



**Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
(Cofnod y Trafodion)**

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

**Dydd Mercher, 5 Hydref 2005
Wednesday, 5 October 2005**

Cynnwys
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Yn y golofn chwith, cofnodwyd y trafodion yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynndi yn y Siambr.
Yn y golofn dde, cynhwyswyd cyfieithiad o'r areithiau hynny.

In the left-hand column, the proceedings are recorded in the language in which they were
spoken in the Chamber. In the right-hand column, a translation of those speeches has been
included.

*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.*

Cwestiynau ar Lywodraeth Leol i'r Gweinidog Cyllid Questions on Local Government to the Finance Minister

Y Grant Cymorth Refeniw Revenue Support Grant

Q1 Mark Isherwood: Will the Minister make a statement on the revenue support grant? OAQ0400(LGP)

C1 Mark Isherwood: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am y grant cynnal refeniw? OAQ0400(LGP)

The Finance Minister (Sue Essex): The revenue support grant is the mechanism by which the Assembly Government delivers unencumbered support to local government in Wales. In the draft budget published on 27 September, the revenue support grant and non-domestic rates allocation for 2006-07 will be £3.4 billion, an increase of 4.2 per cent.

Y Gweinidog Cyllid (Sue Essex): Y grant cynnal refeniw yw'r dull a ddefnyddir gan Lywodraeth y Cynulliad i roi cymorth heb ei neilltuo i lywodraeth leol yng Nghymru. Yn y gyllideb ddrafft a gyhoeddwyd ar 27 Medi, bydd y grant cynnal refeniw a'r dyraniad ardrethu annomestig ar gyfer 2006-07 yn £3.4 biliwn, cynnydd o 4.2 y cant.

Mark Isherwood: A carers' organisation has told me that the carers grant will be subsumed into the revenue support grant from next year, and a Women's Aid annual general meeting report states that one major disappointment for it was to learn that the Supporting People revenue grant would not be ring-fenced when it is handed over to the local authority in 2006. In other words, the RSG will be inflated with figures that are not presently included in it. Is this true, Minister? If so, how will voluntary organisations such as these continue to deliver essential services at a time when local authority budgets are tightening and when decisions on spending priorities are already leading to cuts in key services?

Mark Isherwood: Mae sefydliad gofalgwr wedi dweud wrthyf y bydd y grant gofalgwr yn cael ei gynnwys yn y grant cynnal refeniw o'r flwyddyn nesaf ymlaen, a dywed adroddiad o gyfarfod cyffredinol blynyddol Cymorth i Fenywod mai siom fawr iddynt oedd clywed na fyddai'r grant refeniw Cefnogi Pobl yn cael ei neilltuo pan gaiff ei roi yng ngofal yr awdurdod lleol yn 2006. Hynny yw, bydd y grant cynnal refeniw yn cael ei chwyddo gan ffigurau nas cynhwysir ynddo ar hyn o bryd. A yw hyn yn wir, Weinidog? Os felly, sut y bydd cyrff gwirfoddol fel y rhain yn parhau i ddarparu gwasanaethau hanfodol pan fo cyllidebau awdurdodau lleol yn tynhau a phan fo penderfyniadau ar flaenoriaethau gwario eisoes yn arwain at doriadau mewn gwasanaethau allweddol?

Sue Essex: I do not have the specific figures for those two key grants to hand. However, if what you are saying is true, then we are meeting our commitment to absorb specific and special grants into the RSG. That is a philosophy of your party, as has been argued many times, although perhaps not by you, personally. Glyn Davies, as your local government spokesperson, has certainly asked me many times about when we would

Sue Essex: Nid yw'r ffigurau penodol wrth law gennyf ar gyfer y ddau grant allweddol hynny. Fodd bynnag, os yw'r hyn a ddywedwch yn wir, yna yr ydym yn cyflawni ein hymrwymiad i ymgorffori grantiau penodol a grantiau arbennig yn y grant cynnal refeniw. Athroniaeth eich plaid chi yw honno, fel y dadleuwyd sawl gwaith, er nad gennych chi yn bersonol o bosibl. Yn sicr mae Glyn Davies, eich llefarydd ar

include grants in the revenue support grant. Either you have changed your policy as a party or you have not.

Arweinydd yr Wrthblaid (Ieuan Wyn Jones): Hoffwn eich cyfeirio yn ôl at un mater penodol. Ochr yn ochr â'r arian sy'n gorfod mynd at lywodraeth leol, mae disgwyl iddi godi arian ei hun o dan y dreth gyngor. Sut oeddech chi'n teimlo pan ddywedodd y Prif Weinidog yn Llundain fod y dreth gyngor yn anghynaliadwy, a'i fod yn fwiad i ohirio'r broses ailfandio yn Lloegr?

Sue Essex: When he said that it was unsustainable, I think that he was picking up on an issue that I have frequently articulated here and elsewhere, namely that the council tax has caused such a stir because we have seen—across political parties in England and Wales, although perhaps less so in Wales—fairly large rises, which the public does not necessarily understand. I suspect that the basis of this was concern that people are less likely to accept the council tax because of this situation.

Ieuan Wyn Jones: I detect from that that you agree with Tony Blair that the council tax is unsustainable. That is what he said, and I am asking you to give us your view on that. It was almost as though you were apologising for the fact that he had said it, and half agreeing with him. He has landed you in the soup—you decided to go for rebanding, he saw the effect of that in Wales and realised the political impact of it.

Do you realise the depth of the anger among council tax payers in Wales, whose houses have been moved up a band, who face another band increase next year, and some of whom will face a third increase the following year of 20 to 30 per cent? Do you realise how angry people are? Do you accept that the will of the Assembly yesterday was to ensure that that impact is lessened in your budget?

Sue Essex: We had lots of questions there, Ieuan. I was trying to explain the point that Tony Blair was making. If the council tax is to be acceptable as a form of taxation, we

lywodraeth leol, wedi gofyn imi sawl gwaith pa bryd y byddwn yn cynnwys grantiau yn y grant cynnal refeniw. Mae eich plaid naill ai wedi newid ei pholisi neu heb newid ei pholisi.

The Leader of the Opposition (Ieuan Wyn Jones): I wish to refer you to one particular point. In addition to the money that must be given to local government, it is expected to raise funds itself through the council tax. How did you feel when the Prime Minister said that the council tax is unsustainable, and that the intention is to defer the rebanding process in England?

Sue Essex: Pan ddywedodd ei bod yn anghynaliadwy, credaf ei fod yn cyfeirio at fater yr wyf wedi'i godi droeon yma ac mewn manau eraill, sef bod y dreth gyngor wedi achosi cymaint o gynnwrf oherwydd ein bod wedi gweld—ar draws y pleidiau yng Nghymru a Lloegr, er i raddau llai o bosibl yng Nghymru—godiadau eithaf mawr, nad yw'r cyhoedd yn eu deall o anghenraid. Tybiaf mai sail hyn oedd pryder bod pobl yn llai tebygol o dderbyn y dreth gyngor oherwydd y sefyllfa hon.

Ieuan Wyn Jones: Synhwyraf o hynny eich bod yn cytuno â Tony Blair bod y dreth gyngor yn anghynaliadwy. Dyna a ddywedodd, ac yr wyf yn gofyn ichi roi eich barn ar hynny. Yr oedd bron fel pe baech yn ymddiheuro am iddo ddweud hynny, ac yn hanner cytuno ag ef. Mae wedi'ch rhoi yn y cawl—bu ichi benderfynu ailfandio, gwelodd yntau effaith hynny yng Nghymru a sylweddoli effaith wleidyddol hynny.

A ydych yn sylweddoli cymaint yw dicter pobl sy'n talu'r dreth gyngor yng Nghymru, pobl y mae eu tai wedi eu codi i fand uwch, sy'n wynebu codiad arall y flwyddyn nesaf, gyda rhai ohonynt yn wynebu trydydd codiad o rhwng 20 a 30 y cant y flwyddyn ddilynol? A ydych yn sylweddoli mor ddig yw pobl? A ydych yn derbyn mai ewyllys y Cynulliad ddoe oedd sicrhau bod yr effaith honno'n cael ei lleihau yn eich cyllideb?

Sue Essex: Caswom lawer o gwestiynau gennych, Ieuan. Yr oeddwn yn ceisio esbonio'r pwynt yr oedd Tony Blair yn ei wneud. Os ydym am sicrhau bod y dreth

must present it in a more sustainable way. I think that the reason why people feel angry with the council tax is that they have seen it rise, perhaps without any logic. In some cases, it has gone up in huge percentages. I addressed that point last year when I put down the principles of capping. The mood of the British public has changed, and I do not think that we disagree on that.

When it comes to the decision on revaluation in England, that is for them. We made our decision, which was to go two years early. That was agreed because people thought that that was the best approach. The sooner you do the revaluation, the better. England has made its decision. You will have seen what Sir Michael Lyons said about that. He thinks that there will still be a property tax despite everything, and he has commended us on what we are doing.

Your third point was about how the Welsh public feel about this. I would not necessarily say that many people feel that it is unfair, but you are right to say that they do not understand why we have had this in Wales when they have not had it in England. If you understand how local government finance works, you know that our settlement is contained within Wales. There is no financial implication. We still have lower council tax in Wales, post revaluation, than they have in England. That is the issue: people do not understand that, whatever the decision in England, it does not affect our financial base and the council tax calculation here.

The Leader of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Group (Michael German): In the past, you have stated that any new pressure that Government puts on local government will be reflected in a fully funded payment from the National Assembly. One of the new pressures that will be placed upon local authorities is the requirement, under the new European directive, to deal with electrical products from people's homes. That can mean anything from an electric toothbrush to a printer. Anything being disposed of will have to be dealt with by local authorities. Can you guarantee that local authorities will be

gyngor yn dderbyniol fel dull o drethu, rhaid inni ei chyflwyno mewn ffordd fwy cynaliadwy. Credaf mai'r rheswm pam mae pobl yn teimlo'n ddig ynghylch y dreth gyngor yw eu bod wedi'i gweld yn codi, heb resymeg efallai. Mewn rhai achosion mae'r canrannau'n enfawr. Ymdriniais â'r pwynt hwnnw y llynedd pan sefydlais egwyddorion capio. Mae agwedd y cyhoedd ym Mhrydain wedi newid, ac ni chredaf ein bod yn anghytuno ar hynny.

O ran ailbrisió yn Lloegr, eu penderfyniad hwy fydd hynny. Gwnaethom ein penderfyniad ninnau, sef gwneud hynny ddwy flynedd yn gynnar. Cytunwyd ar hynny gan fod pobl yn credu mai dyna oedd y ffordd orau. Gorau po gyntaf yr ailbrisir. Mae Lloegr wedi gwneud ei phenderfyniad hithau. Byddwch wedi gweld yr hyn a ddywedodd Syr Michael Lyons am hynny. Cred y bydd treth eiddo o hyd er gwaethaf popeth, ac mae wedi cymeradwyo'r hyn a wnawn.

Eich trydydd pwynt oedd teimladau'r cyhoedd ynglŷn â hyn. Ni ddywedwn o reidrwydd fod llawer o bobl yn teimlo ei bod yn annheg, ond yr ydych yn gywir i ddweud nad ydynt yn deall pam bod hyn wedi digwydd yng Nghymru ond nid yn Lloegr. Os ydych yn deall sut y mae cyllid llywodraeth leol yn gweithio, gwyddoch fod ein setliad ni wedi'i neilltuo yng Nghymru. Nid oes goblygiadau ariannol. Mae ein treth gyngor ni yng Nghymru yn parhau i fod yn is, ar ôl ailbrisió, na'r dreth gyngor yn Lloegr. Dyna'r broblem; nid yw pobl yn deall, beth bynnag fo'r penderfyniad yn Lloegr, nid yw'n effeithio ar ein sylfaen ariannol a'r cyfrifiadau treth gyngor yma.

Arweinydd Grŵp Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru (Michael German): Yn y gorffennol, yr ydych wedi datgan y bydd unrhyw bwysau newydd y mae'r Llywodraeth yn ei roi ar lywodraeth leol yn cael ei adlewyrchu gan daliad wedi'i ariannu'n llawn gan y Cynulliad Cenedlaethol. Bydd pwysau newydd ar awdurdodau lleol yn sgîl yr angen, o dan y gyfarwyddeb Ewropeaidd newydd, i ymdrin â chynnyrch trydan o gartrefi pobl. Gall hynny olygu unrhyw beth o frws dannedd trydan i argraffydd. Bydd rhaid i awdurdodau lleol ymdrin ag unrhyw beth sy'n cael ei waredu.

fully funded next year for the work that they will have to do to dispose of these products?

A allwch warantu y bydd awdurdodau lleol yn cael eu hariannu'n llawn y flwyddyn nesaf i wneud y gwaith y bydd yn rhaid iddynt ei wneud i waredu'r cynnyrch hwn?

Sue Essex: You will know about the process, as you sit on the committee. What happens every year is that an expenditure sub-group calculates the yearly pressures on local government. You were at the meeting where the group's report was agreed, and you were, in fact, at the last meeting when I reminded people about the agreement that I had signed with Sir Harry Jones on meeting new pressures. I specifically asked the Welsh Local Government Association whether it felt that the commitment had been met, which was a pretty open thing for me to do under the circumstances with other politicians present, as I did not know for sure what the answer would be. The answer was 'yes'.

Sue Essex: Byddwch yn gwybod am y broses, gan eich bod ar y pwyllgor. Yr hyn sy'n digwydd bob blwyddyn yw bod is-grŵp gwariant yn cyfrifo'r pwysau blynyddol ar lywodraeth leol. Yr oeddech yn y cyfarfod lle y cytunwyd ar adroddiad y grŵp, ac yn wir yr oeddech yn y cyfarfod diwethaf pan atgoffais y cyfarfod am y cytundeb yr oeddwn wedi'i lofnodi gyda Syr Harry Jones ar ymateb i bwysau newydd. Gofynnais yn benodol i Gymdeithas Llywodraeth Leol Cymru a gyflawnwyd yr ymrwymiad o safbwynt y gymdeithas, a oedd yn rhywbeth eithaf agored imi ei wneud o dan yr amgylchiadau gyda gwleidyddion eraill yno, gan na wyddwn i sicrwydd beth fyddai'r ateb. Yr ateb oedd 'do'.

Michael German: Apparently, the regulations concerning the new European directive are being determined by the Department of Trade and Industry in London. Previously, it was to be fully funded by the industry—the retailers and producers of this equipment. However, it has recently come to light that there will be a gap in the funding provided, even if that fund provided by the retailers and producers were sufficient. It will be down to local government to fill that gap. If local government found that it was going to have to pick up the tab for dealing with these products, would you be prepared to fully fund that in the revenue support grant?

Michael German: Ymddengys mai'r Adran Masnach a Diwydiant yn Llundain sy'n penderfynu ar y rheoliadau yn ymwneud â'r gyfarwyddeb Ewropeaidd newydd. Cyn hynny, bwriadwyd i'r diwydiant ei hariannu'n llawn—gwerthwyr a chynhyrchwyr yr offer hwn. Fodd bynnag, daeth yn amlwg yn ddiweddar y bydd bwlch yn y cyllid a ddarperir, hyd yn oed pe bai'r gronfa honno a ddarperid gan y gwerthwyr a'r cynhyrchwyr yn ddigonol. Cyfrifoldeb llywodraeth leol fydd llenwi'r bwlch hwnnw. Pe bai llywodraeth leol yn canfod y byddai'n rhaid iddi dalu'r bil am ymdrin â'r cynnyrch hyn, a fyddech yn barod i ariannu hynny'n llawn drwy'r grant cynnal refeniw?

Sue Essex: You will remember the wonderfully titled WEEE directive on waste electrical and electronic equipment, and the agreement made. I will speak to Welsh local government, as this has not been flagged up on my horizon.

Sue Essex: Fe gofiwch am y gyfarwyddeb hyfryd o'r enw WEEE, ar wastraff offer trydanol ac electronig, a'r cytundeb a wnaed. Siaradaf â llywodraeth leol Cymru, gan na ddaeth hyn ar hyd fy llwybr o'r blaen.

Cyngor Dinas Casnewydd (Gwasanaethau Lleol) Newport City Council (Local Services)

Q2 John Griffiths: What measures has the Minister taken to support Newport City Council in improving the local services that it delivers since 2003? OAQ0361(LGP)

C2 John Griffiths: Pa fesurau y mae'r Gweinidog wedi eu cymryd i gefnogi Cyngor Dinas Casnewydd i wella'r gwasanaethau lleol y mae'n eu darparu ers 2003? OAQ0361(LGP)

Sue Essex: I concluded a policy agreement with Newport City Council in September 2004. Under this, the authority will make significant improvements in service delivery by 2007. The agreement reflects both our strategic objectives and Newport's local needs.

John Griffiths: Following the job losses at Corus, an urban regeneration company, Newport Unlimited, was set up to take forward economic development, transport, infrastructure and other matters in the city. This involves various additional pressures that were not foreseen. Could you assure me that those additional pressures are, and will be, taken into account in providing the necessary support for Newport City Council to play its part in making those plans a reality?

2.10 p.m.

Sue Essex: Newport Unlimited, and what it could bring to the city and the whole area of southern Gwent, is exciting. One of the key contributions that we have made is the southern distributor road, which I used the other day. This was a major private finance initiative project, with £95 million spent on the new road. The way that the road serves Newport means that a new area of land has been opened up and traffic pressure taken off the city centre and residential areas. I think that this will make a major contribution to the area's regeneration.

William Graham: Will you also include in your agreement with Newport City Council enough money to make sure that it can keep schools open and roads surfaced? Although we applaud the new road, which is a type of toll road, we hope that the ordinary people of Newport will have their roads tarred and gravelled. The fact that there are so many holes in some of the city's major routes is causing concern, but the council says that it does not have enough money to deal with them, so it is looking to you to provide that funding.

Sue Essex: I am surprised to hear you refer

Sue Essex: Lluniais gytundeb polisi gyda Chyngor Dinas Casnewydd ym mis Medi 2004. Dan y cytundeb hwn, bydd yr awdurdod yn gwella'r ffordd o ddarparu gwasanaethau yn sylweddol erbyn 2007. Mae'r cytundeb yn adlewyrchu ein hamcanion strategol ni ac anghenion lleol Casnewydd.

