Should we tell you beforehand or not?

The Presiding Officer: Yes. I give advice on all matters relating to procedure. As I have just indicated, points of order should relate primarily to the conduct of business in the Chamber. When there are issues related to the conduct of business that are of concern to Members, they are entitled to raise them, but I prefer points of order to be specifically related to our business. Matters relating to the answer of questions or other extraneous issues should not be raised as points of order, if only for the reason that they take up the time of the Plenary session.

Datganiad Busnes Business Statement

The Minister for Assembly Business (Andrew Davies): I will begin by outlining changes to this week's business. I discussed with the Business Committee this morning the need to bring forward two no-named day motions on Thursday to enable the executive to make urgent legislation when the Assembly is not sitting in respect of the foot and mouth disease emergency. I hope to table these motions today. However, I will make arrangements to e-mail further details to Members as soon as possible.

Moving to the next three weeks' business statement, business on 13 March is as I reported last week but will also include a motion to approve the National Assembly for Wales (Assembly Members and Officials) (Salaries, Allowance etc) Determinations 2001. On Thursday 15 March, business will include a motion to delegate the functions of the Animals (Amendment) Act to the First Minister. On Tuesday 20 March, I have scheduled a Plaid Cymru minority party debate, a motion to delegate the functions of the Transport Act to the First Minister, a composite motion under Standing Order No. 22.25 to approve two items of subordinate legislation and Janice Gregory's short debate on crime, which was postponed from 15 February. With regard to that debate, I said in Business Committee this morning that I would try to accommodate the debate sooner than 20 March if possible.

3:00 p.m.

Business on Thursday 22 March is as I reported last week. On Tuesday 27 March there will be a motion to delegate the function of administering the European social fund to the First Minister, a debate on the Best Value Order, a debate on the meat hygiene costs scheme, three motions to consider and approve items of subordinate legislation, and a composite motion under Standing Order No. 22.25 to approve four draft Assembly Orders.

On Thursday 29 March, there will be a motion to adopt the supplementary budget and a debate on the Health and Social Services Committee's report on bovine spongiform encephalopathy. Finally, on the advice of the Business Committee this morning, the Deputy Presiding Officer has determined, in accordance with Standing Order No. 22.5, that the following items of subordinate legislation need not be referred to a Subject Committee. These are the Valuation Tribunals (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2001, the Education (Nutritional Standards for School Lunches) (Wales) Regulations 2001, the Smoke Control Areas (Exempted Fireplaces) (Wales) Order 2001 and, finally, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (Commencement No. 2) (Wales) Order 2001. Arrangements will be made to post a copy of this statement to the intranet and internet later today.

The Presiding Officer: Are there any objections to the business statement? I see that there are none. Are there any comments on the business statement? There are none. We will therefore move on.

*Derbyniwyd y datganiad busnes.
Business statement adopted.*

**Dadl o dan Reol Sefydlog Rhif 29: Diwygio Gorchymyn Cynllunio Gwlad a Thref
(Mathau Dosbarthiadau) Defnydd 1987 Arfaethedig
Debate under Standing Order No. 29: Proposed Amendment of the Town and
Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987**

Christine Gwyther: I propose that

the Assembly resolves to instruct the Minister for Environment to bring forward subordinate legislation, the effect of which will be to amend the Use Classes Order 1987 to exclude the storage of radioactive materials from Class B8 (storage and distribution).

The objective to be achieved is that future proposals for storage and distribution facilities would not allow storage of radioactive materials unless a planning permission specifically for such purpose is applied for and granted.

A cost benefit analysis was laid in the Table Office on 27 February 2001.

Most of us quite like our neighbours. Some of us think that we have problem neighbours. However, few of us have a neighbour that delivers the triple whammy: the devaluation of our property, the ruination of our business and, in some cases, the wrecking of our health. Those who have the misfortune to live close to Trecŵn in north Pembrokeshire have suffered all of those problems as a direct consequence of having a bad neighbour. They do not have any chance of compensation and their problem has no standing in law.

They are suffering from planning blight. In this case, they are suffering the fall out from a nuclear storage planning application that has never been lodged and which, in all probability, has never even been written.

The site for the proposed storage would be the tunnels at the Trecŵn site, which has an interesting history. In 1997, Omega Pacific, an Anglo-Irish consortium, bought the former Royal Navy Armaments Depot from the Ministry of Defence at Trecŵn for the knock-down price of £400,000. The purchase was originally welcomed by the community, given the prospect of 500 quality jobs in a new aero engine facility. However, four years later, we are still waiting and hoping that those jobs will arrive.

Omega Pacific did not simply forget to deliver on the promised jobs. To add insult to injury, it stated publicly its intention to look for partners to develop the site as a nuclear storage base. That is, nuclear storage for an unspecified length of time. In lay person's terms that is nuclear dumping.

The facility consists of a three-and-a-half mile valley with 58 storage chambers built into the steep valley sides. They are deep tunnels and there have been other ideas for their use, such as a book repository, a wine facility and even a cheese storage facility. The fact that the site holds a B8 planning consent means that on the face of it, you could store just about anything. Whether or not that includes radioactive material remains a moot point.

When I heard that I had been successful in the ballot to propose subordinate legislation under Standing Order No. 29, it was initially difficult to narrow down the field of possible pieces of legislation, and I have a long list on which to draw should I be successful again. The legislation should have the potential to make a great difference to people's lives and should be simple and practical enough to win the support of the Government of Wales and others in the Assembly. I hope that I can do that.

As a lifelong supporter of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, I originally thought that it might be possible to bring forward a motion to ban any new nuclear sites in Wales. A short debate was held on that issue, and it won general support from across the Chamber. However, the quick and practical enactment of that could be fraught with problems. The devolution settlement is unclear as to who has jurisdiction over what in terms of nuclear issues. Sue may wish to refer to that.

The Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions accounts to Parliament for the safe transport of nuclear materials in Great Britain. That is clear enough. The relevant regulators are the same as those for general transport safety. For road transport, it is the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions. For rail, it is the Health and Safety Executive. For sea transport, it is the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and for air it is the Civil Aviation Authority.

In Northern Ireland, the Secretary of State is accountable for the safe transport of radioactive materials by road and rail. Wales does not have the same devolution settlement, and I see the sense in that. Safety does not respect lines drawn on a map, and neither does disease, as we have seen during the current foot and mouth disease crisis.

As far as the safe storage, use, discharge and disposal of radioactive materials is concerned, the Environment Agency is the regulator in England and Wales, as part of its wider role in environmental protection. It regulates the storage and use of radioactive substances and the accumulation of radioactive waste, which is what has been discussed regarding Trecŵn.

In Wales, the Environment Agency reports to Sue Essex. In the light of that, I met Sue to discuss this piece of legislation. I have also met officials from the Environment Agency to discuss any possible concerns that they may have. The officials thought that this legislation could lessen the Agency's control. I could allay their fears on that. If this legislation is brought forward, as I hope it will be, the controls of both the Environment Agency and Sue Essex will remain intact. The important thing for my constituents and I is that local government's control over planning will be strengthened. It will also be much clearer to members of the public and developers that any permission to store radioactive material must be applied for at the initial stages. It cannot happen through the back door.

The regulations surrounding transport and storage of radioactive material are complex. Although some of this may be technical, I will not go into too much detail. Under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 schedule 2 part 3, a change from use in class B2—'general industrial'—to class B8—'storage and distribution'—is classed as 'permitted development'. Therefore, the use of buildings or land that have been used for an industrial process can be changed to storage and distribution without the need for planning permission. That is where the loophole lies.

If the local planning authority believes that an environmental impact assessment is required, permitted development rights are withdrawn and a planning application, accompanied by an environmental statement, must be submitted. Therefore, it appears that a change of use from industrial use to the storage of radioactive waste would need planning consent. However, the current B8 storage class does not differentiate between the different types of material stored. Therefore, the use of land or buildings can be changed from storing one material to storing another without development being involved. It seems that the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 do not apply to this situation where no development is involved. Therefore, there is a loophole in the existing regulations.

Removing the storage of radioactive material from the B8 category under the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 would ensure that any proposals to change storage use from one type of material to radioactive material could not go ahead automatically. Planning permission and environmental impact assessment would need to be considered.

3:10 p.m.

In short, the legislation would remove radioactive materials from the B8 storage classification. If developers wished to apply for permission to store radioactive waste, they would have to do so separately, whether or not the site was tailor-made for that use, as developers tried to argue in the case of Trecŵn.

Also, importantly, local authorities would be able to identify, in their unitary development plans, sites suitable for industrial development and the storing of non-radioactive materials. It is crucial that local councils can identify those areas that they want to see developed industrially, including where there may be a need for storage, without the fear that they will open the door to radioactive waste. In these challenging times for Wales and the Welsh economy, we need to plan our industrial future with confidence.

This legislation—if passed—will not be sensational, but it will be practical. It will remove the confusion and doubt from the B8 classification that led to the planning blight in the Trecŵn area. I hope that Pembrokeshire County Council will be able to make practical use of it because it has been in a most difficult and invidious position. Its only possible—and desperate—response to the planning blight created by Omega Pacific was to hold public meetings and beg the company to come clean about its intentions. That is a terrible state for any local council to be in. As there has never been an application, there has never been a refusal. B8 consent exists, and with it the threat of nuclear waste. To make matters worse, Omega Pacific's reference to meetings with the relevant House of Lords's committee has given a cod legitimacy to its claim that Trecŵn would be suitable for nuclear storage.

Does Omega Pacific intend to go through with the application? It looks increasingly unlikely, and it seems probable that it was merely flying a kite. If it was flying a kite, it cast a long and dark shadow over the people of west Wales. If this legislation is passed—and I urge you to support it—kites like this one will not be able to get off the ground, and nuclear planning blight will not be coming to a town or village near you. Please support the motion.

Helen Mary Jones: I begin my contribution by congratulating Christine Gwyther on proposing this debate. This is an extremely sensible and practical piece of legislation, which Plaid Cymru—The Party of Wales will be glad to support.

We live with the legacy of the reckless and over-subsidised nuclear-fuel industry in the UK. Unfortunately, levels of radioactive waste will now increase as nuclear plants come to the end of their lives. That waste must be managed as safely as possible. It is long-term radioactive waste, which means that it is never possible to be entirely confident that it can be transported or stored safely. There will always be the possibility of accidental leakage that could cause significant, long-term damage. It is essential, therefore, that new planning permission be sought for storing nuclear material, and this piece of legislation seeks to do that.

Christine Gwyther rehearsed the situation in Trecŵn. People across Wales, beyond Christine's constituency, have been moved by it. Cynog Dafis will have more to say on that. There are communities throughout Wales that are concerned about possible nuclear leaks, and low levels of radioactivity, the safety of which we are unsure. For example, the community in Cardiff North has concerns about the possible health risks posed by radioactive discharges from Nycom Amersham.

In Wales we sometimes act as though nuclear issues have gone away. They were once high on our agenda. In bringing this debate forward today, Christine reminded us that it is still a matter of wide concern in many communities. We have a strong tradition of being anti-nuclear. In the 1980s we made the decision, through local authorities, to be a nuclear-free country. This motion before us gives us the opportunity to take a small but practical step in that direction. We are pleased to support it.

The facts and figures make it clear how unsustainable the nuclear-fuel industry was, and remains. We have seen the catastrophic accidents at Five Mile Island and, in particular, Chernobyl, which left a generation of its children in terrible suffering, and also affected areas the other side of Europe, as our farmers know.

This Assembly aims, through sustainable development, to ensure that we meet today's needs in a way that does not compromise the needs of future generations. Nuclear fuel met some of yesterday's needs, and still meets some of today's needs, but the dangerous legacy that it has left for hundreds of thousands of years is one of which we cannot be proud. It was a terrible mistake, and we must ensure that we put it right as far as we can and tap our energy from sustainable sources in future. After all, we are also living with the legacy of fossil fuel energy—climate change. We must develop alternatives.

Just as this debate is about sensible planning policies for nuclear waste, so we desperately need sensible planning policies to promote sustainable renewable energy sources. Wales could take the lead here, if only the Government of Wales will refocus its concern away from landscape alone, towards full sustainability. We owe it to future generations to pass this legislation today and to think about how we use all fuel. We need to get it right this time, and I hope that everybody in this National Assembly will support Christine's motion.

Richard Edwards: I am immensely grateful to Christine for her consideration in proposing this subordinate legislation. As the constituency Member for the beautiful Trecŵn valley, whose blighted existence, thanks to an act of commercial vandalism, has triggered today's motion, I commend her for her good neighbourliness. This is in stark contrast to the behaviour of the current owners of the former MOD armaments depot—behaviour that is grotesque in its antisocial disregard and contempt for the local community.

Members will know that Trecŵn's plight has been a matter of the gravest concern to me since my election. I have tabled statements of opinion opposing the madcap proposal to store radioactive waste in the underground storage chambers at Trecŵn, and have advocated a no new nuclear sites policy—for storage or generation—in Wales. Both these received overwhelming support from fellow Members. I also proposed a short debate entitled 'No New Nuclear Sites in Wales' about 11 months ago. That also attracted impressive cross-party, indeed, all-party, support. Sue Essex has conveyed the Assembly's overwhelming view on this issue to the UK Minister—Michael Meacher MP—but we have still not had a full Plenary debate with a recorded vote on my proposition of a no new nuclear sites policy for Wales. I would like to see that happen, as would most Assembly Members, I believe. I would like it to be official Assembly policy.

There has been some lack of clarity about the Assembly's precise powers in this area and conflicting opinion, as with much else. However, my parliamentary colleague in Preseli Pembrokeshire—Jackie Lawrence MP—has received in writing an unequivocal statement from Mr Meacher that it is up to the Assembly to decide policy and that the UK Government would, without question, respect any decision by the Assembly to say no to any new nuclear sites for storage or generation in Wales. Such a policy, beside being wholly desirable in principle, would be the most effective means of stopping the unscrupulous, speculative antics of Omega Pacific, ending the devastating planning blight afflicting Trecŵn, and hopefully releasing the site for use that will benefit and not blight an area of high unemployment.

In the meantime, Christine's motion helps to plug an important loophole. There is a lurking fear that Omega Pacific will get in through the backdoor, that it will not need planning permission, even for storing radioactive material, because the site already holds a class B8 storage use consent. This does not differentiate between the different types of material stored. As Christine has pointed out, land or buildings can be changed from storage of one material to another without devolvement being involved. What is more, the environmental impact assessment regulations do not apply if no devolvement is involved.

3:20 p.m.

Therefore, removing the storage of radioactive material from the B8 category should ensure that any proposal to change storage use from one type of radioactive material to another, could not go ahead automatically without need for planning consent and involving impact assessment. It is scandalous that a company can make a destructive speculative planning move that blights a whole area, with no prospect of redress for the people concerned. Properties have been devalued, businesses ruined and the people's wellbeing is threatened in an area utterly dependent on an undefiled image of clean, green environment and scenic splendour. Any legislation that helps in some way to stop companies behaving in this

appalling, irresponsible manner must be welcomed. I urge Members to support Christine's motion. It may be Trecŵn today; it could be a community in your constituencies tomorrow.

The best way of frustrating the nuclear vandals is to make clear that new nuclear sites in Wales, for storage or generation, are not an option. I am not proposing crude Nimbyism either. Nuclear waste is an all-pervasive hazard that knows no boundaries wherever it is stored. However, we have a right to insist on the most appropriate management methods and storage location. There is almost universal, scientific agreement that the best option—until a long-term solution can be found—is storage above ground, where it is retrievable and monitorable on the sites where it is generated, where the expertise exists and where there is no need to transport, with all its potential hazards. I want this Assembly to declare, as a matter of principle, that there will be no new nuclear sites in Wales. I want that proposition debated fully in this Chamber, with an opportunity to vote, so that no rogue speculator can be in any doubt.

Glyn Davies: I support Christine. I was not a supporter of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Its activities were not worthy of support and I disagreed wholeheartedly with its objectives. Had it been successful it would have caused great damage. However, I am concerned about the west Wales economy. I remember our concern in mid Wales—when I was closely involved in activities there—that just over the border was an area with similar needs to the one with which we were dealing in mid Wales. Llywydd, you will remember similar areas in Gwynedd. We felt that those areas were being disadvantaged, in that the investment in around 40 per cent of Wales was not being extended as far as Pembrokeshire. The economic disadvantage of west Wales was unacceptable. We cannot have that economic disadvantage. It has been extended as a result of the outbreak of the foot and mouth disease. There are no cases in the area, but it has a negative impact on that area because it is so dependent on farming. The area cannot continue to be blighted. While this kind of possible development hangs over the area, there is no doubt that it is blighted.

Local government should have an influence whenever something of this significance is proposed in its area. There is no way that this kind of development should sneak in through the back door. I have long believed that the use of environmental impact assessments are right whenever a development is proposed that will cause a significant change in the area. Over the last few years, we have seen a growth in the use of environmental investigation agencies and that is right. Local government planning powers—and I have experience of this—should not be whittled away. That underpinned some of the questions I asked and the resistance I showed when applications were proposed. I agree that a change from general storage to the storage of radioactive material must be a separate planning application and must actively seek approval. There must be no further blight on this part of Wales. It has suffered enough. Powers should remain within the local area so that local people can express their views and greatly influence any such development.