John Griffiths: Yn dilyn y swyddi a gollwyd yn Corus, sefydlwyd cwmni adfywio trefol, Newport Unlimited, i fwrw ymlaen â datblygu economaidd, trafnidiaeth, seilwaith a materion eraill yn y ddinas. Mae hyn yn ymwneud â phwysau ychwanegol eraill nas rhagwelwyd. A allech fy sicrhau bod y pwysau ychwanegol hynny yn cael eu hystyried ac y byddant yn cael eu hystyried wrth ddarparu'r gefnogaeth angenrheidiol er mwyn i Gyngor Dinas Casnewydd chwarae ei ran i wireddu'r cynlluniau hynny?

Sue Essex: Mae Newport Unlimited, a'r hyn y gallai ei greu yn y ddinas a holl ardal de Gwent, yn gyffrous. Un o'r prif gyfraniadau yr ydym wedi eu gwneud yw'r ffordd ddosbarthu ddeheuol, a ddefnyddiais y diwrnod o'r blaen. Yr oedd hwn yn brosiect menter cyllid preifat mawr, lle y gwariwyd £95 miliwn ar y ffordd newydd. Mae'r modd y mae'r ffordd yn gwasanaethu Casnewydd yn golygu bod ardal newydd o dir yn rhydd i'w ddefnyddio a bod pwysau traffig wedi lleihau yng nghanol y ddinas ac mewn ardaloedd preswyl. Credaf y bydd hyn yn gwneud cyfraniad mawr i adfywiad yr ardal.

William Graham: Yn eich cytundeb â Chyngor Dinas Casnewydd, a wnewch hefyd gynnwys digon o arian i sicrhau y gall gadw'r ysgolion ar agor a rhoi wyneb ar y ffyrdd? Er ein bod yn croesawu'r ffordd newydd, sy'n dollffordd o ryw fath, gobeithiwn y caiff pobl gyffredin Casnewydd weld tarmac a graean yn cael eu rhoi ar ffyrdd. Mae'r ffaith bod cynifer o dyllau yn rhai o ffyrdd prysuraf y ddinas yn peri pryder, ond dywed y cyngor nad oes ganddo ddigon o arian i wneud rhywbeth yn eu cylch, felly mae'n dibynnu arnoch i ddarparu'r cyllid hwnnw.

Sue Essex: Synnaf i'ch clywed yn cyfeirio at

to the southern distributor road as a toll road, and I can only assume, therefore, that you have not used it, even though it is on your patch, as it were. It is a PFI road, not a toll road, and no-one pays a toll to drive on it.

William Graham: You pay the toll.

Sue Essex: I do not have a crossed cheque. It is an ordinary road, not a toll road, and I drove along it recently. It is financed through PFI. Your question related to policy agreements, and I suggest that you look on the web to see the stated areas of agreement. They do not talk about road surfacing to the best my knowledge.

y ffordd ddsbarthu ddeheuol fel tollffordd, ac ni allaf ond tybio felly nad ydych wedi ei defnyddio, er ei bod yn eich milltir sgwâr, fel petai. Ffordd Menter Cyllid Preifat ydyw, nid tollffordd, ac nid oes neb yn talu i yrru ar ei hyd.

William Graham: Yr ydych chi'n talu'r doll.

Sue Essex: Nid oes gennyf siec wedi ei chroesi. Ffordd gyffredin ydyw, nid tollffordd, a gyrrais ar ei hyd yn ddiweddar. Fe'i hariennir drwy Fenter Cyllid Preifat. Yr oedd eich cwestiwn yn ymwneud â chytundebau polisi, ac awgrymaf eich bod yn edrych ar y we i weld y rhannau penodol o'r cytundeb. Nid ydynt yn trafod rhoi wyneb ar ffyrdd hyd y gwn i.

Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus Public Services

Q3 Helen Mary Jones: What recent discussions has the Minister had with local government regarding the provision of public services in Mid and West Wales? OAQ0403(LGP)

Sue Essex: I have already met, or will soon meet, leaders of the local authorities in Mid and West Wales to discuss, among other things, their provision of public services under the 'Making the Connections' agenda.

Helen Mary Jones: Would you be prepared to add to the agenda for that meeting the issue of delayed transfers of care, which continues to cause concern across Wales? Carmarthenshire is second only to Cardiff in terms of the levels of delayed transfers of care, and the number of beds used as a result in Prince Philip Hospital and West Wales General Hospital is putting serious pressure on the health service in the area. Would you be prepared to discuss this with the local government leaders when you meet them, with a view to alleviating that pressure?

Sue Essex: I will be seeing the Swansea and Pembrokeshire leaders on Friday, and I met the Carmarthenshire and Powys leaders recently. I discussed the delayed transfers of

C3 Helen Mary Jones: Pa drafodaethau diweddar y mae'r Gweinidog wedi eu cynnal gyda llywodraeth leol parthed darpariaeth gwasanaethau cyhoeddus yng Nghanolbarth a Gorllewin Cymru? OAQ0403(LGP)

Sue Essex: Yr wyf eisoes wedi cyfarfod, neu byddaf yn cyfarfod yn fuan, ag arweinwyr awdurdodau lleol yn y Canolbarth a'r Gorllewin i drafod, ymysg pethau eraill, ddarpariaeth gwasanaethau cyhoeddus yn unol ag agenda 'Creu'r Cysylltiadau'.

Helen Mary Jones: A fydddech yn barod i ychwanegu oedi wrth drosglwyddo gofal at agenda'r cyfarfod hwnnw, mater sy'n parhau i beri pryder ledled Cymru? Ar ôl Caerdydd, Sir Gaerfyrddin yw'r lle gwaethaf o ran achosion o oedi wrth drosglwyddo gofal, ac mae nifer y gwelyau a ddefnyddir yn Ysbyty'r Tywysog Philip ac Ysbyty Cyffredinol Gorllewin Cymru o ganlyniad yn rhoi pwysau difrifol ar y gwasanaeth iechyd yn yr ardal. A fydddech yn barod i drafod hyn gydag arweinwyr llywodraeth leol pan fyddwch yn cyfarfod â hwy, gyda'r bwriad o leddfu'r pwysau?

Sue Essex: Byddaf yn gweld arweinwyr Abertawe a Sir Benfro ddydd Gwener, a bu imi gyfarfod ag arweinwyr Sir Gaerfyrddin a Phowys yn ddiweddar. Trafodais y ffigurau

care figures with the Carmarthenshire leader, and I know that the authority is trying hard to deal with what is an important issue in terms of public confidence and the efficient running of the health service. The fact that we have announced extra money for social care might help local authorities to crack this problem. It is a difficult problem, and I accept that the figures will vary from time to time.

The Leader of the Welsh Conservatives (Nick Bourne): In your discussions with council leaders, have you had any representations about the issue of small schools? You will be aware that many small schools in Carmarthenshire are facing closure, and there are up to 40 schools in this position in Powys. This contributes to uncertainty in the community, and we have already lost a lot of small schools. Are you sympathetic to reinstating a sum—without giving too much away on the budget position following yesterday's debate—for a small schools fund, so that we can do something specific for the communities facing the closure of their school? This also includes the dimension of the Welsh language.

Sue Essex: I have tried—and I think that I have managed—to keep out of the argument about what is right or wrong for authorities to do in their dealings on school policy and reconfiguration. Local authorities across the political spectrum have to make difficult decisions. My discussions with authorities have been about practicalities, capital funding, and how they might be able to use that funding, or prudential borrowing, to the best effect. I do not think that it is for me to comment on individual policy for Powys or anywhere else.

What I would say, Nick—and I think that it will be useful, in terms of how the reconfiguration is done, if that is what is done, as local authorities are taking different approaches—is that authorities need to look at where their development plan is going locally, so that they can see where settlements will grow or wane over time. On the last point, about small schools, I replied on this to Dai yesterday. I think that you will find that most of the elements of the small

oedi wrth drosglwyddo gofal ag arweinydd Sir Gaerfyrddin, a gwn fod yr awdurdod yn ymdrechu'n galed i ymdrin â rhywbeth sy'n fater pwysig o ran hyder y cyhoedd a rhedeg y gwasanaeth iechyd yn effeithlon. Gallai'r ffaith ein bod wedi cyhoeddi arian ychwanegol ar gyfer gofal cymdeithasol gynorthwyo awdurdodau lleol i ddatrys y broblem hon. Mae'n broblem anodd, a derbynïaf y bydd y ffigurau'n amrywio o bryd i'w gilydd.

Arweinydd Ceidwadwyr Cymru (Nick Bourne): Yn eich trafodaethau ag arweinwyr y cynghorau, a gawsoch unrhyw sylwadau am ysgolion bach? Byddwch yn ymwybodol y bydd nifer o ysgolion bach yn Sir Gaerfyrddin yn cau, ac mae hyd at 40 o ysgolion yn y sefyllfa hon ym Mhowys. Mae hyn yn cyfrannu at ansicrwydd yn y gymuned, ac yr ydym wedi colli llawer o ysgolion bach eisoes. A ydych yn cydymdeimlo â'r syniad o adfer swm—heb ddweud gormod am sefyllfa'r gyllideb ar ôl y ddadl ddoe—ar gyfer cronfa ysgolion bach, fel y gallwn wneud rhywbeth penodol er lles y cymunedau lle bydd eu hysgolion yn cau? Mae hyn hefyd yn cynnwys dimensiwn yr iaith Gymraeg.

Sue Essex: Yr wyf wedi ceisio—a chredaf imi lwyddo—i gadw allan o'r ffræ ynghylch yr hyn y dylai awdurdodau ei wneud neu beidio o ran polisi ysgolion ac ailgyflunio. Rhaid i awdurdodau lleol ar draws y sbectrwm gwleidyddol wneud penderfyniadau anodd. Bu fy nhrafodaethau gydag awdurdodau yn ymwneud ag agweddau ymarferol, ariannu cyfalaf, a'r ffordd o ddefnyddio'r cyllid hwnnw, neu fenthyca darbodus. Nid wyf yn credu mai fy lle i yw rhoi fy marn ar bolisi unigol i Bowys neu unrhyw le arall.

Yr hyn a ddywedwn, Nick—a chredaf y bydd yn ddefnyddiol, o ran y ffordd y gweithredir y broses ailgyflunio, os mai dyma'r hyn a gaiff ei wneud, gan fod awdurdodau lleol yn cymryd ymagweddau gwahanol—yw bod angen i awdurdodau edrych ar sut y mae eu cynllun datblygu yn cael ei weithredu yn lleol, er mwyn iddynt allu gweld ble y bydd aneddiadau'n tyfu neu'n lleihau dros amser. Ar y pwynt olaf, ynglŷn ag ysgolion bach, rhoddais ateb ar hyn i Dai ddoe. Credaf y

schools fund are within the budget, but have been dispersed under different headings. However, I will come back to you to explain and give you some information on that in terms of the development of the budget proposals.

Nick Bourne: I am grateful for that response; I can understand your not wanting to comment on individual schools, or, indeed, on individual authorities. However, I am talking about setting a framework. At the moment, as far as local authorities are concerned, there is not a pot that they can apply to, having satisfied particular parameters, and draw down cash to address what is a real problem, particularly in rural communities; it affects the community, and schools are more likely to be particularly small in rural areas than in urban ones. So, I understand that you cannot talk about specific schools or authorities, but I am asking about setting a framework within which we could provide some assistance in order to recognise the particular problem faced by many rural communities. That was one of the reasons behind the amendment to the draft budget yesterday.

Sue Essex: I will give you a bit more of an answer; we will obviously see how this develops. The allocation of revenue support grant, of course, does take sparsity into account. Certainly, that is included in the education formula. There is this other pot for small schools, but, from my discussions with local authorities, and Jane has also discussed this with local authorities, I know that it is about trying to be supportive of what are often difficult decisions. You have to bear in mind—and I certainly factor this in—the role of schools in the community, and we are keen to develop community-based schools. That is an interesting factor that local authorities could include in their rationalisation or reconfiguration programmes. However, ultimately, it is for the authority to look at the framework itself. It is not for me to tell an authority how it should cope with what are the particular problems of its demography, as I think that we all recognise.

gwelwch fod y rhan fwyaf o elfennau'r gronfa ysgolion bach o fewn y gyllideb, ond maent wedi'u rhoi o dan benawdau gwahanol. Fodd bynnag, dof yn ôl atoch i roi esboniad a rhywfaint o wybodaeth i chi am y broses o ddatblygu cynigion y gyllideb.

Nick Bourne: Yr wyf yn ddiolchgar am yr ymateb hwnnw; gallaf ddeall pam nad ydych am roi sylwadau ar ysgolion unigol, nac, ychwaith, ar awdurdodau unigol. Fodd bynnag, yr wyf yn sôn am sefydlu fframwaith. Ar hyn o bryd, o ran awdurdodau lleol, nid oes cronfa ar gael iddynt wneud cais amdani, ar ôl bodloni paramedrau penodol, a defnyddio arian ohoni i fynd i'r afael â'r hyn sy'n broblem wirioneddol, yn enwedig mewn cymunedau gwledig; mae'n effeithio ar y gymuned, ac mae ysgolion yn fwy tebygol o fod yn llai o ran maint mewn ardaloedd gwledig o gymharu ag ardaloedd trefol. Felly, deallaf na allwch sôn am ysgolion neu awdurdodau penodol, ond holaf ynglŷn â sefydlu fframwaith i'n galluogi i ddarparu rhywfaint o gymorth er mwyn cydnabod y broblem benodol a wynebier gan lawer o gymunedau gwledig. Dyna un o'r rhesymau dros y gwelliant i'r gyllideb ddrafft ddoe.

Sue Essex: Rhoddaf ateb helaethach ichi; yn amlwg byddwn yn gweld sut y bydd hyn yn datblygu. Wrth gwrs, mae'r broses o ddyrannu'r grant cynnal refeniw yn ystyried teneurwydd y boblogaeth. Yn sicr, mae hynny wedi'i gynnwys yn y fformiwla addysg. Mae cronfa arall ar gyfer ysgolion bach, ond, yn sgîl fy nhrafodaethau gydag awdurdodau lleol, ac mae Jane hefyd wedi trafod hyn gydag awdurdodau lleol, gwn ei fod yn ymwneud â cheisio cefnogi'r hyn sydd yn aml yn benderfyniadau anodd. Rhaid ichi gofio—ac yr wyf yn sicr yn ystyried hynny—rôl ysgolion yn y gymuned, ac yr ydym yn awyddus i ddatblygu ysgolion cymunedol. Mae hwnnw'n ffactor diddorol y gallai awdurdodau lleol ei gynnwys yn eu rhaglenni rhesymoli neu ailgyflunio. Fodd bynnag, yn y pen draw, cyfrifoldeb yr awdurdod yw edrych ar y fframwaith ei hun. Nid fy lle i yw dweud wrth awdurdod sut y dylai ymdopi â'r problemau penodol sy'n ymwneud â'i ddemograffeg, a chredaf ein bod oll yn cydnabod hynny.

Nick Bourne: I understand that. I do not want to talk about specific schools, and will certainly not name any, but if a proposal for a school closure comes forward, it comes to the Minister, and I have seen many examples of an absolutely watertight case for community involvement being established, and yet the closure has been upheld. There may be other reasons, but there are problems out there, and the matter does not ultimately rest with the local authority. As you know, any closure has to come before the Assembly Minister.

Sue Essex: I understand the pain of school closures; I think that we all do. I had one in my own constituency, though it is not a rural constituency, and it was difficult. I know that Jane takes her decisions absolutely properly, based on the criteria, and I am sure that she would be prepared to share those criteria with you.

Kirsty Williams: The Transport Policy and Administration Division is considering revisions to the local transport services grant, with a view to top-slicing that grant and keeping 10 per cent within the National Assembly for Wales for local authorities to make bids to. That represents two local bus services, which Powys County Council currently supports, being lost. If you want to promote innovation, surely that should be funded by new money, or criteria should be added to the existing grant system to encourage local authorities to innovate, rather than it being a case of robbing certain local authorities to pay others.

Sue Essex: That question should really be directed to Andrew Davies as the Minister responsible for transport. He is in charge of that budget, and I am sure that questions could be asked in committee about how that is being handled. I know that there is logic to it in terms of trying to encourage innovation, and that is the approach that Andrew has decided to take.

Nick Bourne: Deallaf hynny. Nid wyf am siarad am ysgolion penodol, ac yn sicr nid wyf am enwi rhai, ond os cyflwynir cynnig i gau ysgol, caiff ei gyflwyno i'r Gweinidog, ac yr wyf wedi gweld sawl enghraifft o achos cwbl ddiwrthbrawf dros ymgysylltu â'r gymuned, ac eto mae'r penderfyniad i gau'r ysgol wedi'i gadarnhau. Efallai bod rhesymau eraill, ond mae problemau yn bodoli, ac nid yr awdurdod lleol sy'n gwbl gyfrifol am eu datrys. Fel y gwyddoch, rhaid i unrhyw gynnig i gau ysgol gael ei gyflwyno i Weinidog y Cynulliad.

Sue Essex: Deallaf y boen yn sgîl cau ysgolion; credaf fod pob un ohonom yn deall hynny. Yr oedd un achlysur o gau ysgol yn fy etholaeth i, er nad yw'n etholaeth wledig, ac yr oedd hynny'n anodd. Gwn fod Jane yn gwneud ei phenderfyniadau yn y ffordd gywir, yn seiliedig ar y meini prawf, ac yr wyf yn siŵr y byddai'n barod i rannu'r meini prawf hynny gyda chi.

Kirsty Williams: Mae'r Is-adran Polisi a Gweinyddu Trafnidiaeth yn ystyried diwygio'r grant gwasanaethau trafndiaeth lleol, gyda'r bwriad o frigidorri'r grant hwnnw a chadw 10 y cant o fewn Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru i awdurdodau lleol wneud ceisiadau ar ei gyfer. Mae hynny'n gyfystyr â cholli dau wasanaeth bws lleol, a gynhelir gan Gyngor Sir Powys ar hyn o bryd. Os ydych yn awyddus i hyrwyddo arloesedd, oni ddylid gwneud hynny gydag arian newydd, neu drwy ychwanegu meini prawf at y system grant bresennol i annog awdurdodau lleol i arloesi, yn hytrach na dwyn arian oddi wrth rai awdurdodau lleol i dalu eraill.