Mick Bates: I congratulate Christine on proposing this legislation. It helps to enhance the world's view of Wales. It is important, strategically, that we continue to put forward measures that assist the image of a green, clean country. I also congratulate Glyn for his support now for the anti-nuclear movement. As somebody who in the past supported Pandora, a group that campaigns against nuclear dumping, I know of the work that CND did to stop the proliferation of nuclear arms and any form of nuclear plant in Wales. The objective must be that future proposals for storage and distribution facilities would not allow storage of radioactive materials unless planning permission for such a purpose is applied for. We are ensuring that people wishing to store nuclear waste seek planning permission. We are taking an important step to bring matters into the open. The Liberal Democrats believe in the principle of openness and hope to bring more openness to this Assembly.

I also congratulate Richard Edwards who tabled a statement of opinion that 38 of us signed

opposing the Omega Pacific proposal, stating that it would be a catastrophic blight on the economy and environment of Pembrokeshire. There is concern that the storage of such waste would have serious effects on a region which depends on agriculture and tourism for much of its income. At a time when we are grappling with GM issues, trying to develop organic agriculture, and dealing with the foot and mouth disease outbreak on top of the BSE blight, this development for the storage of nuclear waste must be stopped. We should take into account Greenpeace's concern that waste from the Sellafield reprocessing plant would be stored there, and ensure that we give unanimous support to this important piece of legislation.

Cynog Dafis: Fe'm hetholwyd yn Aelod Seneddol yn fuan ar ôl cau safle'r Weinyddiaeth Amddiffyn yn Nhrecw'n. Yr oedd hynny'n ergyd economaidd ddifrifol i'r ardal. Bùm yn rhan o'r saga hirfaith pan oedd y Weinyddiaeth Amddiffyn yn dweud ei bod yn ceisio gwerthu'r safle ar gyfer pwrpas arall. Yr oedd disgwyl pethau mawr gyda dyfodiad Omega Pacific ond mae pawb yn siomedig gyda'u gweithgarwch.

Cynog Dafis: I was elected as a Member of Parliament soon after the closure of the Ministry of Defence site at Trecw'n. That was a severe economic blow to the area. I was part of the lengthy saga when the Ministry of Defence said that it was endeavouring to sell the site for an alternative purpose. Great things were expected with the arrival of Omega Pacific but everybody is disappointed with their activities.

Llongyfarchaf Christine Gwyther am ddod o hyd i'r man gwan hwn a dangos sut i gael gwared arno. Mae'n ddefnydd dyfeisgar o alluoedd deddfu'r Cynulliad. Mae gwastraff niwclear yn destun pryder dilys. Mae honiadau difrifol wedi'u gwneud am effeithiau iechyd ymbelydredd lefel isel heb sôn am ymbelydredd lefel canolradd. Mae sôn am storio gwastraff lefel canolradd yn Nhrecw'n.

I congratulate Christine Gwyther for finding this loophole and showing how it can be closed. It is an inventive use of the Assembly's legislative powers. Nuclear waste is a cause of valid concern. Serious allegations have been made about the effects of low level radiation never mind medium level radiation. There is talk of storing medium level waste at Trecw'n.

Pan oeddwn yn Aelod Seneddol, cadeiriais seminar undydd yn San Steffan ar holl gwestiwn ymbelydredd lefel isel a'i effeithiau iechyd posibl. Cyflwynodd Chris Busby ddamcaniaeth ynglŷn â'r effeithiau posibl ar iechyd. Yr oedd gwyddonwyr o fri o bob rhan o'r byd yn bresennol i gymryd rhan yn y seminar. Nid wyf yn gymwys i farnu os yw'r ddamcaniaeth honno yn gywir. Fodd bynnag, yr oedd y dystiolaeth a glywsom y diwrnod hwnnw yn awgrymu bod yn rhaid gweithredu egwyddor ragochel mewn perthynas â'r mater hwn. Bu peth amheuaeth ynglŷn â'r dystiolaeth ystadegol epidemiologol a gyflwynodd Chris Busby. Fodd bynnag, nid oedd neb yn fodlon wffio ei ddansoddiad.

When I was a Member of Parliament, I chaired a day seminar at Westminster on the whole question of low level radiation and its possible health risks. Chris Busby presented a hypothesis about the possible effects on health. Famous scientists from all over the world were present to participate in the seminar. I am not qualified to judge whether that hypothesis is correct. However, the evidence that we heard on that day suggests that we must implement a precautionary principle in relation to this matter. There has been some doubt regarding the epidemiological statistical evidence that Chris Busby presented. However, nobody was willing to doubt his analysis.

Mae unrhyw fwriad i storio gwastraff niwclear yn Nhrecw'n yn annerbyniol. Mae *Pembrokeshire Anti-Nuclear Alliance*, mudiad lleol sydd yn ymgrychu yn erbyn hyn, wedi profi bod y safle yn anaddas yn ddaeaeregol i'r pwrpas hwn. Er enghraifft,

Any intention to store nuclear waste in Trecw'n is unacceptable. Pembrokeshire Anti-Nuclear Alliance, a local organisation campaigning against this, has proved that the site is geologically unsuitable for this purpose. For example, water that flows into

mae dŵr sydd yn llifo i'r afon Cleddau—ac mae'r Cleddau yn darparu oddeutu 90 y cant o ddŵr yfed Sir Benfro—yn tarddu'n rhannol o Drecŵn a'r dyffryn arbennig hwnnw.

the Cleddau river—and the Cleddau provides about 90 per cent of Pembrokeshire's drinking water—partly originates from Trecŵn and that particular valley.

3:30 p.m.

Mae'r amheuaeth ynglŷn â bwriadau Omega Pacific wedi creu malltod cynllunio yn yr yr ardal. Mae hynny'n annerbyniol. Cefnogaf yn gryf alwad Richard Edwards i'r Cynulliad fabwysiadu polisi o beidio â chael safleoedd gwastraff niwclear newydd yng Nghymru. Gobeithiaf yn fawr y bydd Llywodraeth Cymru yn cefnogi hynny.

The suspicions about the intentions of Omega Pacific have created a planning blight in the area. That is unacceptable. I strongly support Richard Edwards' call for the Assembly to adopt a policy of not having new nuclear waste sites in Wales. I greatly hope that the Government of Wales will support that.

Mae'n resyn nad yw'r Papur Gwyrdd disgwylidig o San Steffan ar y cwestiwn hwn wedi ymddangos. Yn y cyfamser, dylai fod gennym bolisi o wrthod unrhyw safleoedd gwastraff niwclear newydd. Gobeithiaf y bydd Sue Essex yn ymateb i'r awgrym hwnnw yn ogystal ag i'r ddeddfwriaeth benodol hon.

It is regrettable that the awaited Westminster Green Paper on this question has not appeared. In the meantime, we should have a policy of rejecting any new nuclear waste sites. I hope that Sue Essex will respond to that suggestion as well as to this specific legislation.

The Minister for Environment (Sue Essex): I am happy to consider the point made by Richard and Cynog. We need clarification of exactly what powers the Assembly has and then we can have some discussion on taking that issue forward. I will concentrate in my response—putting aside my personal views on nuclear power generation—on Christine Gwyther's motion on an issue of wide interest. Storage of radioactive waste is a major concern not only to the present generation but also—I stress this—for future generations because of the points that Christine so graphically made. Decisions should therefore be made after full scrutiny through planning and non-planning procedures. I want to ensure that everybody understands the contextual background. We cannot ignore the need for radioactive waste storage because, as Members have said, we have already produced radioactive waste. I will run through the controls that are in place.

First, on the non-planning controls, the National Assembly and elected local planning authorities, as well as other agencies, have different roles with regard to the different controls over the storage of radioactive waste. The licensing of radioactive waste or nuclear sites in Wales is the responsibility of the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate, as part of the Health and Safety Executive. Proposals for the disposal of radioactive waste not on nuclear sites would require the consent of the Environment Agency, as Christine mentioned, which has a statutory obligation to consult the Health and Safety Executive, local authorities and other relevant bodies. The Assembly would consider whether to call in applications to the Environment Agency for its own determination or leave the responsibility with the Environment Agency.

Secondly, on the planning controls, it is most likely that proposals involving the storage of radioactive waste would also involve a planning application. In this event, both local planning authorities and the Assembly have a direct role. Such proposals could be determined by the local planning authorities or be called in by the National Assembly for determination. In the case of Trawsfynydd, the Welsh Office exercised its power to call in a planning application for decommissioning the station, including storage elements. The application is on hold while the company revises its environmental statements but the application will be forwarded to the Assembly for determination.

That summary of the controls should provide some reassurance that most proposals for the storage of radioactive waste would be subject to planning and other controls, and also that the National Assembly has an important role to play, as have local planning authorities, in providing an opportunity for local discussion.

However, there are some forms of land use development that may not require planning consent. For example, certain changes of use from industry to storage. This has led to suggestions that this could be a loophole allowing, for example, a factory to be used for radioactive waste storage without planning consent. This concern is largely unfounded because the requirements of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 1999 would in those circumstances override such permitted development rights, in regard to developments involving the storage of radioactive waste. Such proposals would need environmental impact assessment and hence planning consent. That is where the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 1999 overrule the permitted development.

I turn to Christine Gwyther's proposal. The one situation where it appears that the storage of radioactive waste might be possible without planning consent is that, as she rightly said, when it changes from other types of storage. The current B8 storage class—B8 is the terminology used in the Order—under the Use Classes Order 1987 does not differentiate between the types of material stored. Therefore, the use of land or buildings can be changed from storage of one material to another without development being involved. The word 'development' is important in planning. Also, it seems that the environmental impact assessment regulations that I previously mentioned do not apply to this situation where no development is involved and, thus, would not trigger an application.

Removing the storage of radioactive material from the B8 category of the Use Classes Order 1987 could help to ensure that proposals to change the use of land from storage of one type of material to the storage of radioactive material could not automatically go ahead without the need for planning permission and environmental impact assessment being considered. However, it should be noted that the effect of the Use Classes Order 1987 is entirely permissive. It does not follow that excluding the storage of certain material would automatically mean that development is involved. The question in each case would be whether there has been a material change in the use of the land or building. This would be a matter of fact, the degree of which would have to be determined in each case.

It is this possibility, that storage space given permission in the future might subsequently change to storage of radioactive waste without planning permission and environmental impact assessment regulations being considered, which forms the basis of Christine Gwyther's motion. This is what it addresses. As I mentioned earlier, the other non-planning controls would already be in place. I stress that. However, the requirement for planning consent would ensure the role of local planning authorities—which was Christine's and Glyn's point—in consulting with their communities and, if decided, there is still the possibility of the National Assembly intervening. That would be brought into place. That is the critical point of Christine's motion.

In conclusion, I understand the great concern on this issue in south west Wales. I thank the elected representatives, Christine Gwyther, Richard Edwards and the local MPs, for their efforts in drawing attention to this issue. In response to the proposal, having considered the potential benefits and its wider context, I support Christine Gwyther's motion, although, it is important that we respect procedures of consultation for proposed planning legislation or guidance. We always do that and, therefore, any legislation that we bring forward should pay due regard to any consultation responses.

Christine Gwyther: I thank Sue most sincerely for the work that she and her officials put in

to help me with this particular motion. It is a difficult subject and my thoughts are with you on it Sue. I learnt much about the planning regime when I undertook this work.

It has been an interesting debate. I do not know how other people feel, but it took me back about 20 years. As an Assembly, we can be radical on this. I support the other speakers who said that they would like this issue to be considered in the round.

Glyn was right to point out that this is not just about scenery, but about the economic blight that has occurred in west Wales, because of Omega Pacific's proposal. I also support Mick Bates's comments. We do not simply want to talk about an image of a green and clean countryside, we really want it to be green and clean for future generations.

I hope that the motion gives clarity to the communities of Wales, when they discuss the planning framework for the storage of nuclear waste and how it can be improved. I will repeat Sue's comment that we are discussing the planning controls and, when you think that in Trecŵn—where there were proposals to store wine, cheese or books—the same facility could suddenly be used for radioactive material, it is frightening.

This is a modest piece of legislation. I chose it for various reasons, one of them being that I want it to be adopted. As an ordinary Assembly Member, it is important that I get this legislation through and that other Members who propose subordinate legislation are successful in their proposals.

I hope that the next piece of nuclear legislation that we discuss in this Assembly will be the announcement that no new nuclear sites will be created in Wales.

3:40 p.m.

Cynnig: O blaid 44, Ymatal 0, Yn erbyn 0.

Motion: For 44, Abstain 0, Against 0.

Pleidleisiodd yr Aelodau canlynol o blaid:

The following Members voted for:

Bates, Mick
 Black, Peter
 Butler, Rosemary
 Cairns, Alun
 Chapman, Christine
 Dafis, Cynog
 Davidson, Jane
 Davies, Andrew
 Davies, David
 Davies, Glyn
 Davies, Janet
 Davies, Jocelyn
 Davies, Ron
 Edwards, Richard
 Essex, Sue
 Evans, Delyth
 Feld, Val
 Gibbons, Brian
 Graham, William
 Griffiths, John
 Gwyther, Christine
 Halford, Alison
 Hancock, Brian
 Hutt, Jane
 Jones, Ann

Jones, Elin
 Jones, Helen Mary
 Jones, Ieuan Wyn
 Law, Peter
 Lloyd, David
 Melding, David
 Middlehurst, Tom
 Morgan, Jonathan
 Morgan, Rhodri
 Neagle, Lynne
 Randerson, Jenny
 Richards, Rod
 Ryder, Janet
 Sinclair, Karen
 Thomas, Gwenda
 Thomas, Owen John
 Thomas, Rhodri Glyn
 Williams, Kirsty
 Williams, Phil

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig.
 Motion adopted.*

**Adroddiad y Pwyllgor Addysg a Dysgu Gydol Oes ar Ddarpariaeth Blynnyddoedd
 Cynnar i Blant Tair Blwydd Oed
 The Education and Lifelong Committee Report on Early Years Provision for
 Three-year-olds**

Cynog Dafis: Cynigiau fod

Cynog Dafis: I propose that

y Cynulliad Cenedlaethol, yn unol â Rheol Sefydlog Rhif 9.9, yn nodi'r adroddiad gan y Pwyllgor Addysg a Dysgu Gydol Oes o dan y teitl 'Gosod y Sylfaen: Darpariaeth y Blynnyddoedd Cynnar i Blant Teirblwydd' a ddosbarthwyd yn electronig i Aelodau'r Cynulliad ac a gyflwynwyd yn y Swyddfa Gyflwyno ar 27 Chwefror 2001.

the National Assembly, in accordance with Standing Order No. 9, notes the report from the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee entitled 'Laying the Foundation: Early Years Provision for Three Year Olds', which was distributed electronically to Assembly Members and laid in the Table Office on 27 February 2001.

Mae heddiw'n ddiwrnod pwysig i mi gan mai hwn yw'r tro cyntaf imi draddodi araith sydd wedi cael ei pharatoi ar fy nghyfer. Nid yw'n union yr un fath â chael car â gyrrwr, fel sydd gan rai yma, ond dyma'r peth agosaf at hynny—cam yn y cyfeiriad cywir. Mae heddiw hefyd yn ddiwrnod pwysig i'r Pwyllgor Addysg a Dysgu Gydol Oes gan mai hwn yw'r tro cyntaf inni gyflwyno adroddiad ar agwedd allweddol ar y ddarpariaeth addysg yng Nghymru yn y Cyfarfod Llawn. Mae'r modd adeiladol a chydweithrediadol y mae'r Pwyllgor Addysg a'i ragflaenydd, y Pwyllgor Addysg Cyn-16, wedi ymdrin â'r adolygiad polisi hwn yn haeddu cael ei gymeradwyo.

Today is an important day for me as it is the first time that I have delivered a speech that has been prepared for me. It is not quite the same as having a car with a chauffeur, as some here have, but it is the closest thing to that—a step in the right direction. Today is also an important day for the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee as it is the first time that we present to Plenary a report on a key aspect of education provision in Wales. The constructive and collaborative way in which the Education Committee and its predecessor, the Pre-16 Education Committee, has dealt with this policy review is to be commended.

Cyn i mi gyflwyno'r adroddiad, hoffwn ddiolch ar fy rhan i ac aelodau'r Pwyllgor i

Before I present the report I and members of the Committee wish to thank William

William Graham ac aelodau'r Pwyllgor blaenorol, a fu'n gyfrifol am ymgymryd â'r rhan fwyaf o'r gwaith sydd yn cyrraedd ei benllanw yn yr adroddiad hwn. Bu Rosemary Butler, fel yr Ysgrifennydd Addysg a Phlant, hefyd yn ddylanwadol yn y gwaith.

Graham and members of the previous Committee, who undertook the majority of the work that culminated in this report. Rosemary Butler, as Secretary for Education and Children, was also influential in the work.