Sue Essex: Mewn gwirionedd, dylai'r cwestiwn hwnnw gael ei gyfeirio at Andrew Davies fel y Gweinidog sy'n gyfrifol am drafndiaeth. Ef sy'n gyfrifol am y gyllideb honno, ac yr wyf yn siŵr y gellid gofyn cwestiynau yn y pwyllgor ynglŷn â'r ffordd yr ymdrinnir â hynny. Gwn fod rhesymeg y tu ôl i hyn o ran ceisio annog arloesedd, a dyna'r ymagwedd y mae Andrew wedi penderfynu ei chymryd.

Cynlluniau Datblygu Unedol Unitary Development Plans

Q4 Janet Davies: Will the Minister make a statement on the costs to local government of preparation of unitary development plans? OAQ0381(LGP)

Sue Essex: The cost of preparing UDPs is up to individual local planning authorities, although they are obliged to pay for an inquiry. Unadopted UDPs remain important; their robustness will vary with the stage reached and whether local planning authorities have resolved to use them for development control purposes.

Janet Davies: I had understood, Minister, that virtually none of the UDPs have been adopted, except for perhaps one or two, and that they will be superseded by local development plans. Can you give an indication of the costs, including the public inquiry costs that you have mentioned, to local government, of these new plans?

2.20 p.m.

Sue Essex: Again, these are questions for Carwyn Jones. However, from my knowledge, four UDPs have been adopted, not one. The Assembly planning department has approached this by reaching an agreement with every local authority on whether they want to progress their UDP to the end and get that approved, or stop and move on to local development plans. That is the process that has been agreed.

Whether in relation to UDPs or the local development plans, there has always been an understanding that the inquiry costs will be met by the local authority. However, a specific planning grant goes to each local authority. That was started when I was the Minister responsible for planning and I know that it has been followed through. A new grant goes to every local authority to support planning services.

Glyn Davies: You will know that the problem with developing UDPs is that they are so complex. The process has been so slow

C4 Janet Davies: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am gostau paratoi cynlluniau datblygu unedol i lywodraeth leol? OAQ0381(LGP)

Sue Essex: Awdurdodau cynllunio lleol unigol sy'n penderfynu ar y gost o baratoi CDUau, er ei bod yn ofynnol iddynt dalu am ymchwiliad. Mae CDUau nas mabwysiadwyd yn parhau i fod yn bwysig; bydd eu cadernid yn amrywio yn ôl y cam a gyraeddwyd a pha un a yw awdurdodau cynllunio lleol wedi penderfynu eu defnyddio at ddibenion rheoli datblygiadau.

Janet Davies: Yr oeddwn ar ddeall, Weinidog, nad oes bron unrhyw un o'r CDUau wedi'u mabwysiadu, ac eithrio un neu ddau efallai, ac y cânt eu disodli gan gynlluniau datblygu lleol. A allwch roi syniad o gostau'r cynlluniau newydd hyn, gan gynnwys costau'r ymchwiliad cyhoeddus y bu ichi sôn amdano, i lywodraeth leol?

Sue Essex: Unwaith eto, cwestiynau ar gyfer Carwyn Jones yw'r rhain. Fodd bynnag, o'r hyn a ddeallaf, mabwysiadwyd pedwar CDU, nid un. Mae adran gynllunio'r Cynulliad wedi ymdrin â hyn drwy ddod i gytundeb gyda phob awdurdod lleol ynghylch a ydynt yn dymuno parhau â'u CDU tan ddiwedd y broses a chael cymeradwyaeth, neu roi'r gorau iddi a symud ymlaen i gynlluniau datblygu lleol. Dyna'r broses y cytunwyd arni.

Pa un a gyfeirir at CDUau neu'r cynlluniau datblygu lleol, y ddealltwriaeth o'r cychwyn oedd mai'r awdurdod lleol fydd yn talu costau'r ymchwiliad. Fodd bynnag, rhoddir grant cynllunio penodol i bob awdurdod lleol. Dechreuwyd hynny pan oeddwn yn Weinidog yn gyfrifol am gynllunio a gwn fod hynny wedi'i weithredu. Rhoddir grant newydd i bob awdurdod lleol i gefnogi gwasanaethau cynllunio.

Glyn Davies: Fel y gwyddoch, y broblem o ran datblygu CDUau yw eu bod mor gymhleth. Bu'n broses mor araf ac mae wedi

that they have become extremely expensive for local government simply because of the commitment of officers' time. In your discussions with local government and the Minister responsible for the LDPs, are you emphasising the need for simplicity and flexibility so that they can be developed without too much of officers' time, simply to limit the burden on council tax?

Sue Essex: There is not much of a burden on council tax, the burden shows in a lack of up-to-date development plans, which hinders a local authority in terms of getting its business support and other matters up and running. What is disappointing about this is that the progress on UDPs has been so slow. They were supposed to be in place by 2000. The great thing about the new planning frameworks—and again I was involved in drawing up this legislation, which started from here and is Welsh-grown—is that they simplify the way forward in the planning process. I used to describe the UDPs as 'everything and the kitchen sink'. That is why they took so long to develop. The new LDPs allow for a much more streamlined process. However, it will always take some time because planning, as you know, is controversial and you must ensure that everyone has a chance to present their views and that everything is tested through an inquiry.

costio'n ddrud iawn i lywodraeth leol a hynny oherwydd ymrwymiad amser swyddogion. Yn eich trafodaethau gyda llywodraeth leol a'r Gweinidog sy'n gyfrifol am y CDLlau, a ydych yn pwysleisio'r angen am symlrwydd a hyblygrwydd fel y gellir eu datblygu heb gymryd gormod o amser swyddogion, er mwyn cyfyngu'r baich ar dreth gyngor?

Sue Essex: Nid oes llawer o faich ar y dreth gyngor, mae'r baich yn cael ei weld yn sgîl cynlluniau datblygu hen ffasiwn, sy'n rhwystro awdurdod lleol rhag gweithredu ei gymorth busnes a materion eraill. Yr hyn sy'n siomedig ynglŷn â hyn yw bod y cynnydd ar y CDUau wedi bod mor araf. Yr oedd disgwyl iddynt fod ar waith erbyn 2000. Y peth da ynglŷn â'r fframweithiau cynllunio newydd—ac unwaith eto, yr oeddwn yn gysylltiedig â'r broses o lunio'r ddeddfwriaeth hon, a ddechreuodd yma ac sydd wedi'i datblygu yng Nghymru—yw eu bod yn symleiddio'r ffordd ymlaen o ran y broses gynllunio. Yn y gorffennol, yr wyf wedi disgrifio CDUau fel 'popeth dan haul a mwy'. Dyna pam maent wedi cymryd cyhyd i'w datblygu. Mae'r CDLlau newydd yn caniatáu proses llawer iawn symlach. Fodd bynnag, bydd bob amser yn cymryd amser oherwydd mae cynllunio, fel y gwyddoch, yn faes dadleuol a rhaid ichi sicrhau bod pawb yn cael y cyfle i gyflwyno eu safbwyntiau a bod popeth yn cael ei brofi drwy ymchwiliad.

Helpu Llywodraeth Leol i fod yn fwy Agored ac Atebol Helping Local Government to be More Open and Accountable

Q5 Mick Bates: How is the Welsh Assembly Government helping local government to be more open and accountable? OAQ0363(LGP)

Sue Essex: I support the principle of open and accountable government. Statutory guidance sets out best practice for the operation of executive and alternative arrangements for local government while regulations on access to information help to make clear what policies, strategies and decisions are being considered, when and by whom.

Mick Bates: Thank you for that reply. I am sure that you, like others here who have

C5 Mick Bates: Sut y mae Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru yn helpu llywodraeth leol i fod yn fwy agored ac atebol? OAQ0363(LGP)

Sue Essex: Cefnogaf yr egwyddor o lywodraeth agored ac atebol. Mae canllawiau statudol yn nodi arfer gorau ar gyfer gweithredu trefniadau gweithredol ac amgen ar gyfer llywodraeth leol tra bod rheoliadau ar fynediad i wybodaeth yn helpu i egluro pa bolisiâu, strategaethau a phenderfyniadau sy'n cael eu hystyried, pryd a chan bwy.

Mick Bates: Diolch ichi am yr ateb hwnnw. Yr wyf yn siŵr eich bod chi, fel eraill yma

served as county councillors, realise the importance of local government scrutiny. However, many local authorities' scrutiny committees—most notably Labour-led local authority scrutiny committees—are chaired by councillors from the ruling party. Minister, you said that you would consider a change in this legislation. Can you tell us today what progress you have made on this legislation and when this change will be introduced?

Sue Essex: I am not sure that it is fair to say that what sounded like 'all Lieder'—I think that that is a German song—or all Labour councils are responsible for that. I will check that, but there has been considerable improvement since the committee produced its report some time ago. I supported the recommendations, as you know. I have been encouraging, and will continue to encourage, local authorities in this respect and I have seen some progress. The guidance will be out soon and we will take it from there. We are seeing substantial changes in attitude and I repeat what I have said before—all of the recommendations in that Local Government and Public Services Committee report were good and we need to ensure that all, and not just one, of the report's recommendations are followed up.

Brynle Williams: On openness and accountability, I am aware of a council in north Wales that recently issued a flood alleviation contract worth £1.5 million. That is going back three years. That is now running at a cost of more than £4 million, I believe, yet no-one will tell us when the works will be completed. This is just one example of a continuing battle against local government and its lack of honesty and accountability. Do you feel that we have a right to know what local authorities do with public money? Why is this not happening?

Sue Essex: I do not know the particular scheme, but from my experience of flood alleviation schemes, the contract price goes up over time because you are often dealing

sydd wedi gwasanaethu fel cynghorwyr sir, yn sylweddoli pwysigrwydd pwyllgorau craffu llywodraeth leol. Fodd bynnag, caiff llawer o bwyllgorau craffu awdurdodau lleol—pwyllgorau craffu awdurdodau lleol o dan arweiniad Llafur yn fwyaf arbennig—eu cadeirio gan gynghorwyr y blaid sydd mewn grym. Weinidog, bu ichi ddweud y byddech yn ystyried newid yn y ddeddfwriaeth hon. A allwch ddweud wrthym heddiw pa gynnydd a wnaed gennych ar y ddeddfwriaeth hon a phryd y caiff y newid hwn ei gyflwyno?

Sue Essex: Nid wyf yn siŵr a yw'n deg dweud bod yr hyn a oedd yn swnio fel 'all Lieder'—credaf mai cân Almaeneg yw honno—neu bob cyngor Llafur yn gyfrifol am hynny. Byddaf yn cadarnhau hynny, ond cafwyd gwelliant sylweddol ers i'r pwyllgor gynhyrchu ei adroddiad beth amser yn ôl. Bu imi gefnogi'r argymhellion, fel y gwyddoch. Yr wyf wedi bod yn annog awdurdodau lleol yn hyn o beth, a byddaf yn parhau i'w hannog, ac yr wyf wedi gweld rhywfaint o gynnydd. Cyhoeddir y canllawiau yn fuan a byddwn yn symud ymlaen o'r fan honno. Yr ydym yn gweld newidiadau sylweddol mewn agwedd ac ailadroddaf yr hyn yr wyf wedi'i ddweud o'r blaen—yr oedd pob un o argymhellion adroddiad y Pwyllgor Llywodraeth Leol a Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus yn rhai da ac mae angen inni sicrhau bod pob un, nid dim ond un, o argymhellion yr adroddiad yn cael ei weithredu.

Brynle Williams: O ran bod yn agored ac yn atebol, gwn am gyngor yn y Gogledd a roddodd gontract lleddfu llifogydd gwerth £1.5 miliwn yn ddiweddar. Yr oedd hynny dair blynedd yn ôl. Mae'r contract bellach yn rhedeg ar gost o fwy na £4 miliwn, fe gredaf, ond nid oes unrhyw un yn fodlon dweud wrthym pryd y caiff y gwaith ei gwblhau. Dim ond un enghraifft yw hon o frwydr barhaus yn erbyn llywodraeth leol a'i diffyg gonestrwydd ac atebolrwydd. A gredwch fod gennym hawl i wybod beth mae awdurdodau lleol yn ei wneud gydag arian cyhoeddus? Pam nad yw hyn yn digwydd?

Sue Essex: Nid wyf yn ymwybodol o'r cynllun penodol, ond o'm profiad o gynlluniau lleddfu llifogydd, mae pris y contract yn cynyddu dros amser oherwydd yr

with complicated systems, and, as you start to do the work, the variation orders flood in. I suspect that that is what has happened in this case. I do not think that you can make the jump, Brynle, from this one particular contact to lambasting local authorities for not being open and so on. I can try to find out some answers, but it may well be that this is now part of a commercial contract and the authority cannot be open about that. I am sure that when the whole scheme is finished, the authority will be able to give chapter and verse as to where the money has gone. Alternatively, you can write to Carwyn Jones as the Minister responsible; I am sure that he will be able to give more information than I can on the particular scheme.

ydych yn aml yn delio â systemau cymhleth, ac, wrth ichi ddechrau ymgymryd â'r gwaith, mae'r gorchmynion amrywio yn llifo i mewn. Amheuaif mai dyma sydd wedi digwydd yn yr achos hwn. Ni chredaf y gallwch wneud y naid, Brynle, o'r contract penodol hwn i lambastio awdurdodau lleol am beidio â bod yn agored ac ati. Gallaf geisio dod o hyd i rai atebion, ond mae'n bosibl bod hwn bellach yn rhan o gontract masnachol ac ni all yr awdurdod fod yn agored ynglŷn â hynny. Yr wyf yn siŵr y bydd yr awdurdod yn gallu rhoi manylion llawn ynglŷn â sut y gwariwyd yr arian pan fydd y cynllun cyfan wedi'i gwblhau. Fel arall, gallwch ysgrifennu at Carwyn Jones, y Gweinidog sy'n gyfrifol; yr wyf yn siŵr y gall roi mwy o wybodaeth nag y gallaf ar y cynllun penodol.

Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus yng Nghaerfyrddin Public Services in Carmarthen

C6 Rhodri Glyn Thomas: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am ddarpariaeth gwasanaethau cyhoeddus yng Nghaerfyrddin? OAQ0402(LGP)

Q6 Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Will the Minister make a statement on the provision of public services in Carmarthen? OAQ0402(LGP)

Sue Essex: We have set out our vision for high-quality, responsive public services in 'Making the Connections'. This has been followed by 'Delivering the Connections', which was published in June. We have been supporting this vision in Carmarthenshire, for example, by an 18.7 per cent increase in Welsh Assembly Government central support over the last three years.

Sue Essex: Yr ydym wedi nodi ein gweledigaeth ar gyfer gwasanaethau cyhoeddus ymatebol o ansawdd uchel yn 'Creu'r Cysylltiadau' cyn cyhoeddi 'Cyflawni'r Cysylltiadau' ym mis Mehefin. Yr ydym wedi bod yn cefnogi'r weledigaeth hon yn Sir Gaerfyrddin, er enghraifft, drwy gynydd o 18.7 y cant mewn cymorth canolog gan Lywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru dros y tair blynedd diwethaf.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Hoffwn gyfeirio yn benodol at yr heddlu a'r gwasanaeth eithriadol o bwysig maent yn cyflawni. Yr ydych yn ymwybodol fod y rhan fwyaf o ariannu'r heddlu yn dod drwy'r ad-dreth, sydd wedi cynyddu yn aruthrol dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf. A dderbyniwch fod Heddlu Dyfed Powys yn cyflawni ei wasanaeth i lefel arbennig o uchel a bod consŷrn yn Sir Caerfyrddin am yr holl sôn sydd wedi bod am ad-drefnu'r heddlu? A dderbyniwch hefyd mai'r ffordd briodol i wneud hynny yw i ddatganoli'r penderfyniad i'r Cynulliad, a hefyd datganoli cyllid digonol i sicrhau bod modd gwneud hynny?

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: I would like to refer specifically to the police and the exceptionally important service that they provide. You are aware that the majority of funding for the police comes from the precept, which has increased greatly over the last few years. Do you accept that Dyfed Powys Police provides an exceptional level of service and that there is concern in Carmarthenshire regarding recent talk of reorganising the police service? Do you accept that the appropriate way to do that would be to devolve the decision to the Assembly, and to devolve sufficient funding to ensure that this can be done?

Sue Essex: As you know, Edwina Hart is

Sue Essex: Fel y gwyddoch, Edwina Hart

responsible for discussions on the police, and recently made a statement to Members on this subject. I agree with you on Dyfed Powys Police. I have no reason to think that it is anything other than efficient; that certainly appears to be the case in all of my dealings with it. The funding of the police service is very complex. Last year, I had discussions with the chief constables about the precept levels, because it was a matter of great concern in some police authorities. My words on council tax equally apply to police precepts.

Lisa Francis: Impacting further on the delayed transfers of care, which were mentioned earlier by Helen Mary Jones, are the problems encountered by people waiting to see a consultant. In Carmarthenshire, 3,326 people have been waiting over six months to see a consultant. How does the Labour Government intend to use its resources to tackle that particular disparity? If there are resources, in which particular budget line can I find them?

Sue Essex: I do not understand the connection that you are making between delayed transfers of care and people waiting to see consultants. You are talking about two different things in the health system; delayed transfers of care are largely the result of delays in discharging people, particularly elderly people or those who are mentally infirm, into the community. There is no link between the two things to the best of my knowledge. Again, I am not the person to answer questions on health. Brian has heard what you said, and might like to follow that up.

sy'n gyfrifol am drafodaethau ynglŷn â'r heddlu, a bu iddi wneud datganiad i Aelodau ar y pwnc hwn yn ddiweddar. Cytunaf â chi ynglŷn â Heddlu Dyfed Powys. Nid oes gennyf unrhyw reswm dros gredu nad yw'n effeithlon; ymddengys fod hynny'n wir o ran fy musnes ag ef. Mae'r broses o ariannu'r gwasanaeth heddlu yn gymhleth iawn. Y llynedd, cefais drafodaethau gyda'r prif gwnstabiliaid ynglŷn â lefelau ad-dreth, oherwydd yr oedd hynny'n fater a oedd yn peri pryder mawr mewn rhai awdurdodau heddlu. Mae'r hyn a ddywedais am dreth gyngor yr un mor berthnasol i ad-dreth yr heddlu.