Etifeddoddd y Pwyllgor Addysg a Dysgu Gydol Oes ddarn o waith ystyriol a ymchwiliwyd yn drylwyr. Gobeithiaf y bydd aelodau'r Pwyllgor Addysg Cyn-16 yn teimlo bod y Pwyllgor newydd wedi gwneud cyfiawnder â'u gwaith wrth gyflawni'r dasg. Mae llawer o aelodau'r Pwyllgor blaenorol yn aelodau o'r Pwyllgor newydd. Hoffwn hefyd ddiolch i addysgwyr a darparwyr gofal ledled Cymru, a gyflwynodd dystiolaeth i'r Pwyllgor a chynnig sylwadau ar yr hyn a oedd dan sylw mewn modd a'n helpodd ni i fynegi barn sydd yn ymdrin ag anghenion y plentyn, sydd yn ganolog i ddarpariaeth addysg blynyddoedd cynnar, a gosod sylfaen gadarn ar gyfer eu bywydau a dyfodol eu cymunedau a'r genedl.

The Education and Lifelong Learning Committee inherited a thoroughly researched and thoughtful piece of work. I hope that it will feel that the new Committee has done it credit in completing the task. Many of the previous Committee members are members of the present Committee. I would also like to thank educationalists and care providers across Wales, who presented evidence to the Committee and commented on its deliberations in a way that helped us to come to a view that addresses the needs of the child, which is central to the provision of early years education, and laying a solid foundation for their lives and the future of their communities and the nation

Yn gryno, y cefndir i'r adolygiad polisi hwn oedd penderfyniad a wnaed gan y Pwyllgor Addysg Cyn-16 bod angen gwella a datblygu'r addysg blynyddoedd cynnar a ddarperir yng Nghymru a hynny yng nghydestun datblygiadau yn Lloegr. Dros y blynyddoedd, cafwyd datblygiadau ar draws y wlad ond nid oedd gydlynid na chysondeb cenedlaethol o ran y math o ddarpariaeth, y cynnwys addysgol, na lle yr oedd y ddarpariaeth ar gael: yr oedd rhai siroedd ymhell ar y blaen i eraill. Barn y Pwyllgor oedd y dylai profiad cyntaf plentyn ym myd addysg fod yn un cadarnhaol a fyddai o gymorth i ddatblygu sgiliau'r plentyn mewn modd cyfannol a chefnogol. Felly, penderfynodd ymgymryd ag adolygiad o'r ddarpariaeth yng Nghymru ac o'r arferion gorau mewn rhannau eraill o'r byd, a datblygu dull gweithredu strategol cenedlaethol fel bod pob plentyn drwy'r wlad yn cael yr un cyfle i fanteisio ar y ddarpariaeth. Mae hyn yn cyd-fynd ag ymrwymadau polisi Llywodraeth Cymru yn y ddogfen 'Gwellcymru.com' a 'Rhoi Cymru'n Gyntaf: Partneriaeth ar gyfer Pobl Cymru'

Briefly, the background to this policy review was a decision taken by the Pre-16 Education Committee that there was a need to improve and develop provision of early years' education in Wales in the context of developments in England. Over the years, there were developments across the country but there was no national coherence regarding the type of provision, its educational content or its accessibility: some counties were far ahead of others. The Committee took the view that the child's first experience of education should be a positive one that would help to develop the child's skills in a holistic and supportive manner. It therefore decided to undertake a review of provision in Wales and of best practice in other parts of the world, and develop a national strategic approach whereby each child in the country had equal opportunity to access the provision. This is in keeping with the policy commitments in 'Betterwales.com' and 'Putting Wales First: A Partnership for the People of Wales'.

Cylch gorchwyl yr adolygiad polisi oedd: yn gyntaf, i ystyried patrwm cyfredol y

The remit of the policy review was: first, to consider the current pattern of education

ddarpariaeth addysg ar gyfer plant teirblwydd; yn ail, i asesu a fyddai ehangu'r ddarpariaeth o fudd addysgol i'r plant. Yr oedd yn bwysig gofyn y cwestiwn hwnnw yn hytrach na chymryd hynny'n ganiataol; yn drydydd, i asesu costau ehangu'r ddarpariaeth, a fyddai'n golygu baich newydd ar awdurdodau lleol. Byddai'n rhaid cydnabod y baich hwn yn eu cyllid. Yn bedwerydd, asesu effaith ehangu'r ddarpariaeth ar allu cylchoedd chwarae gwirfoddol a darparwyr preifat i ddarparu gofal i blant dan oed ysgol gorfodol. Yn olaf, cyflwyno argymhellion i Weinidog y Cynulliad ar bolisi yn y dyfodol.

Roedd dull gweithredu'r Pwyllgor yn arloesol a dyfeisgar. Bu'n ymgynghori'n eang dros Gymru benbaladr i gasglu safbwyntiau'r darparwyr yn y sectorau gofal ac addysg. Cafwyd tystiolaeth hefyd gan academyddion ynghylch arfer gorau. Cyhoeddwyd adroddiad interim gan y Pwyllgor yn nodi ei ymateb dechreuol wedi'i seilio ar y broses ymgynghori, ac yn nodi'n eglur yr egwyddorion a ddylai fod yn sail i unrhyw ddarpariaeth yn y dyfodol.

Dyma'r egwyddorion y cytunodd y Pwyllgor Addysg Cyn-16 arnynt. Yn gyntaf, yr angen i ddarparu sylfaen gadarn ar gyfer dysgu a chyflawni yn y dyfodol, drwy gwricwlwm addas a datblygiadol sydd yn cyd-fynd ag anghenion a diddordebau penodol y plentyn. Pwysleisiaf y gair 'addas'. Mae'n eithaf posibl fod peth o'r ddarpariaeth yn y gorffennol yn gwbl anaddas. Noda'r adroddiad fod dysgu ffurfiol yn rhy gynnar yn gallu bod yn answyddogaethol ac yn niweidiol. Rhaid felly i ddarpariaeth yn y dyfodol fod yn addas ar gyfer gofynion plentyn o'r oedran hwnnw.

Yr ail egwyddor yw sicrhau y caiff pawb yr un cyfle i dderbyn addysg gynnar fel y bônt yn cyrraedd eu llawn botensial ac yn chwarae rhan gyflawn mewn cymdeithas. Yn drydedd, yr angen i ddarparu gofal parhaus drwy ddatblygu partneriaethau rhwng rhieni, teuluoedd, gwarchodwyr plant, meithrinfeydd, cylchoedd chwarae ac ysgolion yn y sector a gynhelir a'r sector preifat. Dylid gweld y cyfan yn un system. Yn olaf, sicrhau bod y broses o gyflenwi addysg gynnar yn cael ei harwain a'i meithrin

provision for three-year-olds; secondly, to assess whether its expansion would be in the educational interest of such children. It was important to ask that question rather than to take that for granted; thirdly, to assess the costs of expanding the provision, which would place a new burden on local authorities. This burden would need to be recognised in their funding. Fourth, to assess the impact of expansion on the ability of voluntary playgroups and private providers to provide childcare for children below compulsory school age. Finally, to make recommendations to the Assembly Minister on future policy.

The Committee's approach was innovative and resourceful. It consulted widely across Wales to gather the views of providers in both the care and education sectors. It also took evidence from academics on best practice. The Committee issued an interim report that set out its initial response based on the consultation exercise, and setting out clearly the principles that should underpin any future provision.

These are the principles on which the Pre-16 Education Committee agreed. First, the need to provide a sound foundation for future learning and achievement, through an appropriate and developmental curriculum which is in harmony with the child's particular needs and interests. I stress the word 'appropriate'. It is quite possible that some of the provision in the past was completely inappropriate. The report notes that formal teaching too early can be dysfunctional and detrimental. Future provision must therefore be appropriate for the needs of a child of that age.

The second principle is to ensure equal opportunity of access to early education for all to reach their full potential and take their full place in society. Third, the need to provide wrap-around care by developing partnerships between parents, families, childminders, nurseries, playgroups and schools in both the maintained and private sectors. It should all be seen as one system. Finally, to ensure that the delivery of early years education is guided and nurtured by early years educators who care as well as

gan addysgwyr blynyddoedd cynnar sydd yn gofalu yn ogystal ag addysgu. Dylai gofal ac addysg ddod ynghyd. Dyna yw addysg gofal neu, a defnyddio'r term Americanaidd, 'educare'.

Penodwyd Margaret Hanney, uwch ddarlithydd mewn addysg blynyddoedd cynnar yn Athrofa Prifysgol Cymru, Caerdydd yn ymgynghorydd arbennig i'r Pwyllgor. Ei thasg oedd ystyried a gwerthuso'r ymatebion i'r ymgynghorion a darganfyddiadau'r adroddiad interim. Gofynnwyd iddi hefyd ddatblygu modelau y gellid eu mabwysiadu yng Nghymru, wedi eu seilio ar yr arferion gorau yma ac mewn rhannau eraill o'r byd. Cyflwynodd ei chynghor i'r Pwyllgor, gan godi nifer o faterion allweddol mewn meysydd megis patrwm y ddarpariaeth, cymhareb nifer y staff i nifer y plant, ansawdd y cwricwlwm, anghenion hyfforddiant staff a chynorthwyr, sicrhau bod y ddarpariaeth ar gael i bawb ac adeiladu partneriaethau. Roedd ei chynghor yn cyfeirio at yr angen i sicrhau bod darpariaeth ar gael drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.

Croesawyd yr adroddiad gan y Pwyllgor, gan gydnabod y byddai ymhlygiadau allweddol i'r partneriaid a fyddai'n gyfrifol am gyflenwi'r strategaeth pe derbynnid y casgliadau. Felly, daeth y Pwyllgor i'r casgliad y dylid rhoi cyfle i'r partneriaid gyflwyno sylwadau ar y cynigion. Gofynnwyd i Margaret Hanney ddadansoddi'r sylwadau a dderbyniwyd a'u hystyried yn ei hadroddiad terfynol i'r Pwyllgor.

Derbyniodd y Pwyllgor gynghor Margaret Hanney a gynhwyswyd yn ei hadroddiad terfynol, ac mae'r atodiad i'r adroddiad hwn yn rhoi crynodeb o'r argymhellion a wnaeth yn ei hadroddiad. Maent yn cynnwys yr isadeiledd a'r modelau ar gyfer datblygu, staffio, hyfforddiant a chymwysterau, y cwricwlwm, safonau ac arolygu'r ddarpariaeth, anghenion addysgol arbennig, addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg a chyllido.

Mae'r argymhellion yn pennu'r isafswm sydd yn ofynnol i sicrhau y cyflwynir darpariaeth gynaliadwy, uchel ei hansawdd i blant teirblwydd wrth iddynt ddechrau ar eu taith i

educate. Care and education should come together. That is care education or, to use the American term, educare.

Margaret Hanney, a senior lecturer in early years education at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff was appointed special adviser to the Committee. Her task was to consider and evaluate the responses to the consultations and the findings of the interim report. She was also asked to develop models that could be adopted in Wales, based on best practice here and elsewhere in the world. She presented her advice to the Committee, identifying a number of key issues in areas such as the pattern of provision, staff to child ratio, quality of the curriculum, training needs of staff and assistants, ensuring equal access and building partnerships. Her advice referred to the need to ensure that provision was available through the medium of Welsh.

The Committee welcomed the report, and recognised that, in accepting its findings, there would be key implications for the partners who would be responsible for delivering the strategy. The Committee therefore concluded that the partners should be given the opportunity to comment on the proposals. Margaret Hanney was asked to analyse the responses received and to take them into account in her final report to the Committee.

The Committee accepted Margaret Hanney's advice as contained in her final report, and the annex to this report summarises the recommendations made in her report. They include the infrastructure and models for development, staffing, training and qualifications, the curriculum, standards and inspection of provision, special educational needs, Welsh medium education and funding.

The recommendations set the minimum that is required to ensure the introduction of a quality and sustainable provision for three-year-olds as they start on their pathway to a

fywyd llawn a buddiol drwy addysg a chyflogaeth. Dyma'r dechreuad y maent yn ei haeddu a barn y Pwyllgor oedd ei bod yn ddyletswydd arnom i sicrhau eu bod yn cael y dechreuad hwnnw.

full and rewarding life through education and employment. This is the start that they deserve and the Committee's view was that it was our duty to ensure that they are given that start.

Mae dau argymhelliad allweddol y mae'n rhaid gweithredu arnynt ar unwaith gan eu bod yn hanfodol i sicrhau bod y strategaeth yn cael ei symud ymlaen yn y ffordd fwyaf effeithiol ac effeithlon bosibl. Y cyntaf yw y dylai'r Gweinidog dros Addysg a Dysgu Gydol Oes gomisiynu arolwg o lefel gyfredol y ddarpariaeth ac amcangyfrifon o'r galw yn y dyfodol. Bydd hyn yn sail i gynllunio ar gyfer yr anghenion datblygu ac yn amlygu ymhlygiadau'r ddarpariaeth arfaethedig o ran cost. Gwn fod swyddogion y Gweinidog yn ymwybodol o'r angen hwn.

There are two key recommendations that need to be acted upon immediately as they are essential to ensuring that the strategy is taken forward in the most effective and efficient way possible. The first is that the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning should commission a survey of the current level of provision and estimates for future demand. This will be the basis for planning the development needs and identify the associated cost implications of the proposed provision. I know that the Minister's officials are mindful of this need.

3:50 p.m.

Yr ail argymhelliad yr hoffwn weld ei weithredu'n fuan, yw i sefydlu panel ymgynghorol blynyddoedd cynnar i gynghori'r Gweinidog ynghylch datblygu'r strategaeth a monitro'r modd y caiff ei gweithredu. Mae'r rhain yn gamau allweddol y byddwn yn annog y Gweinidog i weithredu arnynt yn ddiymdroi.

The second recommendation on which we would wish to see early progress, is the establishment of an early years advisory panel to advise the Minister on the development of the strategy and on monitoring its implementation. These are key steps that we would urge the Minister to act upon without delay.

Trof at addysg drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg. Nid oedd y cylch gorchwyl a gyflwynwyd i Margaret Hanney yn gofyn iddi ystyried hyn ar wahân i'r ddarpariaeth i blant teirblwydd yn ei chyfanrwydd. Seiliodd hithau ei hadroddiad ar y pedair egwyddor y soniais amdanynt eisoes. Dylai'r egwyddorion hynny fod yn gymwys i bob plentyn, p'un a ydynt yn derbyn y ddarpariaeth drwy gyfrwng yn Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg. Serch hynny, yn ei adroddiad interim, daeth y Pwyllgor i'r casgliad ei fod yn dymuno hybu darpariaeth ddwyieithog o'r safon uchaf a chytunodd gyda'r safbwynt a fynegwyd yn adroddiad y Pwyllgor Dethol ar Faterion Cymreig, sef fod addysg blynyddoedd cynnar yn hanfodol bwysig i ddyfodol yr iaith Gymraeg.

I turn to Welsh-medium education. The remit given to Margaret Hanney did not ask her to consider the provision of Welsh-medium provision separately to the total provision for three-year-olds. She based her report on the four principles I have already mentioned. Those principles should be relevant to all children, irrespective of whether they receive the provision through the medium of Welsh or English. However, in its interim report, the Committee concluded that it wished to promote bilingual provision to the highest standards and agreed with the view expressed in the report of the Welsh Affairs Select Committee, namely that early years education is crucial to the future of the Welsh language.

The Deputy First Minister: You have had 10 minutes. Will you please draw to a close?

Cynog Dafis: Ni fyddaf yn hir.

Cynog Dafis: I will not be long.

Mynegwyd y safbwynt hwnnw yn argyhoeddiadol gan Fwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg

That view was expressed most persuasively by the Welsh Language Board and the

a'r Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin. Mae'r Pwyllgor eto'n datgan nad ydyw am weld y gwaith da a gyflawnir gan y Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin yn cael ei beryglu gan y strategaeth hon. Yn hytrach, mae am weld y mudiad yn parhau i chwarae rhan weithgar yn y bartneriaeth gofal plant a datblygu'r blynyddoedd cynnar a dylanwadu ar bolisi a safonau o'r dechrau. Creu cymdeithas ddwyieithog yng Nghymru yw un o amcanion allweddol y Cynulliad, a nodwyd hynny yn ein datganiadau. Mae darparu addysg feithrin drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg yn sylfaenol i hynny.

Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin. The Committee reiterates its view that it does not want to see the good work accomplished by the Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin jeopardised by this strategy. It would rather see the organisation continue to take an active role in the early years development and childcare partnership, and influence policy and standards from the beginning. The creation of a bilingual society in Wales is one of the Assembly's key aims, which has been noted in our statements. The provision of Welsh-medium pre-school education is fundamental to that.

I gloi, gan fod gan Jane Hutt, Kirsty Williams a'r Pwyllgor Iechyd a Gwasnaethau Cymdeithasol yn ymddiddori yn ein hargymhellion, byddwn yn trosglwyddo'r wybodaeth berthnasol iddynt wrth inni fynd ymlaen.

I conclude, as Jane Hutt, Kirsty Williams and the Health and Social Services Committee have an interest in our recommendations, we will keep them informed as we proceed.

Rosemary Butler: I welcome Cynog Dafis's personal commitment, and that of the Committee, to this report. It is one of the most important reports to come before the Assembly. Early years education must be high on our agenda, it must be of a high quality, affordable and, importantly, easily accessible, in English and Welsh. Margaret Hanney's contribution to the future of education in Wales is valuable. She is an excellent person and a good communicator.

Wrap-around care, or edu-care, for want of a better term, must be available for all three-year-olds. At present, three-year-olds must wait to reach their fourth birthday. That year is vital to a child's development. At three years of age, it represents a third of a child's life. To wait until a child reaches four years of age is to waste a valuable asset.

As Cynog said, parents have a vital role in educating children during their early years. Effective education depends on a partnership between parents and outside educators. They must complement each other if a child is to get the best possible start in life. That is one of the Assembly's main planks; every child in Wales should have a flying start in life. Unfortunately, the most underprivileged parents are often the most disillusioned with the education process. Although they want their children to do well, they may distrust schools and underestimate what their own input should be. At the root of some children's difficulties are their own parents' struggles with literacy and numeracy. Children most in need of edu-care, or wrap-around care, often tend to be those who miss out. It is vital that all parents are made aware of the value of early years intervention, and that every child in Wales has the opportunity to enjoy the experience of high-quality early years provision. Some parents have told me that nursery care is not for people like them, because they have always assumed that the mother, grandmother or sister would look after the child while they are at work. We must ensure that every parent in Wales understands the importance of high-quality care for their children at a young age.

However, this report is only one part of the jigsaw and it is vital that we address the age at which our children should start formal education. Cynog has already referred to that. Welsh children currently start formal education at an earlier age than probably any other country in the world. When will the Committee take the brave step of presenting a report on raising the age for receiving formal education from five to at least six years-old, if not a little older? It is essential that we address that issue.

I commend the report to the Assembly and I hope that Edwina Hart finds enough money in the budget to ensure that Jane Davidson's already stretched education budget is not stretched further. It is vital that every Member here goes to his or her constituency to look at what is available. It is important that we are aware of what is and is not available. We must address the matter that was raised in Margaret Hanney's report on the plethora of paper that forms a qualification for child minding. It takes around 1,000 pieces of paper to obtain a qualification. We need a specific qualification for Wales that will be recognised across the board for people who want to start caring for children. It is important that we consider the type of qualifications held by early years' teachers on the continent. Early years' teachers tend to undergo a longer term of training than other teachers. I hope that the Assembly supports this report and I would be interested to know when Cynog will progress this matter.

Jonathan Morgan: As a member of the former Pre-16 Education Committee, I offer our congratulations and thanks to the expert adviser Margaret Hanney for the considerable amount of work that she put into this forward-thinking report.

I will raise several issues relating to the report. First, on the availability of information, I am pleased that we anticipated that the survey of provision will be readily available by May 2001. I hope that that deadline is secure because we need that information as soon as possible. Any delay in that deadline would delay our implementation of this strategy for early learning years provision. However, I am concerned that local authorities do not already have this information at hand because those which currently plan education provision within the 22 local authority areas should have this information somewhere in their systems. Therefore, I am concerned that that information has not been forthcoming. However, I hope that this survey will be undertaken as quickly as possible. Forward planning is important and we need to know what provision is available before presenting concrete policy proposals.

The report draws on the idea of partnership with local authorities. I will refer to two other partnerships that we should consider. The first relates to parents and parental choice as Rosemary Butler just outlined. Parental involvement is crucial not only in the development and implementation of the strategy, but also in ensuring that the educational development of children is pursued outside normal nursery school hours. Parents should support children and encourage them to take part in a range of activities. Last week, we heard that many parents in Wales have not been able to contribute to their child's education because of a variety of circumstances, and Rosemary alluded to that this afternoon. We need to undertake a mopping-up exercise from our end and put in place strategies that will encourage parents to take a more active interest in their children's educational development outside normal nursery school hours.

The second partnership that should be examined is that which relates to the private sector. Although the strategy refers to public provision and what can be achieved by using public resources, we must recognise that the private sector has a role to play. We must ensure that this structure of provision does not become static, but allows diversity between Welsh and English-language and bilingual provision and engages the private sector, where there is much good practice. We should involve it in the development of this strategy and provision.

On staffing, which is outlined in the report, we must examine a range of qualifications issues, particularly in allowing students to pursue early years provision as a specialist subject on

teacher training courses. By doing so and by examining the possibilities at degree level, we will be able to raise our sights on education provision for those people who wish to qualify as appropriately trained staff. Many young people will then emerge from teacher training courses appropriately trained and geared up for the new type of provision that we want.

4:00 p.m.

Improving pupil/staff ratios will involve resource implications. Has the Government considered the anticipated costs for improving the pupil/staff ratios? In particular, has any consideration been given to future budgetary processes to allow for this resource? That is important. We need to train staff but we also need to be able to fund them in the teaching environment, I therefore hope that the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning can address that point.

In conclusion, I stress that this report received cross-party support, and was drafted following a long consultation process. We recognise it as laying the foundations for our children's future educational development. In many respects, we are playing catch-up with other European nations, which have ensured that education for three-year olds has been ongoing for several years, as we discovered during our consultation process. We are playing catch-up and have a great deal of work to do, which we need to start as soon as possible.

Peter Black: On behalf of the Liberal Democrats, I welcome this report and strongly support its recommendation for increased provision of early years education. Free nursery education should be made available to all three-year olds whose parents want it. That commitment was included in the partnership agreement. Furthermore, our Assembly manifesto called for free education for all three and four-year olds.

However, any system that we implement must take account of diversity in Wales. For example, in some areas, local education authorities already provide a high level of education for three-year olds and we must build on that. However, where the LEA provision is lower, it is essential that we increase that by building on existing private and voluntary sectors' provision. LEAs must work in partnership with other organisations. In rural areas parents often do not have the choice of LEA or voluntary or private sectors' provision. For many, the only choice is that of a mixed age reception key stage 1 class. Therefore, we must do all that we can to ensure that those children are cared for and educated appropriately.

Education must not be taken to mean formal lessons for three-year olds. As we have already heard, the lessons from other countries—which have an informal approach to learning up to the ages of six or seven—is that children thrive in an informal setting. The emphasis for three and four-year olds must be on personal and social skills and not on formal learning. We welcome the emphasis on partnership in this report, but that must be a genuine one and not a recipe for LEAs to suffocate the good work that is being undertaken by voluntary organisations such as Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin. We strongly welcome the references to the need for wrap-around care. LEAs alone cannot provide that flexibility. We also welcome the commitment to 100 per cent provision by 2004. That may seem a long time, but in reality only allows a four-year period. However, we urge the Minister and the LEAs to ensure an even rollout of new provision so that we do not leave it all until 2003.

Owen John Thomas: Nodaf nifer o bwyntiau wrth i ni symud ymlaen tuag at weithredu amcanion yr adroddiad. Wrth ystyried egwyddor gyntaf yr adroddiad, sef darparu sylfaen gadarn yn y blynyddoedd cynnar, yr wyf yn hyderus y bydd polisi presennol Awdurdod Cymwysterau **Owen John Thomas:** I note several points as we move towards implementing the report's objectives. In considering the report's first principle, namely providing a firm foundation in the early years, I am confident that ACCAC's existing policy, 'Desirable Learning Outcomes', will lead to other

Cwricwlwm ac Asesu Cymru, 'Canlyniadau Dysgu Dymunol' yn arwain at ddatblygiadau blaengar eraill yn ein cyfundrefn addysg.

Fodd bynnag, mewn ardaloedd gwledig y mae amheuan am ymarferoldeb ail egwyddor yr adroddiad sef sicrhau cydraddoldeb darpariaeth. Yng nghefn gwlad, lle y mae dwysedd y boblogaeth yn denau, nid yw'n hawdd trefnu dysgu drwy chwarae a phroffion strwythuredig yn yr ystafell dosbarth lle y mae'r plant hyn yn dysgu drwy ddulliau ffurfiol.

Gallai rhoi plant y blynyddoedd cynnar at ei gilydd fel un grŵp—rhwng tair a phum mlwydd oed—oresgyn y broblem honno mewn rhai mannau. Efallai bod cyfle i fynd cam ymhellach mewn ardaloedd gwledig, ac arbrofi, drwy ddefnyddio dull a ddefnyddir mewn gwledydd blaengar, ac ymestyn y blynyddoedd cynnar i gynnwys pob plentyn rhwng tair a chwe mlwydd oed, a'u dysgu drwy chwarae a chynnal profion strwythuredig.

Yn gyffredinol, mae'n hanfodol bod arolwg y Gweinidog o lefel y ddarpariaeth bresennol a'r galw yn y dyfodol, yn gwahaniaethu rhwng unedau meithrin a gynhelir, cylchoedd meithrin gwirfoddol a chylchoedd meithrin preifat, ac hefyd yn dynodi'r rhai sydd yn dysgu drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg a'r rhai sydd yn dysgu drwy gyfrwng y Saesneg. Yr wyf yn falch y bydd yr wybodaeth hon gan y Gweinidog erbyn mis Mai.

Mae'n bwysig hefyd fod yr arolwg yn casglu gwybodaeth am gymwysterau'r staff sydd yn gyfrifol am ddysgu plant teirblwydd a phedair oed mewn amgylcheddau cymeradwy. Dan y drefn bresennol, mae'n debyg bod y mwyafrif llethol o staff blynyddoedd cynnar mewn unedau meithrin a gynhelir yn athrawon trwyddedig, tra bod y mwyafrif yn y sector gwirfoddol heb fod yn athrawon trwyddedig. Yr wyf yn falch felly ein bod yn gofyn am fwy o gyrsiau coleg i wella cymwysterau athrawon a staff eraill, a bod y rhain yn cael eu cynnig yn y ddwy iaith. Er mwyn inni allu annog colegau mewn da bryd i drefnu cyrsiau ychwanegol drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg, mae'n hanfodol bod yr wybodaeth am gymwysterau staff presennol yn cael ei chasglu yn

innovative developments in our educational system.

However, in rural areas, there are doubts about the practicality of the report's second principle, namely ensuring equality of provision. In sparsely populated rural areas, it is not easy to learn through structured play and tests in the classroom where the older children are learning through more formal methods.

Putting early years children together as one group—between three and five years of age—could overcome the problem in some areas. Perhaps there is an opportunity to go one step further in rural areas and to experiment, by using methods adopted in innovative countries, and extend the early years to include all children between three and six years of age, and to teach them through play and structured tests.

Generally, it is essential that the Minister's review of the current level of provision and future demand, differentiates between maintained nurseries, voluntary nurseries and private nurseries, and also denotes those that teach through the medium of Welsh and those that teach through the medium of English. I am pleased that the Minister will have this information by May.

It is also important that the review collates information about the qualifications of staff who are responsible for teaching three-year-olds and four-year-olds in approved environments. Under the present system, it seems that the vast majority of early years staff in maintained nursery groups are trained teachers, whereas the majority of staff in the voluntary sector are not trained. I am pleased, therefore, that we are seeking more college courses to improve the qualifications of teachers and other staff, which will be offered in both languages. So that we are able to encourage colleges in sufficient time to arrange additional courses through the medium of Welsh and English, it is essential that information about the qualifications of current staff is collated immediately. If that is

ddiymdroi. Os na wneir hynny, ni fydd yn bosibl i wireddu ail egwyddor yr adroddiad, sef,

‘i sicrhau cydraddoldeb darpariaeth o ran cyfle addysgol i bawb’.

Er mwyn ei wneud yn haws i’r rhai sydd am wella eu cymwysterau, neu hyfforddi o’r newydd, bydd angen darparu cyrsiau coleg ar draws y wlad; rhaid cynyddu’r nifer o golegau sydd yn cynnig cyrsiau o’r math hwn.

Yr wyf yn falch fod yr adroddiad yn sôn am annog ACCAC i baratoi deunydd enghreifftiol i helpu i gynllunio’r cwricwlwm. Fodd bynnag, gan fy mod yn gyfarwydd â derbyn cwynion bod deunydd ysgrifenedig Cymraeg yn aml yn cyrraedd ysgolion yn hwyrach o lawer na’r fersiynau Saesneg, gofynnaf i’r Gweinidog fynnu bod yr egwyddor o ‘sicrhau cydraddoldeb darpariaeth o ran cyfle addysgol i bawb’ yn cael ei gwireddu wrth baratoi a dosbarthu adnoddau.

Nid yw’r cyfle i ddyfynnu geiriau o San Steffan sydd yn cefnogi’r Gymraeg yn codi’n aml. Gwneuthum hynny pan drafodwyd yr adroddiad dros dro ym mis Ebrill y llynedd. Gwnaf hynny eto gan ddyfynnu yn Saesneg o adroddiad y Pwyllgor Dethol ar Faterion Cymreig

‘Early years education is crucial to the future of the Welsh language’.

Yr wyf yn disgwyl i’r Gweinidog, sef Siân ap Dafydd o Waelod-y-garth, i fanteisio ar y cyfle i wneud hyn yn drobwynt yn hanes ein hen iaith.

Lorraine Barrett: First, I say to Peter Black that the Liberal Democrats do not have the franchise on commitments to providing nursery education. The commitment was there and the report was in preparation long before the partnership agreement. As Jonathan Morgan said, it has cross-party support. Peter Black’s comments slightly irritated Peter Law and me.

As a member of the former Pre-16 Education Committee, and a current member of the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee, I too am delighted that this report is now before us and that, hopefully, it will move forward and become something that is more than just noted by the Assembly. I hope the Assembly welcomes the report wholeheartedly. Your job now, Minister, is to take the report to the Cabinet and speak nicely to the Minister for Finance, as we will all try to do.

not done, it will not be possible to realise the report’s second principle, namely to

‘achieve equal access of educational opportunity for all’.

In order to make it easier for those who want to improve their qualifications, or train anew, we must provide college courses throughout Wales; we must increase the number of colleges that offer this provision.

I am pleased that the report talks about encouraging ACCAC to prepare exemplar materials to help with curricular design. However, as I am used to receiving complaints that Welsh textual material often reaches schools much later than the English version, I ask the Minister to ensure that the principle of ‘equal access of educational opportunity for all’ is realised in the preparation and distribution of resources.

It is not often that we can quote words from Westminster in support of the Welsh language. I did that when the interim report was discussed in April last year. I will do so again by quoting in English from the Welsh Affairs Select Committee’s report

I look to the Minister, namely Siân ap Dafydd of Gwaelod-y-garth, to take advantage of the opportunity to make this the turning point in the history of our old language.

It is widely accepted that the earlier children enter a learning environment, the better their development and progression through school and life. Along with schemes such as Sure Start and the healthy living programmes, children, particularly in the most deprived areas, will have the best start in life.

When I first looked at the early years' proposals, it appeared that we had a great deal of work ahead. However, I realised as it progressed that many nurseries already take in three year-olds. In many cases it is a natural step forward, but it varies across Wales. As Jonathan mentioned earlier, the sooner we get the data from local authorities, the sooner we will know our current position and where we need to go. I am sure that that data will be forthcoming.

4:10 p.m.

I will concentrate on one suggestion made by the expert advisor, Margaret Hanney, about an integrated early years centre. That is an innovative suggestion that would probably face resistance initially by parents, headteachers and school governors. They might see the idea as a threat to their school. However, I was approached by two primary headteachers who had done a great deal of work looking at a particular school—no names mentioned—to see how this integrated early learning centre might work. They put forward a pilot project that I will show to the Minister and other members of the Committee. The integrated early years centre would not suit all parts of Wales, and it would probably work better in urban areas. However, such a centre could offer early years provision for children in a defined area. It would feed into a number of schools. It would impact on nursery units that already exist because the suggested integrated early learning centre would cover four schools. They would not need their nursery or reception classes. It is so exciting and innovative that it would be worthwhile to introduce it to local education authorities and ask them if they would be prepared to look at some areas where this pilot project could be considered.

The centre would provide educational and social care for children. It would also consider transport provision because it would cover a larger area than a local nursery. It would also provide nutritional and washing facilities. Many of us have not grasped the fact that a number of three-year-olds or the younger four-year-olds go to school and are not fully toilet-trained. Many nursery teachers have a huge job on their hands, not only to teach the basic social skills to some of the youngsters, such as how to eat properly using a knife and fork, but also have to toilet-train them. These centres could also become a community base. They could provide additional multi-agency services as well as a centre for parents. We talked last week about basic skills and parents who need to improve them. These centres could provide that kind of base for communities.

As I have already said, along with Sure Start, healthy living programmes and many other initiatives, we have the opportunity here to grasp the nettle and provide the best start for our children. It has all been said in this report and we have discussed early years a few times in Committee, as well as in the Chamber. We cannot do this alone. We must work and consult with the local education authorities, as well as education providers. The best way forward is to set up the early years' advisory group as soon as possible. I fully commend this report.

William Graham: This was a Committee initiative. That should be reported and recorded for the Assembly. It was not only a cross-party matter, but also one that helped form the Assembly's policy. It is of major importance. I should also record my thanks to the then Chair for the way in which we were able to select an expert adviser of Margaret Hanney's calibre. She proved her worth. We considered a good cross-section of people for appointment as expert adviser. Margaret Hanney was, by far, the one that we considered most suitable and that has been proved in this report.

I watched the final development of this report, with interest, from some distance. I ask Cynog

to recognise the importance of this—I know that he does—and also to take up the matter of qualifications that Rosemary Butler raised. It became obvious during the early stages of writing the report that many paper qualifications exist. We must now look forward—and I am sure that the Minister will also take this up—to a reduction in the number, and an increase in the veracity of these qualifications. We all know that anybody can set themselves up as a consultant and have a form of paper qualification. If we intend this to be a policy of which the Assembly and the people of Wales can be proud, it must take place in parallel with training for suitable people who will take forward education for three-year-olds.