Lisa Francis: Yr hyn sy'n cael effaith bellach ar yr achosion o oedi wrth drosglwyddo gofal, y soniwyd amdanynt yn gynharach gan Helen Mary Jones, yw'r problemau a wynebir gan bobl sy'n aros i weld meddyg ymgynghorol. Yn sir Gaerfyrddin, mae 3,326 o bobl wedi bod yn aros dros chwe mis i weld meddyg ymgynghorol. Sut y mae'r Llywodraeth Lafur yn bwriadu defnyddio ei hadnoddau i fynd i'r afael â'r gwahaniaeth arbennig hwnnw? Os oes adnoddau ar gael, ym mha gyllideb benodol y deuir o hyd iddynt?

Sue Essex: Nid wyf yn deall y cysylltiad yr ydych yn ei wneud rhwng oedi wrth drosglwyddo gofal a phobl sy'n aros i weld meddygon ymgynghorol. Yr ydych yn sôn am ddau beth gwahanol yn y system iechyd; mae oedi wrth drosglwyddo gofal yn deillio'n bennaf o ganlyniad i oedi wrth ryddhau pobl, yn arbennig yr henoed neu'r rhai â salwch meddwl, i'r gymuned. Nid oes unrhyw gysylltiad rhwng y ddau beth hyd y gwn i. Unwaith eto, nid fi yw'r person i ateb cwestiynau ar iechyd. Mae Brian wedi clywed yr hyn a ddywedasoeh, ac efallai yr hoffai weithredu ar hynny.

Cymorth i Lywodraeth Leol Support for Local Government

Q7 Lynne Neagle: Will the Minister make a statement on the level of Assembly Government support for local government since the establishment of the National Assembly? OAQ0357(LGP)

C7 Lynne Neagle: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am y cymorth y mae Llywodraeth y Cynulliad wedi ei roi i lywodraeth leol ers sefydlu'r Cynulliad Cenedlaethol? OAQ0357(LGP)

Sue Essex: Funding provided by the

Sue Essex: Mae arian a ddarparwyd gan

Assembly Government for local government, including hypothecated and unhypothecated grants, has increased by 53 per cent since the establishment of the Assembly. Publication of the provisional settlement in due course will provide details of the support being provided in the next financial year.

Lynne Neagle: Minister, you will be aware of my long-standing concern that the Assembly Government's funding formula for local government includes a weighting for sparsity that does not appear to be evidence based, and which diverts funding away from Valleys constituencies such as my own. I am aware from previous answers on this issue that you have instigated research on this matter. Could you give an update on the research and on any possible changes that might be introduced to the local government formula that might redress this balance?

2.30 p.m.

Sue Essex: This was discussed at length at the last meeting of the delightfully titled CFF, or consultative forum on finance. Following the concerns raised by you and others, we have had a fairly lengthy piece of work done by two institutions. It shows that there are still question marks over the methodology in terms of its impact. I am not satisfied at present, in my position as Minister—and I do not think that other Members who have sat on the group involved with this feel satisfied either—that it is, with hand on heart, the right methodology. If we move to changes, we must all be certain that it is based on true, solid facts.

Therefore, the agreement at the consultative forum on finance was that we need to do more work so that we can all feel comfortable with the work already done, and share that work with a wide group of people, including Assembly Members, so that when we are ready to make a change—because these changes have considerable financial impacts on local authorities—everyone involved can feel confident that we have the best information possible. The agreement was that we should not make any changes until next year, when we will all have seen that

Lywodraeth y Cynulliad ar gyfer llywodraeth leol, gan gynnwys grantiau wedi'u neilltuo a grantiau heb eu neilltuo, wedi cynyddu 53 y cant ers sefydlu'r Cynulliad. Cyhoeddir y setliad dros dro maes o law a bydd yn darparu manylion y cymorth a ddarperir yn ystod y flwyddyn ariannol nesaf.

Lynne Neagle: Weinidog, byddwch yn ymwybodol o'r pryder sydd wedi bod gennyf ers tro bod fformiwla ariannu Llywodraeth y Cynulliad ar gyfer llywodraeth leol yn cynnwys pwysoliad ar gyfer teneurwydd y boblogaeth nad yw'n ymddangos fel pe bai'n seiliedig ar dystiolaeth, ac sy'n dargyfeirio arian o etholaethau yn y Cymoedd, fel fy etholaeth i. Yr wyf yn ymwybodol yn sgîl atebion blaenorol a roddwyd ar y mater hwn eich bod wedi annog ymchwil ar y mater hwn. A allech roi'r wybodaeth ddiweddaraf ar yr ymchwil ac ar unrhyw newidiadau posibl y gellid eu cyflwyno i fformiwla'r llywodraeth leol a allai unioni'r balans hwn?

Sue Essex: Trafodwyd hyn yn faith yng nghyfarfod diwethaf yr hyn a elwir yn CFF, neu fforwm ymgynghorol ar gyllid. Yn dilyn y pryderon a godwyd gennych chi ac eraill, cawsom ddarn eithaf hir o waith a wnaed gan ddau sefydliad. Dengys fod marciau cwestiwn o hyd ynghylch y fethodoleg o ran ei heffaith. Ar hyn o bryd, nid wyf yn fodlon, yn fy safle fel Gweinidog—ac ni chredaf fod Aelodau eraill sydd wedi bod yn rhan o'r grŵp sy'n ymwneud â hyn yn fodlon ychwaith—mai hon, â'm llaw ar fy nghalon, yw'r fethodoleg gywir. Os byddwn yn symud at newidiadau, rhaid inni oll fod yn sicr ei fod yn seiliedig ar ffeithiau gwir a chadarn

Felly, y cytundeb yn y fforwm ymgynghorol ar gyllid oedd bod angen inni wneud mwy o waith er mwyn inni gyd allu teimlo'n gyfforddus â'r gwaith a wnaed eisoes, a rhannu'r gwaith hwnnw gyda grŵp eang o bobl, yn cynnwys Aelodau Cynulliad, ac felly pan fyddwn yn barod i wneud newid—oherwydd mae'r newidiadau hyn yn cael effeithiau ariannol sylweddol ar awdurdodau lleol—gall pawb sy'n ymwneud â hyn deimlo'n hyderus bod gennym y wybodaeth orau bosibl. Y cytundeb oedd na ddylem wneud unrhyw newidiadau tan y flwyddyn

methodology and feel happy that it is sound and true.

Mick Bates: Do you agree that the indices of multiple deprivation provide robust evidence under five domains, which include the environment, education and employment? They contain evidence that shows quite clearly that the six criteria on access show that rural Wales is suffering and needs support for access to all services, from schools to health and dentists, and so forth. This means that the research is already there. Do you also agree that instead of having new research, all you need to do is look at the indices of multiple deprivation to see that the evidence is there?

Sue Essex: I do not agree. What we are talking about doing in local government is a completely different concept, that is, to look critically at the cost of services. I am not knocking the index of multiple deprivation, but you cannot use that as a substitute for the work taking place in looking at the settlement indices. I thought that it was an interesting piece of work that reflected not just rural areas but areas right across Wales. I was pleased to see that, for once, environmental and other considerations were taken into that. I think that that is a major move forward.

Leanne Wood: Regarding Gordon Brown's civil service cull, which you call 'Making the Connections' in Wales, how many local authority jobs will be lost in Wales, and will you tell us what the breakdown of the savings will be and how you intend to spend the savings?

Sue Essex: I do not think that there is logic to what you said. What Gordon Brown has done in England does not match up with what we are doing under 'Making the Connections'. There is no calculation on local government or any other jobs lost. As you will know—but, in fairness, you have been away for a while—we are looking at reinvesting in front-line services. Therefore, it is about changing the nature of many jobs, with which I agree, and working with

nesaf, pan fyddwn oll wedi gweld y fethodoleg honno ac yn fodlon ei bod yn gadarn ac yn gywir.

Mick Bates: A gytunwch fod mynegeion amddifadedd lluosog yn rhoi tystiolaeth gadarn o dan bum maes, sy'n cynnwys yr amgylchedd, addysg a chyflogaeth? Maent yn cynnwys tystiolaeth sy'n dangos yn glir bod y chwe maen prawf ar fynediad yn dangos bod Cymru wledig yn dioddef a bod angen cymorth arni ar gyfer mynediad i bob gwasanaeth, o ysgolion i iechyd a deintyddion, ac ati. Golyga hyn fod yr ymchwil yno eisoes. A gytunwch hefyd yn lle cael ymchwil newydd, yr unig beth sydd angen i chi ei wneud yw edrych ar fynegeion amddifadedd lluosog i weld bod y dystiolaeth yno?

Sue Essex: Ni chytunaf. Mae'r hyn yr ydym yn sôn am ei wneud o fewn llywodraeth leol yn gysyniad hollol wahanol, hynny yw, edrych yn feirniadol ar gost gwasanaethau. Nid wyf yn beirniadu mynegai amddifadedd lluosog, ond ni allwch ddefnyddio hynny yn lle'r gwaith sy'n cael ei wneud ar ystyried mynegeion y setliad. Credais ei fod yn ddarn diddorol o waith a adlewyrchodd nid dim ond ardaloedd gwledig ond ardaloedd ledled Cymru. Yr oeddwn yn falch o weld, am unwaith, yr amgylchedd yn cael ei ystyried ac ystyriaethau eraill. Credaf fod hwn yn gam sylweddol ymlaen.

Leanne Wood: O ran y cwtogi yn y gwasanaeth sifil a gyhoeddwyd gan Gordon Brown, yr ydych yn ei alw'n 'Creu'r Cysylltiadau' yng Nghymru, faint o swyddi awdurdod lleol a gollir yng Nghymru, ac a ddywedwch wrthym beth fydd dadansoddiad yr arbedion a sut y bwriadwch wario'r arbedion?

Sue Essex: Ni chredaf fod rhesymeg yn yr hyn a ddywedasoch. Nid yw'r hyn a wnaeth Gordon Brown yn Lloegr yn cyfateb i'r hyn yr ydym yn ei wneud o dan 'Creu'r Cysylltiadau'. Nid oes cyfrifiad o ran llywodraeth leol nac unrhyw swyddi eraill a gollir. Fel y gwyddoch—ond, a bod yn deg, yr ydych wedi bod i ffwrdd am gyfnod—yr ydym yn edrych ar ail-fuddsoddi mewn gwasanaethau rheng flaen. Felly, mae'n ymwneud â newid natur sawl swydd, ac yr

employees.

wyf yn cytuno â hynny, a gweithio gyda chyflogeion.

Leanne Wood: There will be no job losses?

Leanne Wood: Ni chaiff unrhyw swyddi eu colli?

Sue Essex: There will be job changes. We do not argue that there will be no job changes. If we can secure efficiencies on shared services, particularly where we know that we have great shortages in front-line services—social care is one area—we will need to extend and put more people in that area. Therefore, we are working with the unions to make sure that we work through those changes and that we have people who can deliver many of the front-line jobs that I know Assembly Members care about and support.

Sue Essex: Bydd swyddi'n newid. Nid ydym yn dadlau na fydd unrhyw swyddi'n newid. Os gallwn sicrhau effeithlonrwydd o ran gwasanaethau a rennir, yn arbennig lle y gwyddom fod gennym brinder mawr mewn gwasanaethau rheng flaen—mae gofal cymdeithasol yn un maes—bydd angen inni ehangu a sicrhau bod mwy o bobl yn y maes hwnnw. Felly, yr ydym yn gweithio gyda'r undebau er mwyn sicrhau ein bod yn gweithio drwy'r newidiadau hynny a bod pobl gennym a fydd yn gallu cyflawni llawer o'r swyddi rheng flaen y gwn fod Aelodau Cynulliad yn poeni amdanynt ac yn eu cefnogi.

Annog Arferion Gorau mewn Llywodraeth Leol Encouraging Best Practice in Local Government

Q8 Jenny Randerson: Will the Minister make a statement on the progress of encouraging best practice in local government in Wales? OAQ0366(LGP)

C8 Jenny Randerson: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am y cynnydd o ran annog arferion gorau mewn llywodraeth leol yng Nghymru? OAQ0366(LGP)

Sue Essex: I believe that local government in Wales will benefit greatly from shared learning and a more active approach to the dissemination of best practice. The Assembly Government has provided support to the Welsh Local Government Association to establish Excellence Wales. This scheme recognises and rewards good practice and disseminates it widely across Wales.

Sue Essex: Credaf y bydd llywodraeth leol yng Nghymru yn cael budd mawr o ddysgu a rennir ac ymagwedd fwy gweithredol tuag at ledaenu arfer gorau. Mae Llywodraeth y Cynulliad wedi rhoi cymorth i Gymdeithas Llywodraeth Leol Cymru er mwyn sefydlu Rhagoriaeth Cymru. Mae'r cynllun hwn yn cydnabod ac yn gwobrwyo arfer da ac yn ei ledaenu yn eang ledled Cymru.

Jenny Randerson: As you indicate, you are encouraging local authorities, as part of the development of best practice, to work more together in partnership and collaboration. If local authorities fail to do that, is it your intention, and that of the Labour Assembly Government, to tackle the issue by reforming the boundaries of local government in Wales? In view of the previous discussion on this and your failure to give a clear answer when you were last questioned on the subject, a simple 'yes' or 'no' will suffice.

Jenny Randerson: Fel y nodwch, fel rhan o ddatblygu arfer gorau, yr ydych yn annog awdurdodau lleol i sicrhau mwy o weithio mewn partneriaeth a chydweithio. Os bydd awdurdodau lleol yn methu â gwneud hynny, ai eich bwriad chi, a bwriad Llywodraeth Lafur y Cynulliad, yw mynd i'r afael â'r mater drwy ailffurfio ffiniau llywodraeth leol yng Nghymru? Yn sgîl y drafodaeth flaenorol ar hyn a'ch methiant i roi ateb clir y tro diwethaf ichi gael eich holi ar y pwnc, bydd 'ie' neu 'na' yn ddigon.

Sue Essex: How can I say 'yes' or 'no' when we have commissioned Sir Jeremy Beecham

Sue Essex: Sut y gallaf ddweud 'ie' neu 'na' a ninnau wedi comisiynu Syr Jeremy

to do the research? He would throw in the towel, would he not, if I predetermined the outcomes of that research? You know that we have a commission, led by Sir Jeremy Beecham, looking at the public sector as a whole, not just local government. This is about looking at how we can deliver the 'Making the Connections' agenda.

We can all get obsessed with boundaries; I have tried not to. It is important to look, from the public's point of view, at the outputs and outcomes of what happens in the public sector. People will not thank us greatly for spending our time being obsessed with structures and boundaries when what they want is delivery of public services.

Janet Ryder: I refer to an answer that you gave a little while ago—I think that it was to Mick Bates—on the appointment of local government scrutiny committee chairs. In July, you said in this Chamber that you felt that the process had to be strengthened and that local government needed to look again at how chairs of scrutiny committees were appointed, to give more political balance. You said in your answer to Mick that you felt happy that many counties are now responding to that agenda, but, in July, you said that you were going to strengthen the guidelines. Is it still your intention to strengthen those guidelines, and, if so, how are you going to do that?

Sue Essex: I am going to do that, and the guidelines will be published fairly soon for consultation.

David Melding: The Lord preserve us, Minister, from another reorganisation of local government. My party is responsible for two, and, according to many people, it is still not right. However, is it not the case that we need more regional co-operation among councils, and that is what we ought to be sorting out? Small councils can succeed and fail, as can large councils. Therefore, it is less a question of size, but much more about planning, anticipation and co-operation.

Sue Essex: I could not agree with you more,

Beecham i wneud yr ymchwil? Oni fyddai'n rhoi'r gorau i'w waith pe byddwn yn rhagderfynu canlyniadau'r ymchwil honno? Gwyddoch fod gennym gomisiwn, o dan arweiniad Syr Jeremy Beecham, sy'n edrych ar y sector cyhoeddus cyfan, nid dim ond llywodraeth leol. Mae a wnelo hyn ag edrych ar sut y gallwn gyflawni agenda 'Creu'r Cysylltiadau'.

Gallwn oll ganolbwyntio'n ormodol ar ffiniau; yr wyf wedi ceisio peidio â gwneud hynny. O safbwynt y cyhoedd, mae'n bwysig edrych ar yr allbynnau a chanlyniadau'r hyn sy'n digwydd yn y sector cyhoeddus. Ni fydd pobl yn diolch inni am dreulio ein hamser yn canolbwyntio'n ormodol ar strwythurau a ffiniau yn hytrach na darparu gwasanaethau cyhoeddus, sef yr hyn y maent am ei gael.

Janet Ryder: Cyfeiriaf at ateb a roddwyd gennych ychydig amser yn ôl—credaf mai ateb i Mick Bates ydoedd—ar benodi cadeiryddion pwyllgorau craffu llywodraeth leol. Ym mis Gorffennaf, bu ichi ddweud yn y Siambr hon eich bod yn teimlo bod yn rhaid cryfhau'r broses a bod angen i lywodraeth leol edrych unwaith eto ar y broses o benodi cadeiryddion pwyllgorau craffu, er mwyn rhoi mwy o gydbwysedd gwleidyddol. Bu ichi ddweud yn eich ateb i Mick eich bod yn fodlon bod llawer o siroedd bellach yn ymateb i'r agenda honno ond, ym mis Gorffennaf, dywedasoich eich bod yn mynd i gryfhau'r canllawiau. Ai eich bwriad o hyd yw cryfhau'r canllawiau hynny ac, os felly, sut yr ydych yn mynd i wneud hynny?

Sue Essex: Yr wyf yn mynd i wneud hynny, a chaiff y canllawiau eu cyhoeddi'n weddol fuan er mwyn ymgynghori arnynt.