John Griffiths: I thank the Committee for bringing forward this report. It is vital, as many contributors to this debate have recognised. I thank the Committee for its commitment, time and energy. We all know that the years up to the age of four are important to development. I can remember from my days as a sociology student that that was stressed many times. The first four years—now long gone—were considered vital to lifelong development, achievement and so on, and provision for three-year-olds is vital in that context. In my sociology classes—I will not bore you with details of those for long—we often considered the cycle of deprivation, as it was commonly referred to. That was the continuation of the same kind of problems of deprivation and general societal problems from one generation to the next. Those impact on quality of life in general and are dire for the individuals in the families concerned. There are many manifestations of the problems resulting from that cycle of deprivation such as education, health, general societal problems, crime and disorder and so on. It would be of great benefit if that cycle of deprivation could be stopped. It has proved difficult to do that, and a great deal of time and effort has gone into trying to devise strategies to tackle those problems, but unfortunately, in many respects, success has been limited.

David Davies: I agree with many of the Member's points. Does he agree that one way to prevent these problems of deprivation from being passed down from one generation to the next is to build strong foundations in families and to provide young people with a moral upbringing?

John Griffiths: We are all in favour of strong families. It is like the old American electoral slogan, 'I am in favour of strong families, God Almighty, the good old US of A and apple pie like mom used to make'. We are all in favour of strong families. As for moral upbringings, all families want to bring up their families to be moral. However, I am a moral relativist. People must the scope to decide what their version of a moral upbringing is. We have seen far too much of people trying to impose their moral standards on families. I would not want to have any truck with that.

It has proved difficult to cut across this cycle of deprivation. Given that the families concerned often have poor parenting skills as a result of their inadequate upbringing, state intervention is vital if we are to achieve a measure of success in tackling these problems. In that context, I welcome this report and the proposed extension and improvement of provision for three-year-olds. This is only a part of that, but it is an important one. That is why I welcome the Committee's initiative in bringing this forward. We need the extension and improvement of this provision and care, and I hope that goes forward successfully. On wrap-around care and educare, we must ensure that provision continues outside term time. That is another factor that must be considered in this context.

4:20 p.m.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Fel pawb arall croeasawaf yr adroddiad hwn yn fawr. Yr wyf yn gofidio braidd ein bod dim ond yn nodi adroddiad pwysig gan Bwyllor unwaith eto yn y Cynulliad. Gobeithio y bydd Jane **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Like everyone else, I greatly welcome this report. I am slightly concerned that we are merely noting an important report by a Committee yet again in the Assembly. I hope that Jane Davidson will

Davidson yn gallu rhoi ymrwymiad y prynhawn yma y bydd rhai, os nad y cyfan, o argymhellion pwysig yr adroddiad hwn yn cael eu gweithredu gan y weinyddiaeth. Credaf fod yn rhaid i'r Cynulliad ddod o hyd i ffordd fwy ffurfiol o ymateb i adroddiadau Pwyllgorau.

Mae hwn yn faes eithriadol o bwysig. Yr ydym oll yn gytûn ar hynny. Gwnaethpwyd ymchwil ar yr ymennydd sydd yn profi, os na chynhyrfir yr ymennydd cyn bod plentyn yn dair blwydd oed, fod perygl y bydd rhannau o'r ymennydd yn marw pan fo'r plentyn mor ifanc â phum mlwydd oed. Efallai y byddai'n dda pe bai Prif Weinidog Cymru, wrth benodi aelodau ei Gabinet, yn ceisio canfod a gawsant addysg feithrin i sicrhau nad yw rhannau o'u hymenyddiau wedi marw cyn eu penodi i swyddi pwysig. Mae addysg feithrin hefyd yn sicrhau bod plant yn datblygu i fod yn bobl ifanc a dinasyddion a all gyfrannu'n greadigol i gymdeithas.

A wnaiff y Gweinidog dderbyn bod llawer o bobl sydd yn gweithio yn y maes addysg eithriadol o bwysig hwn yn teimlo nad yw'r sector yn derbyn digon o arian yng Nghymru? Yr ydym wedi dadlau am faint o arian mae addysg yn ei chyfanrwydd yn ei dderbyn yng Nghymru a bydd trafod pellach ar hynny ddydd Iau. Fodd bynnag, hyd yn oed o fewn yr hyn a ddyrannir i addysg, ni chaiff sector y blynyddoedd cynnar ei gydnabyddiaeth haeddiannol. Mae mwy o arian y pen y plentyn yn mynd i'r sector uwchradd, a hyd yn oed i flynyddoedd hŷn y sector cynradd, nag sydd yn mynd i'r sector blynyddoedd cynnar. Os ydym am gydnabod pwysigrwydd addysg y blynyddoedd cynnar, mae'n rhaid sicrhau bod yr ariannu'n deg.

A wnaiff hi dderbyn hefyd fod y ddarpariaeth yn amrywio o ardal i ardal? Felly mae mynediad i addysg y blynyddoedd cynnar a safon y ddarpariaeth yn dibynnu i raddau helaeth ar y cod post. Mae hynny'n annerbyniol. Hyd yn oed o dderbyn argymhelliad yr adroddiad y dylid bod cynnydd 10 y cant bob blwyddyn, ni fydd hynny o reidrwydd yn mynd i'r afael â phroblem amrywiaeth daearyddol. Mae'n rhaid cysoni'r ddarpariaeth a sicrhau y caiff pob plentyn teirblwydd yng Nghymru yr un cyfle.

be able to give an undertaking this afternoon that some, if not all, of this report's important recommendations will be implemented by the administration. I believe that the Assembly must find a more formal way to respond to Committee reports.

This is an exceptionally important area. We are all agreed on that. Research has been done on the brain that proves that, if the brain is not stimulated before a child is three years' old, there is a danger that parts of the brain will die while the child is as young as five years' old. Perhaps it would be a good idea if the First Minister, when appointing members of his Cabinet, tried to find out whether they had nursery education to ensure that parts of their brains have not died before they are appointed to important posts. Nursery education also ensures that children develop to be young people and citizens who can contribute creatively to society.

Will the Minister accept that many people who work in this exceptionally important educational area feel that this sector does not receive enough money in Wales? We have debated about how much money education receives in the round in Wales and there will be further discussion on that on Thursday. However, even within the amount allotted to education, the early years sector does not receive the recognition that it deserves. More money per child goes to the secondary sector, and even to the older years of the primary sector, than goes to the early years sector. If we want to recognise the importance of early years education, we must ensure that the funding is fair.

Will she also accept that the provision varies from area to area? Therefore, access to early years education and the standard of the provision depends to a large extent on the postcode. That is unacceptable. Even in accepting the report's recommendation that there should be a 10 per cent increase every year, that will not necessarily tackle the problem of geographical variation. The provision must be made consistent and every three-year-old child in Wales must be sure of having the same opportunity.

A wnaiff hi gydnabod cyfraniad y cylchoedd meithrin a'r cylchoedd chwarae at greu continwmm addysg o'r crud i'r bedd? Mae gennyf beth pryder ynglyn â syniad amgylchynu darpariaeth. Os bydd partneriaeth rhwng yr awdurdod addysg a'r sector gwirfoddol, a wnaiff y Gweinidog ymrwymiad y caiff y sector gwirfoddol yr un gydnabyddiaeth ariannol â'r awdurdodau addysg, sef nad cyfraniad yr awdurdod addysg yn unig a gaiff gydnabyddiaeth ariannol?

Will she recognise the contribution of the nursery groups and play groups towards creating an educational continuum from the cradle to the grave? I am a little concerned with the idea of wrap-around provision. If there is to be a partnership between the education authority and the voluntary sector, will the Minister give an undertaking that the voluntary sector will receive the same financial recognition as the education authorities, that is, that it will not only be the education authorities who will have financial recognition?

A wnaiff y Gweinidog hefyd roi ymrwymiad yr edrychwn ar yr angen am hyfforddiant, cyfleoedd am ddatblygu-mewn-swydd, ac am strwythur cymwysterau cydnabyddedig yn y maes hwn. Mae llawer o gymwysterau ar gael: mae'r Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin wedi bod yn arbrofi â thystysgrif a diploma, a bwm mewn cynhadledd ddydd Sadwrn diwethaf a drefnwyd gan staff cwrs MA Coleg y Drindod, Caerfyrddin ar addysg y blynyddoedd cynnar—cwrs arbennig o dda—ond mae eisiau strwythur cydnabyddedig fel y bydd statws i'r swyddi hyn. Un o'r agweddau dadlennol ar y gynhadledd honno oedd bod tri ohonom yn ddyinion mewn cynulleidfa o ryw 60 o bobl, ac nad oedd yr un o'r tri ohonom yn ymwneud yn uniongyrchol â darparu addysg y blynyddoedd cynnar. Mae'n bwysig bod statws i'r sector, ei fod yn denu gwahanol fathau o bobl a bod cydbwysedd rhwng menywod a dynion yn darparu'r addysg holl bwysig hon. Mae angen y statws a'r cyflog i sicrhau bod hynny'n digwydd.

Will the Minister also give a commitment that we will examine the need for training, opportunities for in-service development, and for a recognised qualification structure in this area? There are many qualifications available: Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin have been experimenting with a certificate and diploma and I attended a conference last Saturday that was organised by the staff of Trinity College, Carmarthen's MA course in early years education—an especially good course—but there needs to be a recognised structure so that these jobs will have status. One of the revealing aspects of that conference was that there were three men in an audience of about 60 people, and not one of the three of us was directly involved in the provision of early years education. It is important that this sector has status, that it attracts different types of people, and that there is a balance between women and men in providing this vital education. Status and salary are needed to ensure that that happens.

I will end by referring to the kind of education that we look for in this important sector. The learning environment must be flexible, attractive, healthy and fun. There is much to learn, in terms of developing that approach from the Steiner Waldorf education system.

Rudolf Steiner said:

'The question should not be: what does a person need to know or be able to do in order to fit into the existing social order? Rather we should ask, what capacities are latent in each person and what can develop in him or her?'

Early years education has a high profile in the Steiner Waldorf education system. Young children learn primarily through imitation and play. Children absorb and reflect their experiences. Learning is caught rather than taught, through implicit rather than explicit teaching methods. Children need a secure, caring and structured environment in which activities are in a meaningful context.

I hope that this report, and your response as Minister, will go part of the way to ensuring that three-year-olds in Wales have that opportunity.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning (Jane Davidson): I thank Cynog for presenting the report. I also thank the members of the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee, Rosemary Butler, William Graham and the members of the Pre-16 Education Committee, which initiated this review, for their work in bringing this report to Plenary. I also thank Margaret Hanney, who is the author of the first report that I considered when I became Minister. If I have the opportunity to work with reports of that quality and excellence in the future, then that is a testament to our system of using expert advisers.

Her report produced some 39 recommendations. We debated in Committee whether we wanted to apply our stance as politicians to tackling each recommendation or whether, as this was so important, we should agree on the particularly important recommendations and then consider how to take the rest of them forward through the provision of an early years advisory panel. I am pleased to say that those two recommendations are at the heart of how we wish to respond.

It is an exciting time for those involved in providing learning opportunities for our youngest children and I look forward to driving this policy forward over the coming months. The key issue is that this agenda is focused on child's needs rather than those of the parent or organisation. In the Assembly, we are trying to shift our agendas to meet the needs of the child and learners rather than the needs of the organisation. It is a revolutionary shift that will take time to achieve. However, time will show us that that is the right way forward. I know that the Committee strongly supports that emphasis on the child.

Planning arrangements for the expansion of the early years provision are essential and arrangements are already well underway. Discussions are due to start later this week between my officials and the early years partnerships on the audit needed to identify current provision and estimates of future demand in Wales across all sectors. This work is scheduled for completion by the end of May and I have not heard anything to suggest that that timetable will be not be met. However, I am less concerned about whether this work is delayed by a few weeks than about ensuring that the information is accurate and of the quality necessary to drive this agenda forward.

On the data that will be produced by this audit, like those contributed today, I could barely believe that we did not already have that at hand. The data will allow us to consider how best to implement our principles as part of a holistic approach to the development of child-centred services that identify, and assist our children to learn in, nurturing environments which engage and inspire them.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: In terms of this audit, you say that you are surprised that the information is not already forthcoming from local authorities. Is it not correct to say that local education authorities are awaiting criteria from the Assembly in order to collect and collate the data? They have been told not to start until they receive the criteria from your department and they are expected to return that information by May. Why has that criteria not been set for them?

Jane Davidson: I am happy to take up that issue. I was not aware of that. I was referring to the statement made by Margaret Hanney in her report, and by others, that the data were not previously available and that due to their absence, it was difficult to make recommendations. However, I will take up that issue, because it is important to ensure that we have the necessary data to progress to the next stage of this important research.

4:30 p.m.

That is why the Committee's second proposal—the early years advisory panel—will play an important role in developing our strategy and our implementation plan. Officials will shortly call together membership of the panel, based upon the range of agencies and individuals that have helped the Committee mould the report. It will include all sectors. We state in this agenda that this is a mixed economy. Different approaches will be appropriate in different areas. We have the opportunity to develop innovative and inclusive approaches that reflect Wales's needs and help our young children to thrive. I pay tribute to organisations such as Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin. Its role in offering our youngest children the benefits of Welsh-medium education is important and must be supported. I am keen that we expand on what is currently available, identify best practice and enhance it.

Several Members have raised the idea of an early years curriculum. We discussed in Committee that being between the ages of three and six. In debate, it has been raised to the age of seven. The advantages and disadvantages of starting formal education at the age of six rather than five is a matter for the longer term. I have asked Estyn to consider the scope of a study to assess the impact of the national curriculum and teaching practices on five-year-olds, with a view to assessing the merits of delaying the onset of the curriculum until the age of six. We can then consider what would be an imaginative approach to an early years curriculum in Wales. That will be completed in time for the next comprehensive curriculum review.

We also want to examine the interface between early years provision and other complementary initiatives, such as Sure Start. Jane Hutt and I will work closely on this agenda over the coming months. Jane has already established a taskforce to draw up an action plan under the childcare strategy for Wales. This is a matter of equal opportunities, tackling deprivation and of improving opportunities, for our young people to learn and play in the most appropriate environment.

Gwenda Thomas: I note what the report states about special educational needs and what you have said about discussing issues with Jane Hutt. Will you discuss with her the important issue of administering medication during school hours to our youngest children, which needs urgent attention?

Jane Davidson: I am happy to pick up that proposal and will discuss with Jane all matters related to this agenda.

High quality opportunities should be available for all our children during their early years. When I paid tribute to William, Rosemary and the Committee at the beginning of my speech, I did so because this has been an all-party report. It is a report from all members of the Committees, which is important in terms of how we use Committees for policy development in bringing forward proposals that we can all support. We have allocated £200,000 this year for the audit. We want to meet the objective on extended provision to ensure that a place is available for every three-year-old by September 2004. We are already ahead of colleagues across the border, because we have a tradition of early years support in Wales. Therefore, parts of Wales already provide for three-year-olds. However, we are allocating a large sum, £12 million, in that final year to achieve this major agenda. From the Cabinet's perspective, this is crucial. It is crucial for our young people who will be given these new opportunities in terms of support, and taking them into the education system. It is crucial in terms of giving them better opportunities to play a part in their communities. We will work together to take this important report forward.

Cynog Dafis: Cyfeiriaf at rai o'r themâu sydd wedi codi. Yn gyntaf, ar bwysigrwydd sylaenol yr holl sector hwn, soniwyd am **Cynog Dafis:** I will refer to some of the themes that have been raised. First, on the fundamental importance of this whole sector,

adnoddau. Mae'n bwysig sylweddoli mai'r buddsoddiad gorau y gellir ei wneud o ran addysg yw buddsoddi yn y ddarpariaeth ar gyfer y blynyddoedd cynnar. Dyna'r cyfnod sydd yn ffurfio dyfodol plant a'u cymunedau. Soniodd Rosemary Butler am bwysigrwydd hygyrchedd a manteision darpariaeth blynyddoedd cynnar i bobl ddifreintiedig.

Soniodd Jonathan Morgan am gyfraniad rhieni a'r cartref. Mae tystiolaeth galonogol yn dangos sut y gall rhieni a ddiodefodd anfantais gael eu hysbrydoli i wella eu haddysg eu hunain yn sgîl darpariaeth ar gyfer eu plant. Dyna un o'r pethau mwyaf cyffrous ynglŷn â hyn. Mae'r dystiolaeth a glywais yn awgrymu fod rôl y sector gwirfoddol yn bwysig. Mae rhieni'n helpu i sicrhau bod mudiad gwirfoddol yn gweithredu'n effeithiol, yna maent yn dechrau teimlo'n frwdfrydig ynghylch yr hyn y mae eu plant yn ei wneud ac yn dod yn awyddus i wella eu sgiliau a'u haddysg eu hunain. Gellir gweithredu cylch rhinweddol. Mae'n bwysig inni ystyried y drafodaeth ynghylch adnoddau yn y termau hynny.