David Melding: Duw a'n cadwo, Weinidog, rhag ad-drefnu llywodraeth leol eto. Mae fy mhlaid yn gyfrifol am ddau, ac, yn ôl llawer o bobl, nid yw'n iawn o hyd. Fodd bynnag, onid yw'n wir bod angen mwy o gydweithredu rhanbarthol arnom rhwng cynghorau, a dyna'r hyn y dylem fod yn ceisio ei ddatrys? Gall cynghorau bach lwyddo a methu, fel y gall cynghorau mawr. Felly, mae a wnelo mwy â chynllunio, rhagweld a chydweithredu na maint.

Sue Essex: Ni allwn gytuno mwy â chi,

David, and it is great to see that we agree on this, though it is not a case of the Lord preserving in this instance, but Sir Jeremy Beecham. You are absolutely right, and, in fairness to the Welsh Local Government Authority, this is what it is now trying to do. It is putting together regional groupings to deliver on the 'Making the Connections' agenda. I am very encouraged by what I see happening on the ground. Many local authorities have realised that they need to work together, and that they should not get obsessed with boundaries, because what counts is what they deliver in the end to the people.

David, ac mae'n wych gweld ein bod yn cytuno ar hyn, er nad Duw sy'n ein cadw yn yr enghraifft hon, ond Syr Jeremy Beecham. Yr ydych yn hollol gywir, ac, a bod yn deg i Awdurdod Llywodraeth Leol Cymru, dyna'r hyn y mae'n ceisio ei wneud yn awr. Mae'n rhoi grwpiau rhanbarthol at ei gilydd i gyflawni'r agenda 'Creu'r Cysylltiadau'. Fe'm calonogir gan yr hyn a welaf yn digwydd ar lawr gwlad. Mae llawer o awdurdodau lleol wedi sylweddoli bod angen iddynt gydweithio, ac na ddylent ganolbwyntio'n ormodol ar ffiniau, oherwydd yr hyn sy'n bwysig yw eu bod yn gwneud gwahaniaeth i bobl yn y pen draw.

Cwestiynau i'r Gweinidog dros Addysg a Dysgu Gydol Oes Questions to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

Rhaglen Adeiladu Ysgolion Newydd New School Building Programme

Q1 Janet Davies: Will the Minister make a statement on progress on the new school building programme? OAQ0471(ELL)

C1 Janet Davies: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am gynnydd rhaglen adeiladu ysgolion newydd? OAQ0471(ELL)

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning (Jane Davidson): Good progress is being made. Since 2002, 1,400 projects have received the Assembly Government's school buildings improvement grant, including 66 costing over £0.5 million. A total of 49 major projects costing £81 million have been approved, using the authorities' £9 million lump-sum shares. Overall funding for capital investment in schools has increased to £143 million in 2005-06.

Y Gweinidog dros Addysg a Dysgu Gydol Oes (Jane Davidson): Gwneir cynnydd da. Ers 2002, mae 1,400 o brosiectau wedi derbyn grant gwella adeiladau ysgolion Llywodraeth y Cynulliad, yn cynnwys 66 yn costio dros £0.5 miliwn. Cymeradwywyd cyfanswm o 49 o brif brosiectau yn costio £81 miliwn, gan ddefnyddio cyfranddaliadau cyfandaliad gwerth £9 miliwn yr awdurdodau. Cynyddodd yr arian cyffredinol ar gyfer buddsoddiad cyfalaf mewn ysgolion i £143 miliwn yn 2005-06.

Janet Davies: I would like to refer to the extra £9 million that went each local authority about two and a half years ago. Could you tell me how much of this money has been committed, and how much has been spent on new build? Are there any issues such as the need for compulsory purchase of land affecting the progress? I am aware of this in respect of Penyfai Church in Wales Primary School, near Bridgend.

Janet Davies: Hoffwn gyfeirio at y £9 miliwn ychwanegol a aeth i bob awdurdod lleol tua dwy flynedd a hanner yn ôl. A allech ddweud wrthyf faint o'r arian hwn a neilltuwyd, a faint a wariwyd ar adeiladau newydd? A oes unrhyw faterion megis yr angen am brynu tir yn orfodol sy'n effeithio ar y cynnydd? Yr wyf yn ymwybodol o hyn o ran Ysgol Gynradd Pen-y-fai yr Eglwys yng Nghymru, ger Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr.

Jane Davidson: Forty-nine schemes in 18 authorities have been accepted for the use of the additional £9 million allocations between

Jane Davidson: Derbyniwyd 49 o gynlluniau mewn 18 o awdurdodau i ddefnyddio'r dyraniadau ychwanegol o £9 miliwn rhwng

2005 and 2008. Those authorities that have not yet had approval for any, or a proportion, of their £9 million, will receive it from 2007-08 and 2009-10, and proposals have already been invited. In terms of the Penyfai school, my officials are in close contact with the authority about ensuring that any compulsory purchase arrangements go ahead so that the school can develop to plan.

2.40 p.m.

Ann Jones: On the new build programme, would you consider ensuring that sprinkler systems are included? Given the recent spate of arson fires in my constituency, and in that of my colleague, Alun Pugh, and given the new build that will have to follow, this would be a disruption. Will you look at sprinkler systems in any new build programme?

Jane Davidson: Recommendations from the 'Up in Flames' report are being taken forward. The arson small grants programme has, to date, allocated £350,000 towards projects aimed at combating arson in schools, and we have also provided almost £400,000 to fit sprinklers in two high-rise schools. However, local authorities consider this in terms of what their refurbishment or new build programmes are.

Nick Bourne: On new build programmes, I have written to the Minister about Trefonnen School in Llandrindod Wells. She wrote back, as I thought she would, saying that it is the local authority's responsibility. However, as this is such a serious issue, will the Minister visit the school? There are classroom areas that children and teachers have to walk through to get to another classroom, and there are classrooms where children cannot see the whiteboard. It is a serious position that affects the educational experience offered by the school. If the Minister were to go the school, I think that she would be as concerned as I am. The headteacher, Mr Underhill, and the governors, are excellent, and the children are keen to learn, but they cannot learn satisfactorily in the facilities that they have at present.

2005 a 2008. Bydd yr awdurdodau hynny nad ydynt wedi cael cymeradwyaeth ar gyfer unrhyw ran o'u £9 miliwn, neu gyfran ohono, yn ei dderbyn o 2007-08 a 2009-10, a gwahoddwyd cynigion eisoes. O ran ysgol Pen-y-fai, mae fy swyddogion mewn cyswllt agos â'r awdurdod ynglŷn â sicrhau bod unrhyw drefniadau prynu gorfodol yn mynd rhagddynt er mwyn i'r ysgol allu datblygu yn ôl y bwriad.

Ann Jones: O ran y rhaglen adeiladu newydd, a fydddech yn ystyried sicrhau bod systemau chwistrellu yn cael eu cynnwys? O ystyried yr achosion diweddar o danau bwriadol yn fy etholaeth, ac yn etholaeth fy nghyd-Aelod, Alun Pugh, ac o gofio'r adeiladau newydd a fydd yn gorfod cael eu hadeiladu, byddai hyn yn creu amhariad. A ystyriwch systemau chwistrellu mewn unrhyw raglen adeiladu newydd?

Jane Davidson: Mae argymhellion o'r adroddiad 'Up in Flames' yn cael eu datblygu. Hyd yma, mae'r rhaglen grantiau bach tanau bwriadol wedi dyrannu £350,000 tuag at brosiectau wedi'u hanelu at fynd i'r afael â thanau mewn ysgolion, ac yr ydym hefyd wedi darparu bron £400,000 i osod chwistrellwyr mewn dwy ysgol aml-lawr. Fodd bynnag, mae awdurdodau yn ystyried hyn o ran beth yw eu rhaglenni adnewyddu neu adeiladu newydd.

Nick Bourne: O ran rhaglenni adeiladu newydd, yr wyf wedi ysgrifennu at y Gweinidog ynglŷn ag ysgol Trefonnen yn Llandrindod. Atebodd, fel y disgwyliais iddi wneud, gan ddweud mai cyfrifoldeb yr awdurdod lleol yw hyn. Fodd bynnag, gan fod hwn yn fater mor ddifrifol, a fydd y Gweinidog yn ymweld â'r ysgol? Mae rhannau o ystafelloedd dosbarth y mae'n rhaid i blant ac athrawon gerdded drwyddynt er mwyn cyrraedd ystafell ddosbarth arall, ac mae ystafelloedd dosbarth lle na all plant weld y bwrdd gwyn. Mae'n sefyllfa ddifrifol sy'n effeithio ar y profiad addysgol a gynigir gan yr ysgol. Pe byddai'r Gweinidog yn mynd i'r ysgol, credaf y byddai mor bryderus â minnau. Mae'r pennaeth, Mr Underhill, a'r llywodraethwyr, yn rhagorol, ac mae'r plant yn awyddus i ddysgu, ond ni allant ddysgu'n foddhaol yn y cyfleusterau sydd ganddynt ar

hyn o bryd.

Jane Davidson: As I said in my introduction, the funding has increased to £143 million a year. The Assembly Government expects local authorities to use our resources and to use money from their general capital spend in prioritising those schools in the greatest need. We know that about half the authorities are already on-plan to ensure that all their schools will be fit for purpose by 2010, and we have an asset management planning process that will ensure that all authorities have properly assessed the issues that you describe and enabled their addressing. However, this is a matter for local authorities. I am always happy to visit schools, but you need to have a dialogue with Powys County Council about whether or not this school needs money ahead of other schools from Powys's allocated funding.

Nick Bourne: I anticipated the rhetoric, but it is not the rhetoric that I wanted to hear. I know that I need to have a dialogue with Powys council, but I have had that, and I am getting nowhere. I encourage the Minister to visit this school to see what the children are suffering. They are children from deprived backgrounds, by and large, and they are not getting the educational experience that they need. I know that the Minister has a busy programme, and no-one would question her work commitment, but, if she went to the school, she would share some of my feelings about this. The Minister is probably in a stronger position to influence the local authority than I am. I acknowledge that she has a crowded diary, but I would be grateful if she could visit the school and ensure that we could act together on this, because it is a serious issue that affects the kids' education. Stripped of the rhetoric, that is what we should be keen to do.

Jane Davidson: I am always happy to visit schools across Wales, and I do so regularly. I visit schools in all sorts of conditions. However, it is important that we do not take away from the fact that this is the local authority's responsibility. I am putting in place more funding than ever before, in terms

Jane Davidson: Fel y dywedais yn fy nghyflwyniad, mae'r arian wedi cynyddu i £143 miliwn y flwyddyn. Mae Llywodraeth y Cynulliad yn disgwyl i awdurdodau lleol ddefnyddio ein hadnoddau a defnyddio arian o'u gwariant cyfalaf cyffredinol i flaenoriaethu'r ysgolion hynny sydd â'r angen mwyaf. Gwn fod cynlluniau tua hanner yr awdurdodau eisoes yn mynd rhagddynt i sicrhau bod pob un o'u hysgolion yn addas at y diben erbyn 2010, ac mae gennym broses gynllunio rheoli asedau a fydd yn sicrhau bod yr holl awdurdodau wedi asesu'r materion a ddisgrifir gennych yn briodol ac wedi gallu mynd i'r afael â hwy. Fodd bynnag, mae hwn yn fater i awdurdodau lleol. Yr wyf bob amser yn fwy na pharod i ymweld ag ysgolion, ond mae angen i chi gael trafodaeth â Chyngor Sir Powys ynglŷn â pha un a oes angen arian ar yr ysgol hon cyn ysgolion eraill o'r arian a ddyrennir i Bowys.

Nick Bourne: Rhagwelais y rhethreg, ond nid hon yw'r rhethreg yr oeddwn yn dymuno ei chlywed. Gwn fod angen imi gael trafodaeth â chyngor Powys, ond yr wyf wedi gwneud hynny, ond ni chyflawnwyd dim. Anogaf y Gweinidog i ymweld â'r ysgol hon i weld yr hyn y mae'r plant yn ei ddiodef. Maent yn blant o gefndir difreintiedig ac, ar y cyfan, nid ydynt yn derbyn y profiad addysgol sydd ei angen arnynt. Gwn fod gan y Gweinidog raglen brysur, ac ni fyddai unrhyw un yn amau ei hymrwymiad gwaith ond, pe byddai'n mynd i'r ysgol, byddai'n rhannu rhai o'm teimladau ynglŷn â hyn. Mae'n debygol bod y Gweinidog mewn sefyllfa gryfach i ddylanwadu ar yr awdurdod lleol nag yr wyf innau. Cydnabyddaf fod ganddi ddyddiadur llawn, ond byddwn yn ddiolchgar pe gallai ymweld â'r ysgol a sicrhau y gallem weithio gyda'n gilydd ar hyn, gan ei fod yn fater difrifol sy'n effeithio ar addysg y plant. Heb y rhethreg, dyna'r hyn y dylem fod yn awyddus i'w wneud.

Jane Davidson: Yr wyf bob amser yn fwy na pharod i ymweld ag ysgolion ledled Cymru, a gwnaf hynny'n rheolaidd. Yr wyf yn ymweld ag ysgolion mewn pob math o gyflwr. Fodd bynnag, mae'n bwysig nad ydym yn anghofio mai cyfrifoldeb yr awdurdod lleol yw hwn. Yr wyf yn rhyddhau mwy o arian nag erioed

of ensuring that the local authority can use the funding effectively.

Nick Bourne: You were unable to visit the school when you wrote to me at the end of July. I encourage you to have another look at your diary to see whether you can visit this school, because, as I said, I think that you will share my feelings about this problem. Therefore, I am grateful that you are committed to visiting, but a visit will mean that you see the situation in a different light. Stripped of the rhetoric, we have to do something for the kids. If you could come to the school—and I would be happy to accompany you—perhaps we would be able to do something.

Jane Davidson: As I said, I am always happy to visit schools in Wales, but, as you say, that is subject to diary arrangements. I am content to visit this school, or any other school.

o'r blaen, o ran sicrhau y gall yr awdurdod lleol ddefnyddio'r arian yn effeithiol.

Nick Bourne: Nid oedd modd i chi ymweld â'r ysgol pan ysgrifenasoch ataf ar ddiwedd Gorffennaf. Fe'ch anogaf i edrych ar eich dyddiadur unwaith yn rhagor i weld a allwch ymweld â'r ysgol hon, oherwydd, fel y dywedais, credaf y byddwch yn rhannu fy nheimpladau ynglŷn â'r broblem hon. Felly, yr wyf yn ddiolchgar eich bod yn ymrwymedig i ymweld, ond bydd ymweliad yn golygu eich bod yn ystyried y sefyllfa o safbwynt gwahanol. Heb y rhethreg, rhaid inni wneud rhywbeth ar gyfer y plant. Pe gallech ddod i'r ysgol—a byddwn yn fwy na pharod i ddod gyda chi—efallai y byddai modd inni wneud rhywbeth.

Jane Davidson: Fel y dywedais, yr wyf bob amser yn fwy na pharod i ymweld ag ysgolion yng Nghymru, ond, fel y dywedwch, mae hynny'n amodol ar drefniadau dyddiadur. Yr wyf yn fodlon ymweld â'r ysgol hon, neu unrhyw ysgol arall.

Ysgolion Cyfrwng Cymraeg yn y Canolbarth a'r Gorllewin Welsh-medium Schools in Mid and West Wales

Q2 Lisa Francis: Will the Minister make a statement on the future of Welsh-medium schools in mid and west Wales?
OAQ0460(ELL)

Jane Davidson: The Assembly Government strongly supports Welsh-medium schooling, but this is a matter for the relevant local education authorities. It is for them to decide on the optimum pattern of provision, based on their knowledge of local needs, and in the light of their Welsh education schemes.

Lisa Francis: There needs to be a more in-depth look at the effects of small school closures on the Welsh language. Can you amplify upon any discussions that you may have had with Cabinet colleagues about how Welsh-medium education seems not to have been a consideration when Carmarthenshire County Council formed its strategy on modernising education provision?

Jane Davidson: I can make it absolutely

C2 Lisa Francis: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am ddyfodol ysgolion cyfrwng Cymraeg yn y canolbarth a'r gorllewin?
OAQ0460(ELL)

Jane Davidson: Mae Llywodraeth y Cynulliad yn cefnogi ysgolion cyfrwng Cymraeg yn frwd, ond mae hwn yn fater ar gyfer yr awdurdodau addysg lleol perthnasol. Eu cyfrifoldeb hwy yw penderfynu ar batrwm gorau posibl y ddarpariaeth, yn seiliedig ar eu gwybodaeth o anghenion lleol, ac yng ngoleuni eu cynlluniau addysg Gymraeg.

Lisa Francis: Mae angen edrych yn fanylach ar hyn ar effeithiau cau ysgolion bach ar yr iaith Gymraeg. A allwch ymhelaethu ar unrhyw drafodaethau posibl a gawsoch gyda chyd-Weinidogion yn y Cabinet ynghylch y ffordd yr ymddengys na chafodd addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg ei hystyried pan luniodd Cyngor Sir Caerfyrddin ei strategaeth ar foderneiddio'r ddarpariaeth addysg?

Jane Davidson: Gallaf ddweud yn gwbl glir,

clear, as I have done previously in the Assembly, that we would never approve the closure of a school where the alternative did not provide at least equivalent linguistic provision. I have given that commitment previously, it has been welcomed by Members, and I am happy to give it again today.

Mick Bates: I have a longstanding concern over the budgetary pressure in schools such as Caereinion High School, which delivers Welsh-medium and English-medium education. Caereinion High School is a true community school. Do you accept that such schools require additional support because of the delivery of both Welsh-medium and English-medium education?

Jane Davidson: As you well know, Mick, that is a matter for the local government formula. The Assembly has agreed the overarching principles against which local authorities determine their local formulae. That is the proper job of the Assembly. The local authority then takes those overarching principles and ensures that it has a fair formula across all its schools. Local authorities, therefore, have the capacity to respond appropriately to local needs.

fel yr wyf wedi'i wneud o'r blaen yn y Cynulliad, na fyddem byth yn cymeradwyo cau ysgol lle nad oedd y dewis amgen yn cynnig darpariaeth ieithyddol gyfatebol o leiaf. Yr wyf wedi rhoi'r ymrwymiad hwnnw o'r blaen, fe'i croesawyd gan Aelodau, ac yr wyf yn fodlon ei roi eto heddiw.