Soniodd Rosemary Butler hefyd am godi oedran derbyn gorfodol i'r ysgol. Yr oeddwn yn falch o glywed y Gweinidog yn dweud y bydd Estyn yn ystyried y cwricwlwm ar gyfer plant pump oed, gan ystyried y posibilrwydd o orseddu dysgu anffurfiol yn ystod y blynyddoedd cynnar. Mae'r dystiolaeth yn llethol mai dyna sydd orau i'r plentyn. Mae'n bosibl ein bod wedi bod yn gwneud cam â phlant yn y gorffennol drwy eu rhoi mewn dosbarthiadau a disgwyl iddynt ddechrau darllen a rhifo yn bedair oed, pan allent fod yn gwneud rhywbeth llawer mwy ffrwythlon. Mae hyn yn newyddion da felly. Yr wyf yn awyddus i ystyried syniad Rosemary. Efallai fod cyfle inni fod yn arloesol yng Nghymru ond mae'n debyg y byddai angen newid deddfwriaethol i sicrhau hynny.

Soniodd Rhodri Glyn am Rudolf Steiner. Mae gennym lawer i'w ddysgu gan system addysg Steiner Waldorf. Mae'r term Almaeneg '*kindergarten*' yn odidog—'gardd y plant', y lle y dylai plant fod yn yr oedran hwnnw, yn hytrach nag mewn sefyllfa ffurfiol.

Codwyd thema partneriaeth gan Peter Black

resources were mentioned. It is important to realise that the best investment that can be made in education is in early years provision. That is the period that shapes children's and their communities' futures. Rosemary Butler mentioned the importance of accessibility and the advantages of early years provision for the disadvantaged.

Jonathan Morgan mentioned the contribution of parents and the home. There is encouraging evidence of how parents who have suffered disadvantage can be inspired to improve their own education in the wake of the provision for their children. That is one of the most exciting things about this. The evidence that I have heard suggests that the role of the voluntary sector is important. Parents assist to ensure that a voluntary organisation operates effectively, then they start to feel enthusiastic about what their children are doing and become eager to improve their own skills and education. A virtuous circle can be implemented. It is important that we see the debate about resources in those terms.

Rosemary Butler also mentioned raising the mandatory school admission age. I was pleased to hear the Minister say that Estyn will consider the curriculum for five-year-olds, considering the possibility of having informal teaching during the early years. The evidence is overwhelming that that is best for the child. It is possible that we have been doing children a disservice in the past by placing them in classes and expecting them to start reading and counting at the age of four, when they could be doing something much more fruitful. This is therefore good news. I am willing to consider Rosemary's idea. There may be an opportunity for us to be innovative in Wales but legislative change would probably be required to ensure that.

Rhodri Glyn mentioned Rudolf Steiner. We have much to learn from the Steiner Waldorf education system. The German term '*kindergarten*' is splendid—'the children's garden', where children should be at that age, rather than in a formal setting.

Peter Black and others raised the partnership

ac eraill. Yr ydym wedi sôn am Fudiad Ysgolion Meithrin. Dylem gofio hefyd am waith pwysig Cymdeithas Cylchoedd Chwarae Cyn-Ysgol Cymru. Teimla'r ddau fudiad fod tuedd yn ystod y blynyddoedd diwethaf i'w gwthio i'r naill ochr. Mae'n bechod ein bod yn colli brwdfrydedd mudiadau gwirfoddol. Mae sôn ar hyn o bryd fod ysgolion meithrin, dosbarthiadau meithrin a chylchoedd ti a fi yn cau oherwydd bod tuedd i awdurdodau lleol ddominyddu popeth yn y cyd-destun newydd. Mae'n bwysig inni gael partneriaethau dilys gyda rôl anrhydeddus a bywiog i'r mudiadau gwirfoddol.

Cafodd hyfforddiant ei bwysleisio. Mae'n eironig ein bod yn teimlo ar hyn o bryd nad oes angen cymaint o hyfforddiant ar gyfer pobl sydd yn dysgu plant bach ag i'r rhai sydd yn dysgu plant hŷn ac oedolion. Mae angen llawn cymaint o hyfforddiant, os nad mwy, pan ydych yn delio â phlant ar gyfnod eu ffurfiant a'u prifiant. Yr wyf yn cyd-weld bod angen mwy o bwyslais ar hyfforddiant.

Croesawaf ymrwymiad y Gweinidog, yn enwedig i sefydlu'r archwiliad a'r panel ymgynghorol. Mae'n bwysig iddynt gael eu sefydlu yn fuan. Yr wyf yn siŵr fod yr holl Aelodau'n cyd-weld fod cyfle inni yng Nghymru osod sylfeini ar gyfer dyfodol y genedl—yn economaidd, yn gymdeithasol ac yn ddiwylliannol—drwy fuddsoddi'n ddigonol yn y cyfnod pwysig hwn ym mywydau ein plant.

theme. We have mentioned Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin. We should also remember the important work of the Wales Pre-School Playgroups Association. Both organisations feel that there has been a tendency to push them aside during the last few years. It is a shame that we are losing the enthusiasm of voluntary organisations. There is talk at present that nursery schools, nursery classes and *cylchoedd ti a fi* are closing due to a tendency for local authorities to dominate everything within the new context. It is important that we have valid partnerships, with voluntary organisations playing a significant and vibrant role.

Training was emphasised. It is ironic that we currently feel that people teaching young children do not need as much training as those teaching older children and adults. As much, if not more, training is needed when you are dealing with children in their formative years. I agree that more emphasis on training is needed.

I welcome the Minister's commitment, especially to establish the audit and the advisory panel. It is important that they are established soon. I am sure that all Members agree that there is an opportunity for us in Wales to set the foundations for nation's future—economically, socially and culturally—by investing adequately in this important period in our children's lives.

Cynnig: O blaid 41, Ymatal 0, Yn erbyn 0.

Motion: For 41, Abstain 0, Against 0.

Pleidleisiodd yr Aelodau canlynol o blaid:
The following Members voted for:

Barrett, Lorraine
Bates, Mick
Black, Peter
Butler, Rosemary
Cairns, Alun
Chapman, Christine
Dafis, Cynog
Davidson, Jane
Davies, Andrew
Davies, David
Davies, Glyn
Davies, Janet
Davies, Jocelyn
Essex, Sue
Evans, Delyth

Feld, Val
Gibbons, Brian
Graham, William
Griffiths, John
Halford, Alison
Hancock, Brian
Hutt, Jane
Jones, Ann
Jones, Elin
Jones, Helen Mary
Law, Peter
Lloyd, David
Melding, David
Middlehurst, Tom
Neagle, Lynne
Pugh, Alun
Randerson, Jenny
Richards, Rod
Ryder, Janet
Sinclair, Karen
Thomas, Gwenda
Thomas, Owen John
Thomas, Rhodri Glyn
Wigley, Dafydd
Williams, Kirsty
Williams, Phil

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig.
Motion adopted.*

4:40 p.m.

Y Strategaeth Adnoddau Dynol ar gyfer yr NHS The NHS Human Resource Strategy

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I have selected amendments 1, 4 and 5 in the name of Jocelyn Davies and amendments 2, 3 and 6 in the name of William Graham.

The Minister for Health and Social Services (Jane Hutt): I propose that

the National Assembly

welcomes the progress in achieving the 2000-01 objectives set out in 'A Human Resources Strategy for NHS Wales—Delivering for Patients', laid in the Table Office on 6 June 2000; and

endorses the objectives for 2001-02 and subsequent years in the light of the Workforce chapter of 'Improving Health in Wales: A Plan for the NHS with its Partners', laid in the Table Office on 5 February 2001.

This afternoon, the Assembly is debating one of the most important assets that the people of Wales possess: national health service staff. One of the main themes of the human resources strategy under consideration, is that it is people who deliver services. To bring that about, we need the full support of our staff in the NHS in Wales and that support depends on giving staff, management, staff representatives and professional organisations an opportunity to play a full and active role in developing and implementing policies. As a tangible demonstration of our commitment to achieving this culture of participation, we will ensure that staff representation will be introduced to trust boards during September 2001. That was the key

announcement in the NHS plan launched on 2 February.

That is only one example of how the Assembly has succeeded in developing a spirit of partnership, ownership and co-operation through this new agenda of participation. This is reflected in the sub groups of the NHS partnership forum, which were set up after I launched the strategy last June. These groups involve the trade unions and NHS management and have been set up to take the implementation of the human resources strategy forward and to address matters such as workplace health, staff surveys, recruitment and retention.

Last June, when the Assembly debated this matter, the strategy was widely supported by Assembly Members. Many of the initiatives set out in the 10 objectives for 2001 are ambitious and are the bedrock upon which many of our plans for the health workforce will be built. The objectives set out in the national plan will develop these themes and introduce many others. I am pleased that progress has been made and I will report on each objective. I am also pleased that 'Delivering for Patients' has been well received by NHS Wales. If the Assembly welcomes this progress, it will send out a positive message to staff. That is why I will not support amendments 1 and 2.

Objective one of the strategy concerns planning for the future workforce. The process we put in place this year improves on previous plans because it examines staffing needs as opposed to trust funding levels, which is what has happened in the past. This year's planning process will result in trust workforce plans being produced by the end of April. That means that staff targets for the whole of the NHS in Wales for the next five years will be set by the end of the summer. That is important to ensure longer term planning for our staffing needs and strategy.

The results of the 2001 workforce planning process, in conjunction with local recruitment and retention strategies, will enable us to produce realistic costed targets for staff numbers. Until the data has been collected, any targets set for each profession would be unrealistic. We cannot work by estimates, we need hard information. That is why I will not support William Graham's amendment 6, which would not provide the necessary accurate long-term targets and forecasts.

Planning for the future of the national health service in Wales must include all eventualities. By April 2003, we want all health organisations to have career development and succession planning programmes in place, which must include secondments, shadowing and networking opportunities. A computerised workforce planning system will be introduced throughout England and Wales for next year's process. To ensure that we have an overall picture of staffing needs in the NHS, this year's workforce planning process is collecting data on levels of overseas recruitment and on the use of bank and agency staff. This will enable targets for future staff to be based on need.

Objective two of the strategy seeks the development of a programme for the systematic examination of education provision to identify areas for common core training. This has been achieved successfully within the target date. The Assembly has already committed resources to increase the number of places on pre-registration training and return-to-practice courses. Last year, the Welsh National Board for Nursing recorded over 12,000 inquiries and expressions of interest from nurses, midwives and health visitors. Over 1,000 of these inquiries came from people who were already on the professional register seeking to return to work or looking for career opportunities. There is a commitment to increase staff levels through training: an extra 265 nursing and professions-allied-to-medicine students; 65 extra medical students; an additional 13 GP registrars, with year on year growth for the next three years. By 2004 in Wales, more than 3,800 nurses, midwives and health visitors will have been trained, over 1,750 therapists and other professions and 1,385 medical students and 275 dental students will be in training. That is a huge increase. There is also a commitment to provide 19 extra pre-registration health officers.

Dafydd Wigley: Can you give any indication on progress made on medical education in centres away from Cardiff as part of our all-Wales approach? More doctors need to be trained in north Wales so that they are more likely to stay and pursue their careers there.

Jane Hutt: We met recently with Ian Cameron, Vice Chancellor of the University of Wales College of Medicine and other representatives from higher education, and with Dr Ruth Hall, our Chief Medical Officer. We agreed, as is stated in the plan, that we would move forward. The Swansea Clinical School is the first step towards expanding medical education centres throughout Wales and we are starting work on the Bangor development. We are making progress. We are also reviewing junior doctor funding and are involved in the national review of the senior house officer grade. There will be 60 extra specialist registrars by 2003, which is important to strengthen our consultant workforce. We have set up a working group to discuss how to promote common core training and inter-professional education, which is important to all health care professionals.

William Graham's amendment 3 would delete the second part of the motion, which takes our agenda for tackling workforce issues forward. I will not support this amendment.

I hope that Assembly Members recognise that 83 per cent of the NHS workforce are women. Equality issues pervade the objectives and actions set out in this strategy. This has relevance to the many organisations that are exhibiting in the Assembly's milling area today and that cover many of the issues that we are tackling in the human resources strategy.

Recruitment and retention is part of the strategy that forms objective three and we remain firmly on target. A data collection system has been identified to predict the long-term vacancies that will occur across all staff groups. Return-to-practice courses for nurses and midwives continue to be funded throughout Wales. During this year, 145 returners will complete their courses. We have made a commitment to provide a contribution of £50 a week towards the cost of childcare for eligible return-to-practice students. This will help remove one of the main barriers encountered by nurses who wish to return to the NHS in Wales. I am pleased to say that most of our trusts now have childcare facilities for staff. We have also set up a helpline for staff who wish to return to work in the NHS. I have made it clear to the trusts that they should take nurses back on their terms, not on the trusts' terms. If nurses want to work fewer or more hours, and if they need training and support and return to practice, then we have to make those options available. We have also commissioned careers information publications to market NHS Wales. We are preparing detailed information on trusts and NHS careers in Wales for use at health care training establishments and careers events in Wales and beyond.

I support Jocelyn Davies's amendment 5. It is included in chapter 5 of the strategy, and I quote:

'Targets will be set to reduce staff shortages and turnover and improve retention rates.'

Therefore, we are already addressing that. However, staff shortages are localised and affect certain professions in geographical areas. We need to ensure that we help trusts develop their recruitment and retention strategies to address those differing needs.

Objective four of the strategy heralded a review of employment policies across the NHS in Wales and the creation of a mechanism for promoting and identifying examples of best practice. I return to issues relating to equality. Flexibility of employment is a key issue. We are looking at initiatives that enable good practice to be shared throughout the NHS. I was pleased to launch a guide entitled 'Job Sharing in Medicine' last year, which was produced by the NHS Equality Unit. We must recognise that there are more women coming out of medical

school than men. We must address this issue if we want to ensure that women can make their full contribution in terms of balancing work and family life, which also, of course, applies to men. Each trust in Wales has access to £30,000 a year to support workers who wish to train as nurses while receiving their current salary. That is an important development.

4:50 p.m.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: You have spoken for 11 minutes so you are eating into your five minutes of allocated time to close the debate.

Jane Hutt: Objective five concerns the implementation of effective internal communication policies. I have covered equality, which is in Objective six. We must make great progress on race, health, disability, gender and the Welsh language, and we have targets to meet these issues and challenges. I was pleased to recently launch the leadership challenge at Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust with the Commission for Racial Equality. We need to move forward on that to ensure that we have a diverse workforce that represents the people of Wales. Objective seven examines job design and flexibility to provide up to 24 hour, seven day a week cover. We cover occupational health services and the need to ensure that we are addressing issues of violence, aggression, absence and sickness in the NHS in Wales. We have identified 66 objectives for next year and beyond for human resource strategy, working in partnership with our human resource directors and the NHS Wales Partnership Forum.

This debate gives Members the opportunity to influence the direction of the objectives. I reject Jocelyn Davies's amendment 4, which would only note where we are going. We need to support and contribute to the development. I am delighted that we are having this debate and we should return to it on a regular basis to ensure that the NHS, as the largest public sector employer in Wales, is also the best practice employer in terms of employment policies.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I have selected six amendments to the motion and have grouped them according to party groups. I call on Dai Lloyd to propose amendments 1, 4 and 5 tabled in the name of Jocelyn Davies.

David Lloyd: Cynigiau welliant 1. Yn y cymal cyntaf, dileu 'yn croesawu'r' ac ychwanegu 'yn nodi'r'.

David Lloyd: I propose amendment 1. In the first clause delete 'welcomes' and replace with 'notes'.

Cynigiau welliant 4. Yn yr ail gymal, dileu 'yn cefnogi'r amcanion ar gyfer 2001-02 a'r blynyddoedd dilynol yn sgîl y' ac ychwanegu 'yn nodi'r'.

I propose amendment 4. In the second clause delete 'endorses the objectives for 2001-02 and subsequent years in the light of' and replace with 'notes'.

Cynigiau welliant 5. Ychwanegu ar ddiwedd y cynnig:

I propose amendment 5. Add at the end of the motion:

ac mae hybu nodau'r strategaeth adnoddau dynol a 'Gwella Iechyd yng Nghymru' yn golygu y bydd angen pennu cyfres o dargedau cenedlaethol i leihau'r prinder staff, gwella cyfraddau cadw staff a chynorthwyo gyda recriwtio nyrsys, meddygon a gweithwyr mewn proffesiynau sy'n gysylltiedig â meddygaeth.

and to further the aims of the human resources strategy and 'Improving Health in Wales' calls for a set of national targets to be established to reduce staff shortages, improve retention rates, and aid the recruitment of nurses, doctors and those in professions allied to medicine.

Datganaf fuddiant fel meddyg teulu ac fel cynghorydd sir. Yr ydym wedi cytuno i

I declare an interest as a general practitioner and as a county councillor. We have agreed

dynnu gwelliant 1 yn ôl. Cefnogwn welliant 2. to withdraw amendment 1. We support amendment 2.

Croesawaf ddatganiad Jane, gan fod cael strategaeth adnoddau dynol effeithiol yn holl bwysig. Mae'n her sylweddol, a hoffwn weld strategaeth tymor hir ar gyfer recriwtio a chadw staff. Wrth i Jane dderbyn ein gwelliant, gwelaf ei bod yn cytuno â'r safbwynt hwnnw. I welcome Jane's statement because having an effective human resources strategy is crucial. It is a great challenge, and I would like to see a long-term strategy for the recruitment and retention of staff. In accepting our amendment, I see that Jane agrees with that view.