Mick Bates: Mae gennyf bryder ers tro o ran y pwysau cyllidebol mewn ysgolion fel Ysgol Uwchradd Caereinion, sy'n darparu addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg ac addysg cyfrwng Saesneg. Mae Ysgol Uwchradd Caereinion yn ysgol gymunedol go iawn. A dderbyniwch fod angen cymorth ychwanegol ar ysgolion o'r fath oherwydd eu bod yn darparu addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg ac addysg cyfrwng Saesneg?

Jane Davidson: Fel y gwyddoch yn iawn, Mick, mater i fformiwla llywodraeth leol yw hynny. Mae'r Cynulliad wedi cytuno ar yr egwyddorion cyffredinol y mae awdurdodau lleol yn pennu eu fformiwlâu lleol yn unol â hwy. Mater i'r Cynulliad yw hynny. Yna mae'r awdurdod lleol yn defnyddio'r egwyddorion cyffredinol hynny ac yn sicrhau bod fformiwla deg yn cael ei chymhwyso ar draws ei holl ysgolion. Felly, mae gan awdurdodau lleol y gallu i ymateb yn briodol i anghenion lleol.

Addysg 16-19 16-19 Education

Q3 Peter Black: Will the Minister make a statement on her plans for 16-19 education in Wales? OAQ0426(ELL)

Jane Davidson: The draft budget proposals prioritise post-16 learning. Strategic plans will put in place a co-ordinated approach to drive forward the post-16 and 14-19 agendas together to develop a high quality, efficient and effective provider network for learners.

Peter Black: As you know, there are concerns about the proposals to transfer powers currently held by Education and Learning Wales with regard to the reform of sixth forms to the new education and lifelong learning department being set up under your auspices. In particular, there are concerns that

C3 Peter Black: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am ei chynlluniau ar gyfer addysg 16-19 yng Nghymru? OAQ0426(ELL)

Jane Davidson: Mae cynigion drafft y gyllideb yn blaenoriaethu dysgu ôl-16. Bydd cynlluniau strategol yn rhoi ymagwedd gydgyssylltiedig ar waith er mwyn hyrwyddo agendâu ôl-16 a 14-19 gyda'i gilydd i ddatblygu rhwydwaith darparwyr effeithlon ac effeithiol o safon i ddysgwyr.

Peter Black: Fel y gwyddoch, mae pryderon o ran y cynigion i drosglwyddo pwerau sydd gan Dysgu ac Addysgu Cymru ar hyn o bryd o ran diwygio darpariaeth chweched dosbarth, i'r adran addysg a dysgu gydol oes newydd sy'n cael ei sefydlu o dan eich nawdd. Yn benodol, mae pryderon y gallai

proposals for closure of, or other amendments to, sixth form provision might originate from your department and be adjudicated by you. Will you explain to the Assembly what Chinese wall is being put in place in your department to ensure that parents have a right of appeal on these decisions, and that strict propriety is being observed at all times?

Jane Davidson: You must remember that those powers already exist; this is a transfer of functions Order in terms of bringing the powers into the Assembly from ELWa. It is important that the powers are only about improving provision. As we discussed at length in committee, this only refers to complex reorganisations, which go beyond an individual local authority boundary, and when they involve schools not covered by the local authority, such as foundation schools or colleges for example, which are also beyond the local authority ability to recommend any changes. There needs to be a power for the Assembly to be able to look at developing the best possible strategic provision in Wales. I have asked my department to develop some proposals, and I will be happy to discuss those with you once they have been developed, which I understand will happen shortly.

Leighton Andrews: Minister, you will be aware of my commitment to the continuation of sixth-form education in the Rhondda, not least from my time on the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee. Will you confirm today your view that sixth forms have an important part to play within the provision of 16 to 19 education, but that it is right that responsible local authorities look at their 16 to 19 provision from time to time? That process of consultation, however, is not helped by irresponsible minor parties scaremongering to parents about the likely outcomes.

Jane Davidson: I absolutely confirm that sixth forms have a continuing major role to play in education in Wales, as have colleges and work-based learning providers. We want to ensure that all 16 to 19-year-olds have the best possible opportunities at a local level to develop their talents. That is what the 14 to 19 agenda is about. It is incumbent upon us

cynigion i gau darpariaeth chweched dosbarth, neu wneud newidiadau eraill iddi, ddeillio o'ch adran chi, a chael eu dyfarnu gennych chi. A wnewch esbonio i'r Cynulliad pa fur diadlam sy'n cael ei greu yn eich adran er mwyn sicrhau bod gan rieni yr hawl i apelio yn erbyn y penderfyniadau hyn, ac y cedwir at briodoldeb llym bob amser?

Jane Davidson: Rhaid ichi gofio bod y pwerau hynny yn bodoli eisoes; Gorchymyn trosglwyddo swyddogaethau yw hwn o ran trosglwyddo'r pwerau i'r Cynulliad o ELWa. Mae'n bwysig bod a wnelo'r pwerau hyn â gwella darpariaeth yn unig. Fel y trafodwyd yn faith yn y pwyllgor, nid yw hyn ond yn cyfeirio at achosion cymhleth o ad-drefnu, sy'n mynd y tu hwnt i ffiniau awdurdod lleol unigol, a phan fyddant yn ymwneud ag ysgolion nad yw'r awdurdod lleol yn gyfrifol amdanynt, megis ysgolion sefydledig neu golegau er enghraifft, sydd hefyd y tu hwnt i allu'r awdurdod lleol i argymhell unrhyw newidiadau. Mae angen i'r Cynulliad gael pŵer i allu ystyried datblygu'r ddarpariaeth strategol orau posibl yng Nghymru. Yr wyf wedi gofyn i'm hadran ddatblygu rhai cynigion, a byddaf yn fodlon eu trafod gyda chi cyn gynted ag y cânt eu datblygu, a deallaf y bydd hynny'n digwydd cyn bo hir.

Leighton Andrews: Weinidog, byddwch yn ymwybodol o'm hymrwymiad i barhau ag addysg chweched dosbarth yn y Rhondda, yn bennaf o'm hamser fel aelod o'r Pwyllgor Addysg a Dysgu Gydol Oes. A wnewch gadarnhau heddiw eich barn bod gan ddarpariaeth chweched dosbarth ran bwysig i'w chwarae yn narpariaeth addysg 16 i 19, ond ei bod yn briodol bod awdurdodau lleol cyfrifol yn edrych ar eu darpariaeth addysg 16 i 19 o bryd i'w gilydd? Fodd bynnag, nid yw'r partion llai, anghyfrifol sy'n codi bwganod ymhlith rhieni o ran canlyniadau tebygol yn helpu'r broses ymgynghori honno.

Jane Davidson: Cadarnhaf yn bendant fod gan ddarpariaeth chweched dosbarth rôl bwysig barhaus i'w chwarae yn y byd addysg yng Nghymru, fel ag y mae gan golegau a darparwyr dysgu seiliedig ar waith. Yr ydym am sicrhau bod gan bob person ifanc 16 i 19 oed y cyfleoedd gorau posibl yn lleol i ddatblygu eu doniau. Dyna beth yw diben yr

all to be responsible on these issues, because we know that any talks about changes in school settings become emotional. It is important that everybody hears the education argument, one way or another, and that decisions are finally made with regard to the education provision.

2.50 p.m.

Janet Ryder: Students in that 16 to 19 age group can receive financial support, either through the educational maintenance allowance, or through the Assembly learning grant. If they are in the 16 to 18 age group, and qualify for an educational maintenance allowance, as long as they have a joint household income of anything up to £30,000, they can still receive some form of financial support. Yet students are cut off and not allowed to apply for an Assembly learning grant if they have a joint household income of anything over £16,065. Is that acceptable to you, Minister? Are you happy with that?

Jane Davidson: Once again, Janet, you demonstrate an ability to bring two things together that have different outcomes. The first one, in relation to 16 to 18-year-olds, is to encourage young people to stay on in a school or college to acquire the qualifications that will then take them further in the education system. The Assembly learning grant came from a decision by the Assembly to support students going on in both colleges and higher education. In higher education, there are other loans and grants available to students that are not available to students in the further education sector, or at school. I am happy that we have the EMAs—which you have continually opposed—as well as the Assembly learning grants, which was an imaginative proposal for the Assembly.

Jeff Cuthbert: Do you agree that it is critically important, within our 16 to 19-year-old learning programme, that we encourage the maximum possible collaboration between schools, further education providers and workplace learning providers, and that we encourage businesses to get involved with learning for that age group? This will mean that the maximum opportunities can be

agenda 14 i 19. Mae'n ddyletswydd ar bob un ohonom i fod yn gyfrifol ynghylch y materion hyn, oherwydd gwyddom y bydd unrhyw sôn am newidiadau mewn lleoliadau ysgol yn mynd yn emosiynol. Mae'n bwysig bod pawb yn clywed y ddatl am addysg, y naill ffordd neu'r llall, ac y gwneir penderfyniadau yn y pen draw o ran y ddarpariaeth addysg.

Janet Ryder: Gall myfyrwyr yn y grŵp oedran 16 i 19 hwnnw gael cymorth ariannol, naill ai drwy'r lwfans cynhaliath addysg, neu drwy grant dysgu'r Cynulliad. Os byddant yng ngrŵp oedran 16 i 18, ac yn gymwys i gael lwfans cynhaliath addysg, ar yr amod bod ganddynt incwm cartref ar y cyd o unrhyw beth hyd at £30,000, gallant gael rhyw fath o gymorth ariannol o hyd. Eto, ni chaniateir i fyfyrwyr wneud cais am grant dysgu'r Cynulliad os oes ganddynt incwm cartref ar y cyd dros £16,065. A yw hynny'n dderbyniol ichi, Weinidog? A ydych yn fodlon ar hynny?

Jane Davidson: Unwaith eto, Janet, yr ydych yn dangos y gallu i ddod â dau beth ynghyd sydd â chanlyniadau gwahanol. Y mater cyntaf, mewn perthynas â phobl 16 i 18 oed, yw annog pobl i aros yn yr ysgol neu goleg i gael y cymwysterau a fydd yn mynd â hwy ymhellach yn y system addysg. Deilliodd grant dysgu'r Cynulliad o benderfyniad gan y Cynulliad i gefnogi myfyrwyr sy'n mynd i'r coleg ac addysg uwch. Mewn addysg uwch, mae benthyciadau a grantiau eraill ar gael i fyfyrwyr nad ydynt ar gael i fyfyrwyr yn y sector addysg bellach, nac yn yr ysgol. Yr wyf yn fodlon bod gennym yr LCA—yr ydych wedi eu gwrthwynebu yn barhaus—yn ogystal â grantiau dysgu'r Cynulliad, a oedd yn gynnig llawn dychymyg i'r Cynulliad.

Jeff Cuthbert: A gytunwch ei bod yn hollbwysig, o fewn ein rhaglen ddysgu 16 i 19 oed, ein bod yn annog cymaint o gydweithredu â phosibl rhwng ysgolion, darparwyr addysg bellach a darparwyr dysgu yn y gweithle, a'n bod yn annog busnesau i gymryd rhan yn y gwaith o ddysgu'r grŵp oedran hwnnw? Bydd hyn yn golygu y gellir darparu'r nifer mwyaf posibl o gyfleoedd i'n

provided for our young people to be able to select courses and awards that are suitable for them.

Jane Davidson: I agree that that is important; that is why we looked to recruit a vocational skills champion, and I am delighted to say we will shortly be making an announcement on that person. This is about ensuring that vocational courses are recognised within the system and also about looking at whether or not they are the right vocational courses to ensure that business needs are appropriately met, and that we can encourage young people to develop their talents appropriately.

William Graham: With the amalgamations and reorganisations that you propose, are you sure that the morale of those excellent civil servants will remain and that they will be able to continue to contribute so much to the future of education in Wales?

Jane Davidson: I remain convinced that any proposal that we agree from an Assembly Government perspective is always about improving education provision. The morale of people involved with a commitment to improve education provision can sometimes be challenged locally, but can remain strong, if that is what our agenda is together.

Y Llywydd: Trosglwyddwyd cwestiwn 4, OAQ0463(ELL), i'w ateb yn ysgrifenedig gan y Gweinidog dros Gyfiawnder Cymdeithasol ac Adfywio.

pobl ifanc allu dewis cyrsiau a chymwysterau sy'n addas ar eu cyfer.

Jane Davidson: Cytunaf fod hyn yn bwysig; dyna pam yr aethom ati i recriwtio hyrwyddwr sgiliau galwedigaethol, ac mae'n bleser gennyf ddweud y byddwn yn gwneud cyhoeddiad ynghylch y person hwnnw maes o law. Mae a wnelo hyn â sicrhau y caiff cyrsiau galwedigaethol eu cydnabod o fewn y system, a hefyd ag ystyried pa un ai'r cyrsiau galwedigaethol cywir ydynt er mwyn sicrhau y caiff anghenion busnesau eu diwallu'n briodol, ac y gallwn annog pobl ifanc i ddatblygu eu doniau yn briodol.

William Graham: O ran y gwaith cyfuno ac ad-drefnu a gynigiwch, a ydych yn siŵr y bydd morâl y gweision sifil ardderchog hynny yn parhau, ac y gallant barhau i gyfrannu gymaint i ddyfodol addysg yng Nghymru?

Jane Davidson: Yr wyf wedi'm hargyhoeddi o hyd bod a wnelo unrhyw gynnig y cytunwn arno o safbwynt Llywodraeth y Cynulliad bob amser â gwella darpariaeth addysg. Gall morâl pobl sy'n gysylltiedig ag ymrwymiad i wella darpariaeth addysg gael ei herio'n lleol weithiau, ond gall barhau'n gryf, os mai dyna ein hagenda gyda'n gilydd.

The Presiding Officer: Question 4, OAQ0463(ELL), has been transferred for written answer by the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration.

Addysg Gymunedol Community Education

Q5 Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on the role of small schools in community education provision? OAQ0474(ELL)

Jane Davidson: Schools should provide the communities that they serve with a range of facilities and activities for pupils, their families and the local community during the school day and out of school hours. What individual schools provide will depend on the needs of their communities and existing provision.

C5 Helen Mary Jones: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am rôl ysgolion bach yn narpariaeth addysg gymunedol? OAQ0474(ELL)

Jane Davidson: Dylai ysgolion ddarparu amrywiaeth o gyfleusterau a gweithgareddau i'r cymunedau y maent yn eu gwasanaethu, i ddisgyblion, eu teuluoedd a'r gymuned leol yn ystod y diwrnod ysgol ac y tu allan i oriau ysgol. Bydd yr hyn y mae ysgolion unigol yn ei ddarparu yn dibynnu ar anghenion eu cymunedau a'r ddarpariaeth bresennol.

Helen Mary Jones: Would you accept that some of the changes coming forward from your Government's policy of including an opportunity for more community provision for childcare and the forthcoming changes in pupil-teacher ratios in the early years, may serve to make small schools that are currently under the threat of closure more sustainable in the future? How will you ensure that the small schools fund is used to ensure that such schools can take the greatest possible advantage of those forthcoming opportunities?

Jane Davidson: The small and rural schools fund has substantial additional funding, of £3.5 million, which is over and above what goes to local authorities, which, as Sue Essex said earlier, get additional amounts of money for sparsity, which they then use in terms of the allocation of funding across the schools in their area. From that £3.5 million, £1 million is dedicated to the community focus of schools, because we are keen to look at ways in which schools can expand services in their communities. This is something that we look at in terms of any closure or reorganisation proposals.

Leighton Andrews: Residents of Blaenllechau in my constituency are deeply disappointed at the decision to announce the closure of the infants' school from 1 September 2006, as am I. You cannot comment on the case of this specific school, I know, but do you agree that it is important that, in planning school provision across the county borough, the county fully takes into account the educational and community aspects of any school, and the importance of its function in delivering provisions for local communities?

Jane Davidson: The guidance does both those things. We wanted to move away from what previous Governments had done, which was to focus on the funding element in terms of small schools; I wanted to look at the education provision. However, it is important that the Assembly recognises that, when I became Minister, there were around 40,000 spare places in our schools, but the figure is getting on for 70,000 now and there will

Helen Mary Jones: A dderbyniwch y gallai rhai o'r newidiadau sy'n deillio o bolisi eich Llywodraeth gynnwys cyfle i gael mwy o ddarpariaeth gofal plant gymunedol a'r newidiadau sydd ar y gweill o ran cymarebau disgybl athro yn y blynyddoedd cynnar, olygu bod rhai o'r ysgolion bach sydd mewn perygl o gau ar hyn o bryd yn fwy cynaliadwy yn y dyfodol? Sut y byddwch yn sicrhau y caiff y gronfa ysgolion bach ei defnyddio i sicrhau y gall ysgolion o'r fath fanteisio i'r eithaf ar y cyfleoedd hynny sydd ar y gweill?

Jane Davidson: Mae gan gronfa'r ysgolion bach a gwledig arian ychwanegol sylweddol, gwerth £3.5 miliwn, sydd yn ychwanegol at yr hyn sy'n mynd i awdurdodau lleol, sydd, fel y dywedodd Sue Essex yn gynharach, yn cael symiau ychwanegol o arian oherwydd teneurwydd poblogaeth, y maent yn eu defnyddio wedyn ar gyfer dyrannu arian ar draws yr ysgolion yn eu hardal. O'r £3.5 miliwn hwnnw, mae £1 filiwn wedi'i chlustnodi i ffocws cymunedol yr ysgolion, am ein bod yn awyddus i ystyried ffyrdd y gall ysgolion ehangu gwasanaethau yn eu cymunedau. Mae hyn yn rhywbeth yr ydym yn ei ystyried o ran unrhyw gynigion i gau neu ad-drefnu.

Leighton Andrews: Mae trigolion Blaenllechau yn fy etholaeth i wedi'u siomi'n fawr gan y penderfyniad i gyhoeddi cau'r ysgol fabanod o 1 Medi 2006, fel minnau. Gwn na allwch roi sylwadau ar achos yr ysgol benodol hon, ond a gytunwch ei bod yn bwysig, wrth gynllunio darpariaeth ysgol ar draws y fwrdeistref sirol, bod y sir yn ystyried agweddau addysgol a chymunedol unrhyw ysgol yn llawn, a phwysigrwydd ei swyddogaeth o ran sicrhau darpariaeth i gymunedau lleol?

Jane Davidson: Mae'r canllawiau yn gwneud y ddau beth hynny. Yr oeddem am symud o'r hyn a wnaeth Llywodraethau blaenorol, sef canolbwyntio ar yr elfen ariannu o ran ysgolion bach; yr oeddwn am ystyried darpariaeth addysg. Fodd bynnag, mae'n bwysig bod y Cynulliad yn cydnabod, pan ddeuthum yn Weinidog, bod tua 40,000 o leoedd gwag yn ein hysgolion, ond mae'r ffigur yn agos at 70,000 bellach, a bydd tua

110,000 not far beyond the end of the decade. There are real issues in terms of the fact that demographically we will have far fewer children in our schools and we have to look to make appropriate provision so that children are educated in schools that are fit for purpose. The quick point on the community is that we require all authorities to look at community provision when considering decisions, before we will consider those decisions. We need to see that they have done that. However, at the end of the day, our responsibility is to ensure that the education provision is paramount.

Ieuan Wyn Jones: O ran y defnydd a wneir o'r gronfa ysgolion bach a gwledig, yn eich ateb i Helen Mary Jones gwnaethoch gyfeirio at y ffaith bod awdurdodau lleol yn defnyddio rhan o'r arian hwnnw i ddatblygu buddiannau cymunedol. Nid yw'r gronfa honno yn cael ei defnyddio'n llawn at ei phwrpas gwreiddiol. Yn y blynyddoedd cynnar, yr oedd i gyd yn mynd o dan un system ond, eleni, yr ydych wedi newid y system mewn ffordd sy'n golygu bod y rhan fwyaf o'r arian yn cael ei ddefnyddio yn anuniongyrchol ar gyfer yr un cynllun. Pam wnaethoch chi hynny?

Jane Davidson: Nid hynny sydd wedi digwydd. Cyn i gytundeb llwyth gwaith athrawon gael ei sefydlu, rhoddwyd arian ychwanegol i ysgolion bach i'w helpu gyda chymorth gweinyddol os oedd eu prifathrawon yn dysgu rhan amser. Yn awr, gyda'r cytundeb llwyth gwaith athrawon, bydd £70 miliwn yn y system bob blwyddyn, ar ôl mis Ebrill nesaf, i helpu i dalu am y cytundeb-dim ond £1 miliwn oedd helpu i dalu am gymorth yn wreiddiol. Hefyd mae £1.5 miliwn yn aros yn y gyllideb i gefnogi arloesedd yn y system. Mae pobl yn gofyn i mi ynglŷn â defnydd pobl leol o ysgolion bach a dyna pam yr ydym wedi symud £1 miliwn, wedi'i glustnodi, i'r gyllideb ffocws cymunedol. Mae hyn oll yn gweithio tuag at bwrpasau sy'n bwysig i ysgolion. Mae'r awdurdodau lleol hefyd yn hoffi'r pwrpasau hyn.

Ieuan Wyn Jones: Yr ydych wedi clywed heddiw, gan fwy nag un blaid, bod pryder gwirioneddol ynglŷn â'r pwysau sydd ar ysgolion bach, yn y lle cyntaf i ddarparu

110,000 erbyn diwedd y degawd. Mae problemau gwirioneddol o ran y ffaith y bydd gennym lawer llai o blant yn ein hysgolion yn ddemograffig, a rhaid inni geisio sicrhau darpariaeth briodol fel bod plant yn cael eu haddysgu mewn ysgolion sy'n addas at y diben. Y pwynt cyflym o ran y gymuned yw ein bod yn gofyn i bob awdurdod ystyried darpariaeth gymunedol wrth ystyried penderfyniadau, cyn y byddwn yn ystyried y penderfyniadau hynny. Mae angen inni weld eu bod wedi gwneud hynny. Fodd bynnag, yn y pen draw, ein cyfrifoldeb ni yw sicrhau mai'r ddarpariaeth addysg sydd bwysicaf.

Ieuan Wyn Jones: On the use that is made of the small and rural schools fund, in your answer to Helen Mary Jones you referred to the fact that local authorities use part of that money to develop community interests. That fund is not being used fully for its original purpose. In the early years, it all went under one system, but, this year, you have changed that system in a way that means that most of the money will be used indirectly for the same scheme. Why did you do that?

Jane Davidson: That is not the case. Before the teachers' workload agreement was established, additional money was given to small schools to help them with administrative support if their headteachers taught part time. Now that the teachers' workload agreement exists, there will be £70 million in the system each year, after next April, to help to pay for it—originally there was only £1 million to help to pay for support. Also, £1.5 million will stay in the budget to support innovation in the system. People ask me about the use that local people make of small schools and that is why we have moved £1 million of ring-fenced money to the community focus budget. All of this works towards a purpose that is important to schools. Local authorities also like these purposes.

Ieuan Wyn Jones: You have heard today, from more than one party, that there is genuine concern about the pressure on small schools, in the first place to deliver

addysg, ond hefyd i ddarparu buddiannau cymunedol. Fy nheimplad i, ar ôl siarad ag awdurdodau lleol, ac yn sicr gydag ysgolion bach, yw eu bod yn bryderus nad yw'r arian oedd yn benodol ar gyfer ysgolion bach yn wreiddiol yn cael ei ddefnyddio yn llawn ar gyfer hynny. A fydddech yn derbyn bod eisiau ail edrych ar y ffordd y mae'r arian yn cael ei ddefnyddio fel ei fod yn benodol ar gyfer y pwrpas gwreiddiol a ddim yn cael ei rannu ar draws pwrpasau eraill?

Jane Davidson: Nid yw'n cael ei rannu ar gyfer pwrpasau eraill ond yr wyf yn hapus i edrych ar y sefyllfa i wneud yn siŵr bod y £3.5 miliwn yn cael ei ddefnyddio i helpu ysgolion bach. Mae'n bwysig hefyd i feddwl am y ffaith y bydd llawer llai o blant dros y blynyddoedd nesaf a bydd yn rhaid i bobl gynllunio'n strategol am hynny.

3.00 p.m.

Huw Lewis: Looking at this from the perspective of a Member representing a deprived area, I want to ask whether you agree that small rural schools are effectively doubly subsidised, first by the sparsity payments through local authorities, and secondly through the small schools fund. Do you not agree that that works almost entirely counter to a far more important factor, which is not taken into account so much in terms of funding schools: educational attainment? Are we not in a situation rather akin to running a casualty department that operates a triage system in which patients are quizzed on how far they have travelled to get there rather than the extent of their injury? Is it not the case that children in my constituency are effectively cross-subsidising those in rural areas, where the spend per head on education can be up to twice that in Merthyr and Rhymney?

Jane Davidson: It is important to achieve a balance. We put the additional funding into small and rural schools, particularly focused on the ways in which they can work with their community, on innovation, and to support teaching heads. However, we also put additional funding into tackling deprivation, and particularly low educational attainment. I strongly stand by that as a Minister committed to social justice. It is so important

education, but also to deliver community interests. My feeling, after speaking to local authorities, and certainly to small schools, is that they are concerned that the funding that was originally designated for small schools is not being fully used for that purpose. Will you accept that there is a need to reconsider how that funding is used so that it is used specifically for that original purpose and not shared across other purposes?

Jane Davidson: It is not shared across other purposes, but I am happy to look at the situation to ensure that the £3.5 million is used to help small schools. It is also important to think about the fact that there will be far fewer children over the next few years and people will have to plan strategically for that.

Huw Lewis: Gan edrych ar hyn o safbwynt Aelod sy'n cynrychioli ardal ddifreintiedig, hoffwn ofyn pa un a gytunwch fod ysgolion bach gwledig yn cael dau gymhorthdal i bob pwrpas, gan y taliadau ar sail teneurwydd poblogaeth drwy awdurdodau lleol yn gyntaf, a thrwy'r gronfa ysgolion bach yn ail. Oni chytunwch fod hynny'n gweithio bron yn gwbl groes i ffactor llawer pwysicach, nad yw'n cael ei ystyried yn nhermau ariannu ysgolion gymaint: cyrhaeddiad addysgol? Onid ydym mewn sefyllfa sy'n debyg i redeg adran damweiniau ac achosion brys sy'n gweithredu system blaenoriaethu cleifion lle y caiff cleifion eu holi ynghylch pa mor bell y maent wedi teithio i gyrraedd yr adran yn hytrach na'u hanafiadau? Onid yw'n wir bod plant yn fy etholaeth yn trawsgynnal y rhai mewn ardaloedd gwledig i bob pwrpas, lle y gall y gwariant fesul disgybl ar addysg fod dwywaith cymaint ag ym Merthyr a Rhymni?

Jane Davidson: Mae'n bwysig sicrhau cydbwysedd. Bu inni ddarparu arian ychwanegol ar gyfer ysgolion bach ac ysgolion gwledig, a oedd yn canolbwyntio'n arbennig ar y ffyrdd y gallant weithio gyda'u cymunedau, o ran arloesedd, ac i gynorthwyo penaeithiaid sy'n addysgu. Fodd bynnag, bu inni ddarparu arian ychwanegol hefyd i fynd i'r afael ag amddifadedd, ac yn arbennig cyrhaeddiad addysgol isel. Credaf yn gryf yn

for educational attainment that we get our early years programmes right, to really give children a flying start in life.

hynny fel Gweinidog sy'n ymrwymedig i gyfiawnder cymdeithasol. Mae'n hollbwysig ein bod yn sicrhau bod ein rhaglenni blynyddoedd cynnar yn briodol er lles cyrhaeddiad addysgol, er mwyn rhoi'r cychwyn gorau posibl i blant.

Lwfansau Cynhaliath Addysg Education Maintenance Allowances

Q6 Sandy Mewies: Will the Minister make a statement on the education maintenance allowances? OAQ0424(ELL)

C6 Sandy Mewies: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am y lwfansau cynhaliath addysg? OAQ0424(ELL)

Jane Davidson: More than 14,000 young people successfully applied for an EMA in 2004-05. It is excellent news that young people are taking advantage of this new incentive. We are delivering on our commitment to build on this success, and the EMA is available to both 16 and 17-year-olds this academic year.

Jane Davidson: Bu i fwy na 14,000 o bobl ifanc wneud cais llwyddiannus am LCA yn ystod 2004-05. Mae'r ffaith bod pobl ifanc yn manteisio ar y fenter newydd hon yn newyddion ardderchog. Yr ydym yn cyflawni ein hymrwymiad i adeiladu ar y llwyddiant hwn, ac mae'r LCA ar gael i bobl ifanc 16 a 17 mlwydd oed yn y flwyddyn academaidd hon.

Sandy Mewies: I am very pleased to say that more than 600 EMA applications have been approved in Flintshire, where they are making a significant difference to those participating in education at that level. In addition, 76 per cent of the approved applications came from students with a household income of £19,630 or less, which means that they were entitled to the maximum EMA of £30 a week. Do you agree that, in terms of social justice, the scheme is helping to deliver educational opportunities to those who need them most?

Sandy Mewies: Mae'n bleser gennyf nodi bod mwy na 600 o geisiadau LCA wedi'u cymeradwyo yn Sir y Fflint, lle y maent yn gwneud gwahaniaeth sylweddol i'r rhai sy'n cael eu haddysgu ar y lefel honno. Yn ogystal, gwnaed 76 y cant o'r ceisiadau a gymeradwywyd gan fyfyrwyr sy'n byw mewn cartrefi ag incwm o £19,630 neu lai, sy'n golygu bod ganddynt yr hawl i gael y swm uchaf o LCA sef £30 yr wythnos. A gytnwch, o ran cyfiawnder cymdeithasol, fod y cynllun yn helpu i gyflwyno cyfleoedd addysgol i'r rhai sydd eu hangen fwyaf?

Jane Davidson: I do. It is interesting that, in Wales, 76 per cent of young people are entitled to the maximum EMA, so we are clearly managing to target those who are most in need, and encouraging them to stay on in education. That must be good for us all.

Jane Davidson: Cytunaf. Mae'n ddiddorol nodi, yng Nghymru, bod 76 y cant o bobl ifanc yn gymwys i gael y swm uchaf o LCA, felly mae'n amlwg ein bod yn llwyddo i dargedu'r rhai sydd â'r angen mwyaf, a'u hannog i barhau ym myd addysg. Rhaid bod hynny'n beth da i bawb ohonom.

Ariannu Adnoddau ar gyfer Athrawon Cymwysedig Funding Resources for Qualified Teachers

Q7 Mark Isherwood: Will the Minister make a statement on funding resources for qualified teachers? OAQ0480(ELL)

C7 Mark Isherwood: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am ariannu adnoddau ar gyfer athrawon cymwysedig? OAQ0480(ELL)

Jane Davidson: Significant resources continue to be made available to support

Jane Davidson: Mae adnoddau sylweddol yn parhau i gael eu darparu i gynorthwyo

teachers in Wales. In 2005-06, total local authority education spend is set to rise to £1.845 billion; the better schools fund will provide £49.43 million, and £9.15 million is being made available for the structured professional development of teachers.

Mark Isherwood: Headteachers repeatedly say that they have not been given enough money to employ more teachers to fill the gaps in the timetable left by non-contact time and for the workload agreement. How do you respond to the primary school teacher, whom I copied in on a letter from you to me, and who replied:

‘This letter is a load of political rubbish, which still does not address the situation as it presents itself in the classroom. This is political spin from the Minister, who does not know the reality of the situation in teaching today.’?

Jane Davidson: I hope that that person also ensures that they take up their issues with the local union. I have just met all the unions in Wales that represent classroom teachers and headteachers, and, broadly speaking, people are content with the way in which the workload reforms are going. I am keeping a close eye on the issues.

athrawon yng Nghymru. Yn 2005-06, disgwylir i gyfanswm gwariant awdurdodau lleol ar addysg gynyddu i £1.845 biliwn; bydd y gronfa ysgolion gwell yn darparu £49.43 miliwn, ac mae £9.15 miliwn yn cael ei ddarparu ar gyfer datblygiad proffesiynol strwythuredig athrawon.

Mark Isherwood: Mae penaethiaid yn dweud yn rheolaidd nad ydynt wedi cael digon o arian i gyflogi mwy o athrawon i lenwi'r bylchau yn yr amserlen a adewir gan amser digyswllt ac ar gyfer y cytundeb llwyth gwaith. Sut yr ymatebwch i'r athro ysgol gynradd, y bu imi anfon ato lythyr yr anfonasoch chi ataf, a ddywedodd:

Mae'r llythyr hwn yn llawn dwli gwleidyddol, ac nid yw'n mynd i'r afael â'r sefyllfa sy'n bodoli yn yr ystafell ddosbarth o hyd. Sbin gwleidyddol gan y Gweinidog ydyw, nad yw'n ymwybodol o wirionedd y sefyllfa a geir ym myd addysg heddiw.?

Jane Davidson: Gobeithiaf y bydd y person hwnnw hefyd yn sicrhau ei fod yn codi eu pryderon gyda'r undeb leol. Yr wyf newydd gwrdd â'r holl undebau yng Nghymru sy'n cynrychioli athrawon dosbarth a phenaethiaid, ac, yn gyffredinol, mae pobl yn fodlon ar y ffordd y mae'r gwaith o ddiwygio llwythi gwaith yn mynd rhagddo. Yr wyf yn cadw llygad barcud ar y materion.

Canolfannau Blynyddoedd Cynnar Early Years Centres

Q8 Rosemary Butler: Will the Minister make a statement on the introduction of early years centres across Wales? OAQ0458(ELL)

Jane Davidson: I have made a commitment to establish at least one integrated centre in each local authority area. To date, 16 centres have opened, with an additional 15 planned for opening in the next six months. A further eight are planned by the end of March 2007.

Rosemary Butler: Thank you for that good news; that is excellent. The introduction of the foundation phase will transform the life chances of thousands of Welsh children, and will be another part of this jigsaw of

C8 Rosemary Butler: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am gyflwyno canolfannau blynyddoedd cynnar ledled Cymru? OAQ0458(ELL)

Jane Davidson: Yr wyf wedi ymrwymo i sefydlu o leiaf un ganolfan integredig ymhob ardal awdurdod lleol. Hyd yma, agorwyd 16 o ganolfannau, a bwriedir agor 15 ychwanegol yn ystod y chwe mis nesaf. Bwriedir agor wyth arall erbyn diwedd Mawrth 2007.

Rosemary Butler: Diolch am y newyddion da hwnnw; mae hynny'n ardderchog. Bydd cyflwyno'r cyfnod sylfaen yn trawsnewid bywydau miloedd o blant yng Nghymru, a bydd yn rhan arall o'r ddarpariaeth yr ydych

provision that you just talked about. The foundation phase is an exciting initiative, but, if it is to succeed, we have to provide quality training for teachers and classroom assistants. Could you assure me that sufficient money will be available, not only for initial training, but also for the essential ongoing training and development of all staff?

Jane Davidson: The foundation phase is a big vision for the Assembly Government for how we transform the life chances of three to seven-year-olds by using the free breakfast initiative, by building on the Flying Start initiative and by building on the integrated children's centres. I can assure you that we are absolutely focused on ensuring that people are trained—fit for purpose, as it were—for the job, and we have an ongoing evaluation of the scheme to ensure that everything appropriate will be in place as we move forward from piloting to full implementation.

newydd sôn amdani. Mae'r cyfnod sylfaen yn fenter gyffrous, ond, os yw'n mynd i lwyddo, rhaid inni ddarparu hyfforddiant o ansawdd ar gyfer athrawon a chynorthwyr ystafell ddsbarth. A allech fy sicrhau y bydd digon o arian ar gael, nid yn unig ar gyfer hyfforddiant cychwynnol, ond hefyd ar gyfer y broses barhaus hanfodol o hyfforddi a datblygu pob aelod o staff?

Jane Davidson: Mae'r cyfnod sylfaen yn weledigaeth fawr ar gyfer Llywodraeth y Cynulliad o ran y modd yr ydym yn trawsnewid cyfleoedd bywyd plant tair i saith mlwydd oed drwy ddefnyddio'r fenter brecwast am ddim, drwy adeiladu ar y fenter Cychwyniad Da a thrwy adeiladu ar y canolfannau plant integredig. Gallaf eich sicrhau ein bod yn canolbwyntio ar sicrhau bod pobl yn cael eu hyfforddi—yn addas at y diben, fel petai—ar gyfer y swydd, ac yr ydym yn gwerthuso'r cynllun yn barhaus er mwyn sicrhau bod popeth priodol yn ei le wrth inni symud ymlaen o'i dreialu i'w weithredu'n llawn.