Mae angen strategaeth tymor hir i ariannu'r gwasanaeth iechyd yn ddigonol ac yn gyson, a thrafodaethau aeddfed ar y galwadau cynyddol a'r pwysau gwaith echrydus sydd ar ysgwyddau staff y gwasanaeth iechyd. We need a long-term strategy to fund the health service adequately and consistently, and mature discussions about the increasing requirements and the shocking pressure on NHS staff.

Mae'r strategaeth adnoddau dynol yn annigonol, ond croesawn y cytundeb fod ein gwelliant yn cael ei fabwysiadu. This human resource strategy is inadequate, but we welcome the agreement that our amendment will be adopted.

We have been here before. The human resources strategy came before Plenary on 13 June. A Plaid Cymru amendment was adopted then that asked for national targets for the recruitment of nurses, doctors, medical laboratory staff, scientists and those in professions allied to medicine. Nothing has happened in the interim and we are still waiting, which is why I welcome the acceptance of amendment 5. The NHS Wales Strategy continues with these deficiencies with human resource mentioned briefly only three times. We need a promise, as Dafydd Wigley mentioned, to expand the number of doctors trained in Wales, to make Plaid Cymru policy on additional medical campuses in Swansea and Bangor a reality.

Page 50 of the NHS Wales Strategy places the onus on health organisations to produce their own recruitment and retention strategy. However, that should be the Government's responsibility. Page 66 states that, in future, primary care services will be open for 24-hours a day, seven days a week, which means that people will be seen within 24-hours. That is an excellent aspiration, but people, quite reasonably want to spend more time—around 15 minutes—with their general practitioner. Therefore, making that vision a reality will require doubling the GP workforce and the number of practice nurses.

Recruitment is pointless without implementing a staff retention policy. The uncosted Welsh Conservative amendments with their superficial headlining and unrealistic figures do not address staff retention and morale issues. Bio-medical scientists, whose absence led to the closing down of Llandudno Hospital last year, are not included in the pay review body, which is why this profession is no longer considered attractive.

Career and professional development opportunities should be addressed in many areas, for example radiology and professions allied to medicine. Retention is all about morale and how we value and care for our NHS staff. It is about family-friendly and flexible working practices, providing hospital staff and GPs with an occupational health service and caring and valuing GP practice staff. NHS staff are currently overstretched, stressed and running to stand still. National service frameworks, clinical governance and revalidation are all worthy concepts, but they all increase the demands on staff. The pressure on staff is intense and growing and is reflected in sickness rates and early retirements. Therefore, human resources are central to any modern health service that delivers high quality care to patients in Wales today. This human resource strategy, as it is, is inadequate. Our amendments improve it, because we need a Welsh analysis of recruitment needs to form the basis of a national

recruitment strategy. We need a long-term national recruitment and retention strategy and I welcome Jane Hutt's acceptance of amendment 5 on this point.

David Melding: I propose the following amendments in the name of William Graham. Amendment 2: in the first clause, delete '*welcomes the progress in achieving*' and replace with '*notes*'.

I propose amendment 3. Delete the second clause and replace with:

recognises that Scotland and England have set targets for the recruitment of NHS frontline staff, rather than just trainee targets as contained in 'Improving Health in Wales';

I propose amendment 6. Add at the end of the motion:

sets the following targets for the number of additional full time equivalent staff in NHS Cymru by 2004; at least:

375 more hospital consultants;

100 more general practitioners;

1,000 more nurses; and

325 more therapists and other health professionals.

We all know that the NHS plan and the human resource strategy lack targets. That has been widely commented on and not only by the Welsh Conservative Party, but by many independent commentators and NHS organisations. I will quote two independent sources to strengthen my case. The Welsh Institute for Health and Social Care stated the following:

'If you do not have a destination or an estimated time of arrival, it matters not where you go or when. It is in the relative absence of targeting that the plan is most vulnerable to attack'.

The Welsh NHS Confederation stated the following:

'The English plan specified a significant increase in medical and nursing posts to achieve its modernisation programme. We want to avoid staff being trained in Wales only to fill posts in England.'

Nowhere is the plan weaker than in its lack of targeting for more NHS frontline staff. Amendment 6 was proposed in that vein. I will speak to it in more detail in a moment.

Some people would say that devolution means that we can do our own thing. Within our competence, we want to develop policies that are tailored to meet the needs of the people of Wales. However, we must at least justify a different approach to the one being taken in England and Scotland. The Minister has so far failed to do that, although she has now started to backtrack on presenting targets for staff recruitment. The NHS is a universal service in the UK. We need a common minimum standard of staffing levels. Training places are outlined by the Minister, as in the Scottish and English plans, but they are alongside frontline staff increases. We have only had the training figures so far, which has been a weakness in the Minister's approach.

5:00 p.m.

However, to add a positive note, I am glad that we will have targeted figures by the end of the

summer. That is a significant advance, as we now know when we can scrutinise those figures and compare and contrast them with those of other parts of the UK. The figures in amendment 6 would at least enable us to achieve the standards that will pertain in England. However, the targets that will appear in the summer will be one full year later than the ones produced last year in England and, as I understood, will be five-year figures. Therefore, they will take us two years beyond the English targets that have been set for 2004. The initial targets are a year late, and we will have to wait two years longer than they will in England to see whether they have been achieved. I had hoped that devolution would have provided a more vigorous and innovative approach. Without adequate staffing levels, we cannot underwrite a modernisation agenda. This is not only about staff recruitment, but improving the NHS's performance and the level of service that it can provide.

My figures have not been plucked from thin air. If Dai Lloyd had any intellectual curiosity, he would have asked me how I arrived at them, and I would have been happy to tell him. In fairness to the Liberal Democrats, they sent a researcher to speak to me, and I was happy to provide information. My targets reflect experience in Scotland, England and the projected increases in NHS expenditure promised by this Government—a promise that has been matched by the UK's main opposition party on the future level of NHS funding. Manpower, or person power, is the main area of spending in the NHS. Therefore, if we expect a third more of expenditure on health, we should be aiming for an ambitious increase in the number of consultants, which is what the Welsh Conservatives have proposed today. That will only provide the minimum level that England expects to achieve by 2004. One hundred more GPs will only enable us to reach a basic level of service to reduce waiting times to see a GP and lengthen consultation times. The figure of 1,000 more nurses is a full-time equivalent one, and the Royal College of Nursing has called for more than that by 2003. Our target gives the Executive more time to achieve that. The need for more therapists is widely acknowledged.

My time has run out. I welcome some things in the strategy, but we will vote against it, on the assumption that amendment 6 is rejected. However, we could review our vote in light of the targets that the Minister produces this summer, but until she does so, I will not sign up to her human resource strategy. I welcome references to working practices, part-time employment and bringing back staff who have left the NHS. Jane Hutt will get support for those flexible measures. It is important to remember that the staff are the foundation of the service that we offer to patients. We welcome staff participation in trust boards, but I hope that it will be done formally and that full directors will be on those bodies. We will support Plaid Cymru's amendments.

Kirsty Williams: We have made great strides, even to get this far. Considering that the NHS is Wales's largest employer, we laboured for many years without a strategy, or a human resource professional in Cathays Park to lead on this. Therefore, we have come a long way. Although I welcome David Melding's figures on what he considers to be appropriate staff levels, it is ironic that the Conservative Party is now calling for an extra 1,000 nurses when it cut the amount of training places available for nurses in the past.

There are two ways of retaining NHS staff. First, we must concentrate on flexible working practices. Jane mentioned an innovative job-share plan and programme that was launched last year. We heard from senior consultants who could have left the service but who continued to work because they had the opportunity of sharing their jobs. We need to do more to dispel the fears and ignorance that some trust managers may have about the issue of job sharing. The partnership agreement gives a commitment to developing term-time working for staff, such as being able to provide planned services around school term times and allowing those with caring responsibilities to return to nursing. We also need to realise that many people not only have child caring responsibilities, but care also for older relatives. I would like to see us considering ways of developing a friendly environment to which people caring for elderly relatives could return.

Finally on retirement, many people leave the service because they do not want to continue the hard slog of working at a senior level. They would like to cut down on their commitments, but are unable to do so in a way that does not badly affect their pension. We need to find a way around the issue of pensions to allow people to begin to curtail their activities in the NHS, and not to be placed in an in or out situation. We can also encourage people to stay if we provide them with the best environment in which to work. That environment must be safe and supportive. We hear all too often of the attacks on NHS staff and the abuse that they suffer. I visited the University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff on a Saturday night two weeks before Christmas and I was appalled by patients' treatment of staff at the accident and emergency department. We also need to ensure that Wales becomes an exemplar in the NHS by providing the staff with the best kit that they can possibly hope to work with. Recently, some people left the service in Wales to go and work in other facilities because they had better kits for their jobs. We also need to consider training and professional development for staff in the service. We need to enable them to attend training courses and international conferences without putting pressure on them that they are leaving behind an under-strength team. The need to train more staff goes without saying. Nobody could disagree with the fact that we need to invest heavily in more trainee medical and nursing places.

I finish by highlighting the issue of medical academics. If we are going to train more doctors and nurses, we need staff to provide that training. We will see a 60 per cent increase by the end of this year in the number of medical training places available in Wales. However, that has not been matched by a significant increase in the number of medical academics working in Wales. We will not be able to train the doctors, nurses and therapists of the future unless we are able to invest in medical academics. There are currently 16 senior lecturer and 14 lecturer posts vacant in Cardiff. Before we consider the welcome plans to extend medical education throughout Wales, we need to address the issue of filling the medical academic posts.

Brian Hancock: I declare that my wife is a community midwife. The Conservative amendment is at best superficial, and at worst, damaging to the possibility of creating a coherent NHS human resource strategy for Wales. Amendment 6 calls for 375 consultants. It takes around 12 years to train a consultant and 375 consultants are the equivalent of around 500 people under current contracts. We need around 500, not 375. Where will the money come from? For what type of consultants are they asking? Oncologists, Ophthalmists, Orthopaedics, Gynaecologists or Radiologists? Where do they think the shortages lie? What specialist centres or deficiencies have they identified in Wales? They ask for full-time equivalents. The current contractual arrangements are part-time with an emphasis on private work, which creates problems. Plaid Cymru favours altering that. In chapter 5 of Jane Hutt's NHS plan, there is a commitment that 'contractual arrangements for consultants will be modernised'. We can all see that that is an insufficient and meaningless commitment, but does it mean an end to the parasitic nature of private practice in the NHS? Are the Tories now committed to destroying the contract between the consultant and the NHS? They have not been committed to doing so in the past and are not now, even at the UK level.

5:10 p.m.

The Conservatives' amendment 6 asks for 1,000 extra nurses. How did they arrive at this estimate? The Royal College of Nursing estimates a need for 2,000 extra nurses on top of the 750 vacancies currently in the system.

David Melding: Will the Member give way?

Brian Hancock: No. How will the current system of medical training schools cope with this influx of nurses? Plaid Cymru has developed an all-Wales model of a medical campus. I am

pleased that the Government has adopted this but it will take a few years to develop. Nursing, midwifery and professions allied to medicine schools should be established adjacent to the medical schools. How are they going to pay for these extra places? The money for medical training places is determined at the UK level by the Department of Health. Twenty-five to 30 years ago, GPs were imported into Wales and they are now retiring. This retirement crisis in the Valleys will not be solved by 100 extra GPs unless they go where there are vacancies. The Tories, Labour and the Liberal Democrats are not tackling this. Plaid Cymru favours salaried sponsorship options for GPs in those areas. We have not learnt the lessons of the past 25 to 30 years and I do not want history to repeat itself with nurses.

Amendment 6 also calls for 325 more therapists and other health professionals. This vagueness is a blatant admission of their superficial approach of chasing cheap political headlines.

David Melding: Are you giving way so that we will get rid of the vagueness?

Brian Hancock: No. You are undermining in a damaging way the real possibility of creating a coherent human resources strategy for the NHS in Wales. Taking English numbers and demanding the same percentage increase for Wales is a damaging foundation for an intellectually valid health policy. Wales not only has greater needs than those in England but it has different ones. For example, rural areas might demand a greater number of community nurses than GPs. Plaid Cymru want to see a recruitment plan tailored to Welsh needs.

David Melding: Will the Member give way?

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Order. Brian Hancock is not giving way and is coming to the end of his speech.

Brian Hancock: The UK Department of Health must provide money for the medical undergraduate training that we deem necessary for Wales. In addition, we want to see the development of a Welsh retention strategy to force the UK Government to act because, importantly, the UK Government controls pay and conditions.

Brian Gibbons: One of the document's key themes is that the NHS should become an exemplar of good employment practice, particularly as it is the largest single employer in Wales. I welcome paragraph 1:2, which underlines the importance for NHS organisations that are commissioning from other non-NHS organisations to inform those organisations of the good employment standards in the NHS and expect those organisations to attempt to emulate what is going on in the NHS. That is an important principle in the document particularly as the NHS will be engaged in public, private partnerships on the one hand and also partnerships with the voluntary sector. It is sad that many organisations in the private and voluntary sector—and I declare an interest—often have a negative, if not hostile attitude to the rights of workers and particularly in relation to their trade union rights. Therefore, paragraph 1:2 raises a clear obligation on any organisation, whether it is in the private or voluntary sector, to emulate the standards that we have outlined in this document.

I will discuss the amendments, particularly amendments 5 and 6. Amendment 6 in the name of William Graham is disingenuous to say the least. I wonder why William picked on 2004 for implementation—

David Melding: I am delighted that the gallant Member is prepared to give way. The amendment states 'at least'—that is crucial. We want a service that is at least as good as the one across the border, which is this Government's policy, as stated by the Minister.

Brian Gibbons: As has already been mentioned, it takes six or seven years to train doctors,

and three, four or five years to train many of the other specialists that William's amendment 6 so eloquently asks for. I wonder who was in charge when these doctors started medical school or started on their professional careers. It is fortuitous that William decides to pick a period in which the sticky fingers of his party's Government cannot claim any responsibility. It is Welsh Labour that has to undo the damage and the neglect of your party and your time in Government.

I was also fascinated by Plaid Cymru's amendment 5 in the name of Jocelyn Davies. Does Plaid Cymru ever read any of the documents that come before this Assembly, particularly the NHS human resources strategy? Amendment 5, which David so gallantly was pleased that we accepted, as Jane has said, states word for word what is written in the NHS plan to which we are already committed. We do not need Plaid Cymru to repeat what we have already written and we are already committed to.

David Lloyd: The point is that nothing has moved since we had this debate last June. That is why we have tabled amendment 5, and we are glad that it has been accepted.

Brian Gibbons: I beg to differ. I will take one example, because time is short. On medical school input, the number of medical student places has gone up by 100, and since the last time that you spoke in debate on this issue, the number of places has gone up by 60 medical student places. Welsh Labour is delivering.

Janet Davies: We need a well organised programme, and we are beginning to move towards that. We must first consider the services that are needed, the number of staff needed to deliver, the training that they need and, importantly, the retention of staff in the national health service. Without retention, training can be—not a waste of time—but somewhat futile if nurses, or anyone else, then go off to do other jobs. It is important to have an explicit strategy of where we can fill gaps when the lapse in training will not allow those gaps to be filled immediately. I welcome Jane Hutt's commitment to collecting data on overseas and bank staff, which will help to show where and how gaps are being filled.

On general practitioners, it is a matter of great concern that it seems that we will need double the number of general practitioners and double the number of practice nurses to provide enough 24-hour, seven days a week services. That is a large number of staff. I am not sure whether we have enough strategy to succeed in that. Brian Hancock mentioned that we will need 100 extra GPs in the Valleys shortly, because of the approaching retirements. There is no strategy to ensure that extra GPs coming in to Wales go to the Valleys. It is great to have more GPs, but it is not much help to people living in the Valleys if those GPs do not go there. It is time to consider alternative ideas, such as salaries, and salaried GPs in specific areas, to see whether that will help in areas of acute need.

5:20 p.m.

On amendment 5, about which there has been quite a furore, Dai made the point that it is proposed because nothing has changed. It is time to accept that an opposition party exists in this Chamber and that it has the right to table amendments, which should be welcomed, if they do not contradict what the governing party wants. If you are saying that an opposition has no right to table amendments, then we are almost moving towards the Central Committee of the Supreme Soviet. I am sure that we do not want that in a democratic Chamber.

Brian Gibbons: It is superfluous to table an amendment that amends our document and replicates, virtually word for word, the same point. It is a waste of Assembly time.

Janet Davies: That is a silly point, because an amendment is an amendment, it is not part of a document.

Above all, we must have accurate data from the national health service. There is clearly a lack of sufficient accurate data on which to base a strategy. The Conservatives have made a guesstimate of need. That is not good enough. It is a bit rich to accuse Dai Lloyd of a lack of intellectual curiosity, when basing figures on guesstimates shows a lack of intellectual curiosity in itself.

David Melding *rose*—

Janet Davies: I am sorry, I have already given way once.

Perhaps that was what happened in the past and that is why we currently have shortages.

Money is needed, but we need value for money for all the competing sectors. In terms of the education service, which this Assembly funds through local government, people say that in Wales we spend more money per head on it than England does. They also say that the same is true for health. That, however, is only because London is not taken into consideration. If we include London in the calculation, we spend less per head.

Karen Sinclair: I will limit myself to two main points, because I know that time is short. First, we constantly hear about the fear that support facilities will be contracted out. I fervently believe that all staff who provide a service in our hospitals are equally important in contributing to patients' recovery and wellbeing. It therefore stands to reason that all staff should have the same employment rights and protection and be part of the same team. I was particularly pleased, therefore, to see that that is the first issue to be addressed in the document. The first paragraph of the first chapter states:

'It is for staff in all areas of health care—clinicians, managers, professional, administrative and support staff—in all hospital, community, primary care and related services.'

I congratulate Jane on that commitment.

At no point in this document did I find reference to any distinction being made between different groups of workers in the NHS in terms of employment rights, openness or inclusivity. I highlight my satisfaction that that commitment is clearly stated.

Secondly, I refer to part 4, on education, training and development. Again, I congratulate Jane on the priority given to lifelong learning and education. I welcome the plans for medical training in north Wales and the plans for Bangor and NEWI. However, I flag up one particular skill shortage, for which resources should be targeted. I have been told in recent weeks that there is a significant shortage in audiology training in Wales. Audiology is a relatively new field. Indeed, the term 'audiology' was only coined in 1947. However, it is doubling in size every decade and expertise in this field will be vital to the roll-out of digital hearing aids in Wales. This shortage in training and skills is UK-wide. England is having huge difficulties in recruiting enough skilled staff for the digital hearing aid pilot schemes and is even considering advertising abroad.

Currently, the only training in audiology in Wales takes the form of a GNVQ level 3, which can be done 'on the job' over two years. This is ideal for fast-tracking training and encouraging women returning to the job market. However, it is only available through the University of Wales, Swansea. At the moment, about 10 students a year take up the course, but to have the necessary numbers of qualified technical officers to roll out the digital hearing aid service quickly and professionally we need to significantly increase that number. I was delighted with Jane's commitment in the NHS plan for Wales to invest £1.5 million in audiology services. We need extra provision for audiology training across Wales to honour

this commitment and fulfil the vision set out in paragraph 4 of the human resources strategy.

Ann Jones: I welcome the human resources strategy as a step forward. I will not go over the reasons why or how we will implement it. As I stated in the recent debate on the NHS plan for Wales, until we have the heart surgeons and the cardiac nurses that we need, we will not be able to cut waiting times for heart surgery. If we cannot recruit the extra nurses and physiotherapists to staff the extra beds and immediate care facilities, our expansion plans will remain plans. That is why I welcome the increase in the number of medical training centres in Wales. They will be not just in Cardiff and Swansea but, as Jane mentioned, in Bangor and, hopefully, in Wrexham in the future.

We are encouraging people to return to nursing but despite the significant progress made on this, there are still over 750 nursing vacancies across Wales. I was pleased that the Health and Social Services Committee last week supported my call for a swifter registration procedure for nurses recruited from overseas. These nurses are qualified and experienced but, even after their initial training and induction into our ways of working, are left in the ludicrous situation of only being able to perform duties such as changing bed sheets or emptying bed pans. They are not able to undertake the more complicated medical care for which they have been trained, because their registration is being held up.

As I have often said, nurses are only one part of the NHS team. We must look to recruit and retain more pathology staff, physiotherapists, speech therapists, occupational therapists, and dieticians. All are vital to the creation of a confident, vibrant NHS in Wales. That is why I am pleased that nurses' pay has increased by 20 per cent over the past three years and, more importantly, to see the pay awards that have recently been made to staff outside the pay review body.

Under previous administrations, pathology staff were undermined and undervalued and the service was therefore desperately understaffed. Medical laboratory science officers perform life-saving inspections and tests in pathology labs. Entry requires a science degree, but these essential, skilled staff have been taking home less pay than had they been stacking shelves in their local supermarkets. We have made a start, but there is much more to do to improve the pay of these workers.

As I have said previously in this Chamber, conditions of work are as important to staff as pay. The NHS must appear to be an attractive and good employer if it is to recruit and retain staff. Helping staff to square work and home responsibilities is not only socially responsible, but essential. The NHS professionals scheme, designed to offer nurses the chance to obtain the flexibility that they often seek through becoming bank or agency nurses, is to be welcomed. The scheme will also co-ordinate the initiatives to recruit and deploy nurses from overseas and pilot arrangements for co-ordinating the employment of local medical staff and professionals such as physiotherapists and radiographers, where sessional work is widespread. Hopefully, that will ensure that the NHS will benefit from flexibility of working without having to pay agency fees.

We should pursue Welsh solutions to Welsh problems, but we should also work in partnership with the NHS in England where it makes sense to do so. We can achieve more by piloting the NHS professionals scheme together than we could by doing so alone. Some commentators may disagree with the idea that we in Wales can learn from our colleagues over the border. However, while we must take forward a health agenda that reflects the needs of our communities, we should not pursue policies in a puerile attempt to be different. We must follow what happens in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and in other European countries. The people of Wales do not expect any less. They do not want their health service to fall behind that of others. They want us to work in partnership and share in the research that is conducted in England and elsewhere.

Finally, on childcare provision, I was grateful that Jane said that she would provide £50 towards childcare. Some trusts offer childcare support for working parents but, unfortunately, provision remains patchy and is all too often inadequate to cope with the shift patterns required of health service staff. By valuing and rewarding NHS staff we will liberate their talent and start to break down the demarcations that slow down services for patients. This strategy will make a start on that and I commend it.

5:30 p.m.

The Minister for Health and Social Services (Jane Hutt): Thank you for your positive responses, and the reasonably positive responses from the Welsh Conservatives, to this debate. Negative approaches do not work well with the hardworking staff of the NHS, who seek and expect our support. We have made great progress this afternoon in that respect.

National health service staff also want us to plan realistically. It is interesting to note, David and Dai, that the Royal College of Nursing's response to the NHS plan, which I am sure you have seen, recognises that, unless we get the workforce issues right in terms of numbers and skills, we cannot expect to reach our targets for improving health. That is the message conveyed by the hard-pressed 18,500 nurses who work in the NHS. We must get health needs planning right and ensure that it is not based on finances, cost improvement programmes or guesstimates, but on consultation with staff.

I am pleased that Plaid Cymru has withdrawn amendment 1, and NHS staff will be glad to hear that there is widespread support for the strategy, on which they are working hard. You welcomed my support for amendment 5 and, as Brian Gibbons said, I have highlighted areas of progress since June 2000 in the human resources strategy. There has been significant progress in terms of the work of staff and management across Wales and the money invested in the service. You will remember that, last spring, in a meeting of the Health and Social Services Committee, I insisted that we retain some money centrally to deliver and implement the human resources strategy. If we had not done that, we would not have seen this progress. Twenty per cent more nurses are now in training, which will result in an increase in the number of nurses by 2004. That has been made possible by the fact that, when the budget came before the Committee and the Assembly Government, we made a commitment to the human resources strategy.

Chapter 5 of 'Improving Health in Wales: A Plan for the NHS with its Partners' is based on the contribution and support of NHS staff. If you read that chapter, you will find that all the information Members have requested is included. I have told Members that the five-year plans will be in place by the summer. That will be possible, David, as a result of receiving the data that will allow us to predict what each trust needs and ensure realistic planning. I hope that you will consider that that is the right way to move matters forward.

Targets, and how we reach them, must be based on the planning of health needs. Guesstimates are not good enough. We want long-term planning. It is important that money is invested where it is needed. The 750 nursing vacancies were mentioned. I visited the Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust today and was pleased to hear that it now has 50 more nurses, which is a significant number for that area.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Order. Your time has come to an end, Jane.

Jane Hutt: I cannot, therefore, reply to everyone's contribution.

On Karen and Ann's point about the development of medical education, it applies to the whole of Wales and, in terms of the role of medical academics, training is important, as Kirsty

mentioned. NHS staff, particularly in the medical and nursing sectors, would like more staff, better research and teaching opportunities, good equipment and to be able to improve services for patients. We should seek to achieve that and that is the aim of the human resources strategy. All NHS staff, whether they be porters, cleaners, consultants, nurses, medical laboratory staff or scientific officers, have a role to play in improving the health and wellbeing of the people of Wales. This is a national human resources strategy for all health service staff in Wales.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: We will now proceed to a vote. Please note that if amendment 3 is adopted, amendment 4 will fall.

Tynnwyd gwelliant 1 yn ôl.
Amendment 1 withdrawn.

*Gwelliant 2: O blaid 17, Ymatal 0, Yn erbyn 27.
Amendment 2: For 17, Abstain 0, Against 27.*

Pleidleisiodd yr Aelodau canlynol o blaid:
The following Members voted for:

Cairns, Alun
Dafis, Cynog
Davies, David
Davies, Glyn
Davies, Janet
Davies, Jocelyn
Graham, William
Hancock, Brian
Jones, Elin
Jones, Ieuan Wyn
Lloyd, David
Melding, David
Richards, Rod
Ryder, Janet
Thomas, Rhodri Glyn
Wigley, Dafydd
Williams, Phil

Pleidleisiodd yr Aelodau canlynol yn erbyn:
The following Members voted against:

Barrett, Lorraine
Bates, Mick
Black, Peter
Butler, Rosemary
Chapman, Christine
Davidson, Jane
Davies, Andrew
Davies, Ron
Edwards, Richard
Essex, Sue
Evans, Delyth
Feld, Val
Gibbons, Brian
Griffiths, John
Gwyther, Christine
Halford, Alison
Hutt, Jane
Jones, Ann
Jones, Carwyn
Law, Peter
Middlehurst, Tom
Neagle, Lynne
Pugh, Alun
Randerson, Jenny
Sinclair, Karen
Thomas, Gwenda
Williams, Kirsty

*Gwrthodwyd y gwelliant.
Amendment rejected.*

*Gwelliant 3: O blaid 6, Ymatal 11, Yn erbyn 27.
Amendment 3: For 6, Abstain 11, Against 27.*

Pleidleisiodd yr Aelodau canlynol o blaid:
The following Members voted for:

Cairns, Alun
Davies, David
Davies, Glyn
Graham, William

Pleidleisiodd yr Aelodau canlynol yn erbyn:
The following Members voted against:

Barrett, Lorraine
Bates, Mick
Black, Peter
Butler, Rosemary

Melding, David
Richards, Rod

Chapman, Christine
Davidson, Jane
Davies, Andrew
Davies, Ron
Edwards, Richard
Essex, Sue
Evans, Delyth
Feld, Val
Gibbons, Brian
Griffiths, John
Gwyther, Christine
Halford, Alison
Hutt, Jane
Jones, Ann
Jones, Carwyn
Law, Peter
Middlehurst, Tom
Neagle, Lynne
Pugh, Alun
Randerson, Jenny
Sinclair, Karen
Thomas, Gwenda
Williams, Kirsty

Ymataliodd yr Aelodau canlynol:
The following Members abstained:

Dafis, Cynog
Davies, Janet
Davies, Jocelyn
Hancock, Brian
Jones, Elin
Jones, Ieuan Wyn
Lloyd, David
Ryder, Janet
Thomas, Rhodri Glyn
Wigley, Dafydd
Williams, Phil

*Gwrthodwyd y gwelliant.
Amendment rejected.*

*Gwelliant 4: O blaid 18, Ymatal 0, Yn erbyn 26.
Amendment 4: For 18, Abstain 0, Against 26.*

Pleidleisiodd yr Aelodau canlynol o blaid:
The following Members voted for:

Cairns, Alun
Dafis, Cynog
Davies, David
Davies, Glyn
Davies, Janet
Davies, Jocelyn
Evans, Delyth
Graham, William
Hancock, Brian
Jones, Elin
Jones, Ieuan Wyn
Lloyd, David
Melding, David
Richards, Rod
Ryder, Janet
Thomas, Rhodri Glyn
Wigley, Dafydd
Williams, Phil

Pleidleisiodd yr Aelodau canlynol yn erbyn:
The following Members voted against:

Barrett, Lorraine
Bates, Mick
Black, Peter
Butler, Rosemary
Chapman, Christine
Davidson, Jane
Davies, Andrew
Davies, Ron
Edwards, Richard
Essex, Sue
Feld, Val
Gibbons, Brian
Griffiths, John
Gwyther, Christine
Halford, Alison
Hutt, Jane
Jones, Ann
Jones, Carwyn

Law, Peter
Middlehurst, Tom
Neagle, Lynne
Pugh, Alun
Randerson, Jenny
Sinclair, Karen
Thomas, Gwenda
Williams, Kirsty

*Gwrthodwyd y gwelliant.
Amendment rejected.*

*Gwelliant 5: O blaid 44, Ymatal 0, Yn erbyn 0.
Amendment 5: For 44, Abstain 0, Against 0.*

Pleidleisiodd yr Aelodau canlynol o blaid:
The following Members voted for:

Barrett, Lorraine
Bates, Mick
Black, Peter
Butler, Rosemary
Cairns, Alun
Chapman, Christine
Dafis, Cynog
Davidson, Jane
Davies, Andrew
Davies, David
Davies, Glyn
Davies, Janet
Davies, Jocelyn
Davies, Ron
Edwards, Richard
Essex, Sue
Evans, Delyth
Feld, Val
Gibbons, Brian
Graham, William
Griffiths, John
Gwyther, Christine
Halford, Alison
Hancock, Brian
Hutt, Jane
Jones, Ann
Jones, Carwyn
Jones, Elin
Jones, Ieuan Wyn
Law, Peter
Lloyd, David
Melding, David
Middlehurst, Tom
Neagle, Lynne
Pugh, Alun
Randerson, Jenny
Richards, Rod
Ryder, Janet
Sinclair, Karen
Thomas, Gwenda
Thomas, Rhodri Glyn
Wigley, Dafydd
Williams, Kirsty
Williams, Phil

*Derbyniwyd y gwelliant.
Amendment adopted.*

*Gwelliant 6: O blaid 6, Ymatal 11, Yn erbyn 27.
Amendment 6: For 6, Abstain 11, Against 27.*

Pleidleisiodd yr Aelodau canlynol o blaid:
The following Members voted for:

Cairns, Alun
Davies, David
Davies, Glyn
Graham, William
Melding, David
Richards, Rod

Pleidleisiodd yr Aelodau canlynol yn erbyn:
The following Members voted against:

Barrett, Lorraine
Bates, Mick
Black, Peter
Butler, Rosemary
Chapman, Christine
Davidson, Jane
Davies, Andrew
Davies, Ron
Edwards, Richard
Essex, Sue
Evans, Delyth
Feld, Val
Gibbons, Brian
Griffiths, John
Gwyther, Christine
Halford, Alison
Hutt, Jane
Jones, Ann
Jones, Carwyn
Law, Peter
Middlehurst, Tom
Neagle, Lynne
Pugh, Alun
Randerson, Jenny
Sinclair, Karen
Thomas, Gwenda
Williams, Kirsty

Ymataliodd yr Aelodau canlynol:
The following Members abstained:

Dafis, Cynog
Davies, Janet
Davies, Jocelyn
Hancock, Brian
Jones, Elin
Jones, Ieuan Wyn
Lloyd, David
Ryder, Janet
Thomas, Rhodri Glyn
Wigley, Dafydd
Williams, Phil

*Gwrthodwyd y gwelliant.
Amendment rejected.*

Amended motion:

the National Assembly

welcomes the progress in achieving the 2000-01 objectives set out in 'A Human Resources Strategy for NHS Wales—Delivering for Patients', laid in the Table Office on 6 June 2000;

endorses the objectives for 2001-02 and subsequent years in the light of the Workforce chapter of 'Improving Health in Wales: A Plan for the NHS with its Partners', laid in the Table Office on 5 February 2001; and

to further the aims of the human resources strategy and 'Improving Health in Wales' calls for a set of national targets to be established to reduce staff shortages, improve retention rates, and aid the recruitment of nurses, doctors and those in professions allied to medicine.

Cynnig wedi'i ddiwygio: O blaid 38, Ymatal 0, Yn erbyn 6.

Amended motion: For 38, Abstain 0, Against 6.

Pleidleisiodd yr Aelodau canlynol o blaid:
The following Members voted for:

Barrett, Lorraine
Bates, Mick
Black, Peter
Butler, Rosemary
Chapman, Christine
Dafis, Cynog
Davidson, Jane
Davies, Andrew
Davies, Janet
Davies, Jocelyn
Davies, Ron
Edwards, Richard
Essex, Sue
Evans, Delyth
Feld, Val
Gibbons, Brian
Griffiths, John
Gwyther, Christine
Halford, Alison
Hancock, Brian
Hutt, Jane
Jones, Ann
Jones, Carwyn
Jones, Elin
Jones, Ieuan Wyn
Law, Peter
Lloyd, David
Middlehurst, Tom
Neagle, Lynne
Pugh, Alun
Randerson, Jenny
Ryder, Janet
Sinclair, Karen
Thomas, Gwenda
Thomas, Rhodri Glyn
Wigley, Dafydd
Williams, Kirsty
Williams, Phil

Pleidleisiodd yr Aelodau canlynol yn erbyn:
The following Members voted against:

Cairns, Alun
Davies, David
Davies, Glyn
Graham, William
Melding, David
Richards, Rod

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig wedi'i ddiwygio.
Amended motion adopted.*

The Deputy Presiding Officer: That brings today's proceedings to a close.

*Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 5.35 p.m.
The session ended at 5.35 p.m.*