Sefydlu o dan Reol Sefydlog Rhif 8.1 Bwyllgor yn unol â Deddf Ymchwiliadau 2005 i Ystyried Cylch Gorchwyl Ymchwiliad i'r Achosion E.coli Diweddar yng Nghymru

Establishment under Standing Order No. 8.1 of a Committee in Accordance with the Inquiries Act 2005 to Consider the Terms of Reference for an Inquiry into the Recent E.coli Outbreaks in Wales

Y Llywydd: Yr wyf wedi dethol gwelliant 1 yn enw Jocelyn Davies a gwelliant 2 yn enw David Melding.

The Presiding Officer: I have selected amendment 1 in the name of Jocelyn Davies and amendment 2 in the name of David Melding.

The Business Minister (Jane Hutt): I propose that

Y Trefnydd (Jane Hutt): Cynigiaf fod

the National Assembly for Wales, in accordance with Standing Order No. 8.1:

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru, yn unol â Rheol Sefydlog Rhif 8.1:

1. establishes a committee to consider the terms of reference for an inquiry into the recent E.coli outbreaks in Wales.

1. yn sefydlu pwyllgor i ystyried cylch gorchwyl ymchwiliad i'r achosion E.coli diweddar yng Nghymru.

2. The title of the committee shall be the Committee on the Inquiry into the E.coli Outbreaks in Wales;

2. Rhaid rhoi'r teitl a ganlyn i'r pwyllgor, sef y Pwyllgor ar yr Ymchwiliad i'r Achosion E.coli yng Nghymru.

3. *Membership of the committee shall comprise six Assembly Members, three from the Labour Party, and one each from Plaid Cymru, the Welsh Conservative Party and the Welsh Liberal Democrat Party.*

4. *The terms of reference of the Committee on the Inquiry into the E.coli Outbreaks in Wales will be:*

a) *to consider the terms and conditions for an inquiry;*

b) *to report to the National Assembly by 7 December 2005 on its conclusions.*

5. *The committee shall cease to exist on 7 December 2005. (NDM2602)*

The Government shares the wish of Members of all parties to learn the lessons from the E.coli outbreak to help to ensure that such events do not happen again. The importance of this process was underlined by the very sad death of Mason Jones, which was reported yesterday. I express my deepest sympathy to the family of Mason Jones and the people of Deri, who are so deeply affected by this tragic news.

It will now be for the committee to establish the terms of reference under which an inquiry will be conducted. There are questions that need to be asked about the systems in place to prevent an outbreak of E.coli, and there are questions that also need to be asked about the systems in place to deal with an outbreak where one has occurred. Indeed, the Minister for Health and Social Services, Brian Gibbons, outlined yesterday some of the steps that he has already taken to draw the most immediate conclusions that need to be taken from recent events. The committee will need to consider the tools required to carry out a more fundamental and wide-ranging review. It will have the responsibility of designing an inquiry vehicle that is fit for the important purposes that I have just outlined.

In supporting both the amendments, it may be helpful to draw to the surface some of the technical issues that the committee will need to consider at an early meeting. I am advised, for example, that, if an inquiry is to be established under the Inquiries Act 2005, a

3. *Rhaid i aelodaeth y pwyllgor gynnwys chwe Aelod Cynulliad, tri o'r Blaid Lafur, un o Blaid Cymru, un o Blaid Geidwadol Cymru ac un o Blaid Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru.*

4. *Cylch gorchwyl Pwyllgor yr Ymchwiliad i'r Achosion E.coli yng Nghymru fydd:*

a) *ystyried telerau ac amodau'r ymchwiliad;*

b) *adrodd i'r Cynulliad Cenedlaethol erbyn 7 Rhagfyr 2005 ynghylch ei gasgliadau.*

5. *Rhaid i'r pwyllgor beidio â bod ar 7 Rhagfyr 2005. (NDM2602)*

Mae'r Llywodraeth yn rhannu dymuniad Aelodau pob plaid i ddysgu'r gwersi o'r achosion o E-colli er mwyn helpu i sicrhau na welir digwyddiadau o'r fath eto. Tanlinellwyd pwysigrwydd y broses hon gan farwolaeth drist iawn Mason Jones, a gyhoeddwyd ddoe. Cydymdeimlaf â theulu Mason Jones a phobl Deri, y mae'r newyddion trasig hwn wedi effeithio'n fawr arnynt.

Mater i'r pwyllgor bellach fydd sefydlu'r cylch gorchwyl ar gyfer cynnal ymchwiliad. Mae angen gofyn cwestiynau am y systemau sydd ar waith i atal achosion o E.coli, ac mae hefyd angen gofyn cwestiynau am y systemau sydd ar waith i ymdrin ag achosion o E.coli. Yn wir, amlinellodd y Gweinidog dros Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol, Brian Gibbons, ddoe rai o'r camau y mae wedi eu cymryd eisoes i lunio'r casgliadau cyntaf y mae angen eu llunio yn sgîl y digwyddiadau diweddar. Bydd angen i'r pwyllgor ystyried yr hyn sydd ei angen i gynnal adolygiad mwy sylfaenol ac eang. Bydd yn gyfrifol am gynllunio cyfrwng ar gyfer yr ymchwiliad sy'n addas at y dibenion pwysig yr wyf newydd eu hamlinellu.

Wrth gefnogi'r ddau welliant, efallai y byddai'n ddefnyddiol amlygu rhai o'r materion technegol y bydd angen i'r pwyllgor eu hystyried mewn cyfarfod cynnar. Fe'm cynghorir, er enghraifft, er mwyn sefydlu ymchwiliad o dan Ddeddf Ymchwiliadau

chair of that inquiry would need to be appointed before terms of reference can be agreed, because any chair has the right to be consulted on the proposed terms of reference. However, the committee will receive advice on these issues relating to the Act.

The committee will also have to give careful consideration to the issue of timeliness, as the value of any inquiry is bound to diminish if its conclusions appear long after the events that gave rise to the questions have ended. Therefore, I am pleased to propose the motion and wish the committee well in the serious task that will now be passed to it.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: I propose amendment 1 in the name of Jocelyn Davies. In point 1, after the word 'inquiry', insert 'under the Inquiries Act 2005'.

Minister, thank you for supporting our amendment and for showing that you share our commitment to a public inquiry that will look at all the aspects of this occurrence, and the very sad death of Mason Jones. Once again, I extend my sympathies and those of Plaid Cymru—the Party of Wales group to his family. As I said yesterday, the least that we can do in memory of Mason Jones is to ensure that this inquiry is comprehensive.

I ask you to ensure that all the powers necessary to allow the committee to do its work and the inquiry to carry out its work are delegated to them. In addition, Minister, can you give a financial commitment that the committee will be able to decide where the finance should come from to allow it to carry out its work? It is important that we give a clear sign that the Assembly and the Government of Wales are totally committed to this inquiry and will allow nothing to hinder it from carrying out the important work that it has to do.

Jonathan Morgan: I propose amendment 2 in the name of David Melding. Insert as a new point 4 and renumber accordingly:

2005, y byddai angen i gadeirydd yr ymchwiliad hwnnw gael ei benodi cyn y gellir cytuno ar gylch gorchwyl, oherwydd gellir ymgynghori ag unrhyw gadeirydd ynghylch y cylch gorchwyl arfaethedig. Fodd bynnag, bydd y pwyllgor yn derbyn cyngor ar y materion hyn sy'n gysylltiedig â'r Ddeddf.

Hefyd, bydd rhaid i'r pwyllgor ystyried amseroldeb yn ofalus, oherwydd mae gwerth unrhyw ymchwiliad yn siŵr o leihau os yw ei gasgliadau yn ymddangos ymhell ar ôl i'r digwyddiadau a gododd y cwestiynau ddod i ben. Felly, mae'n bleser gennyf gynnig y cynnig a dymunaf yn dda i'r pwyllgor wrth iddo gyflawni'r dasg ddifrifol a drosglwyddir iddo bellach.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Cynigiaf welliant 1 yn enw Jocelyn Davies. Ym mhwynt 1, ar ôl y gair 'ymchwiliad', rhodder 'dan Ddeddf Ymchwiliadau 2005'.

Weinidog, diolch am gefnogi ein gwelliant ac am ddangos eich bod yn rhannu ein hymrwymiad i gynnal ymchwiliad cyhoeddus a fydd yn ystyried pob agwedd ar y digwyddiad hwn, a marwolaeth drist iawn Mason Jones. Unwaith eto, cydymdeimlaf, ar ran Plaid Cymru, â'i deulu. Fel y dywedais ddoe, y lleiaf y gallwn ei wneud er cof am Mason Jones yw sicrhau bod yr ymchwiliad hwn yn gynhwysfawr.

Gofynnaf ichi sicrhau bod yr holl bwerau sy'n angenrheidiol er mwyn galluogi'r pwyllgor a'r ymchwiliad i gyflawni eu gwaith yn cael eu dirprwyo iddynt. Yn ogystal, Weinidog, a allwch wneud ymwrymiad ariannol y bydd y pwyllgor yn gallu penderfynu o ble y dylai'r arian ddod i'w alluogi i gyflawni ei waith? Mae'n bwysig ein bod yn dangos yn glir bod y Cynulliad a Llywodraeth Cymru yn gwbl ymrwymedig i'r ymchwiliad hwn ac na fyddant yn caniatáu i unrhyw beth eu rhwystro rhag cyflawni'r gwaith pwysig y mae'n rhaid ei wneud.

Jonathan Morgan: Cynigiaf welliant 2 yn enw David Melding. Cynnwys pwynt 4 newydd ac ailrifo'r pwyntiau sy'n dilyn:

The chair of the committee shall be drawn from a party not represented in the Cabinet.

I am grateful to the Government for supporting our amendment that the initial committee, which will report by December this year, should be chaired by a Member from a party that is not represented in the Cabinet—that is only fair.

3.10 p.m.

In support of Rhodri Glyn Thomas's comments, it is important that we get this absolutely right. Many people in south Wales are expecting the inquiry to be very searching in the areas that it will look into. As I said when I paid tribute to him on the radio this morning, Leighton Andrews got it right yesterday when he said that we were looking for assurances that no question would remain unanswered, which is a very good starting point for the Assembly.

While the motion states that the committee will report to the Assembly by 7 December, we would welcome if the committee were able to report sooner. From our perspective, the sooner the better, because we want to ensure that we get on with this as quickly as possible.

Leighton Andrews: I thank Jonathan for his comments. This has been an issue that has now been with us for three weeks. We had very sad news indeed yesterday, and my colleague, Huw Lewis, expressed the feelings of us all in his comments on the statement.

There is no question that the outbreak is serious, and that it remains an extraordinarily large outbreak in Wales compared with the normal annual total. Many of us have constituents with children who have been taken to hospital in Bristol during the last few weeks. We understand the seriousness of the issue, and the concerns that parents have. I am glad that the inquiry is proceeding on an all-party basis, and that we have been able today to agree on an all-party basis on the way forward, as that is important.

It is also important that the inquiry's outcome does not take place on too extended a basis.

Rhaid dewis cadeirydd y pwyllgor o blaid nas cynrychiolir yn y Cabinet.

Yr wyf yn ddiolchgar i'r Llywodraeth am gefnogi ein gwelliant y dylai'r pwyllgor cychwynnol, a fydd yn cyflwyno ei adroddiad erbyn mis Rhagfyr eleni, gael ei gadeirio gan Aelod o blaid nas cynrychiolir yn y Cabinet—mae hynny ond yn deg.

Gan ategu sylwadau Rhodri Glyn Thomas, mae'n bwysig ein bod yn gwneud hyn yn hollol gywir. Mae llawer o bobl yn y De yn disgwyl i'r ymchwiliad fod yn drylwyr iawn yn y meysydd y bydd yn ymchwilio iddynt. Fel y dywedais pan fu imi dalu teyrnged iddo ar y radio y bore yma, yr oedd Leighton Andrews yn llygad ei le ddoe pan ddywedodd ein bod am gael sicrwydd y bydd pob cwestiwn yn cael ei ateb, sy'n fan cychwyn da i'r Cynulliad.

Er bod y cynnig yn nodi y bydd y pwyllgor yn cyflwyno adroddiad gerbron y Cynulliad erbyn 7 Rhagfyr, byddai'n dda gennym pe byddai'r pwyllgor yn gallu cyflwyno adroddiad yn gynharach. O'n safbwynt ni, gorau po gyntaf, oherwydd yr ydym am sicrhau ein bod yn bwrw ati mor gyflym â phosibl.

Leighton Andrews: Hoffwn ddiolch i Jonathan am ei sylwadau. Mae hwn yn fater sydd wedi bodoli ers tair wythnos. Cawsom newyddion trist iawn ddoe, a bu i'm cyd-Aelod, Huw Lewis, fynegi teimladau pob un ohonom yn ei sylwadau ar y datganiad.

Ni ellir dadlau bod yr achosion hyn o E.coli yn ddifrifol, a bod nifer yr achosion yn parhau i fod yn syndod o fawr o gymharu â'r cyfanswm blynyddol arferol. Mae gan lawer ohonom etholwyr â phlant sydd wedi cael eu derbyn i'r ysbyty ym Mryste yn ystod yr ychydig wythnosau diwethaf. Deallwn ddifrifoldeb y mater, a'r pryderon sydd gan rieni. Yr wyf yn falch bod yr ymchwiliad yn mynd rhagddo ar sail hollbleidiol, a'n bod wedi gallu cytuno ar y ffordd ymlaen ar sail hollbleidiol heddiw, gan fod hynny'n bwysig.

Mae hefyd yn bwysig nad yw'n cymryd gormod o amser i ddod i gasgliad yr

People are looking for answers, and it is important for us to restore confidence in the food supply chain into schools and into the quality of school meals, so that we can reassure people about the safety of school meals. No stone should be left unturned, in any inquiry, and people have a right to expect answers to the specific problems that have arisen in this particular incident. That is why an inquiry is appropriate, and I am glad that we are proceeding on an all-party basis.

Jenny Randerson: The Welsh Liberal Democrats are very pleased to support the motion and the amendments. The Minister said that the inquiry needed to be open and transparent, and I am glad that he has accepted that it will need to be held in public. Public confidence must be restored both in our ability to deal with such outbreaks in the future and in the quality of school meals. I was dismayed to read speculation in the press today about the safety of school food as a result of the outbreak. It is undermining much of the Assembly's work.

A cross-party approach will ensure that no-one can accuse the Government of political spin. As Leighton said, the key element is that this must be a detailed inquiry—it must have breadth as well as depth. It must look into the primary source of the infection and how it was dealt with, as well as the issue of secondary infections and how they occurred.

I have looked at the recommendations of the Scottish inquiry, and it is interesting to note that they cover elements as diverse as conditions and training in slaughterhouses, working practices on farms, training and conditions in meat-production premises, food hygiene in schools, food hygiene as a curriculum subject, the enforcement of food safety measures, the surveillance and investigation by relevant bodies, the role of the national public health service and the handling and control of outbreaks, including the adequacy of the resources devoted to them.

In Wales, we must ensure that we have a similar breadth. I am sure that exactly the

ymchwiliad. Mae pobl yn chwilio am atebion, ac mae'n bwysig inni adfer hyder yng nghadwyn cyflenwi bwyd ysgolion ac ansawdd prydau ysgol, fel y gallwn dawelu meddyliau pobl ynghylch diogelwch prydau ysgol. Dylid ymchwilio i bopeth, mewn unrhyw ymchwiliad, ac mae gan bobl yr hawl i ddisgwyl atebion i broblemau penodol sydd wedi codi yn y digwyddiad penodol hwn. Dyna pam mae ymchwiliad yn briodol, ac yr wyf yn falch ein bod yn mynd ati i'w gynnal ar sail hollbleidiol.

Jenny Randerson: Mae'n bleser gan Ddemocratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru gefnogi'r cynnig a'r gwelliannau. Dywedodd y Gweinidog fod angen i'r ymchwiliad fod yn agored ac yn dryloyw, ac yr wyf yn falch ei fod wedi derbyn y bydd angen iddo fod yn gyhoeddus. Rhaid adfer hyder y cyhoedd yn ein gallu i ymdrin ag achosion o'r fath yn y dyfodol ac yn ansawdd prydau ysgol. Siomedig oedd darllen erthyglau yn y wasg ddoe yn dyfalu ynghylch diogelwch bwyd ysgol o ganlyniad i'r achosion o E.coli. Mae'n tanseilio llawer o waith y Cynulliad.

Bydd ymagwedd drawsbleidiol yn sicrhau na all neb gyhuddo'r Llywodraeth o sbin gwleidyddol. Fel y dywedodd Leighton, yr elfen allweddol yw sicrhau bod hwn yn ymchwiliad manwl—rhaid iddo fod yn eang ac yn drwyadl. Rhaid iddo ymchwilio i brif ffynhonnell yr haint a sut yr ymdriniwyd â hi, yn ogystal â heintiau eilaidd a sut y bu iddynt ddigwydd.

Yr wyf wedi edrych ar argymhellion ymchwiliad yr Alban, ac mae'n ddiddorol nodi eu bod yn cwmpasu elfennau mor amrywiol ag amodau a hyfforddiant mewn lladd-dai, arferion gwaith ar ffermydd, hyfforddiant ac amodau mewn safleoedd cynhyrchu cig, hylendid bwyd mewn ysgolion, hylendid bwyd fel pwnc cwricwlwm, gorfodi mesurau diogelwch bwyd, gwaith arolygu ac ymchwilio gan gyrff perthnasol, rôl y gwasanaeth iechyd cyhoeddus cenedlaethol a'r modd yr ymdrinnir ag achosion o heintiau a'r modd y'u rheolir, gan gynnwys digonolrwydd yr adnoddau a neilltuir iddynt.

Yng Nghymru, rhaid inni sicrhau bod gennym gylch gorchwyl eang tebyg. Yr wyf

same fit would not apply, but we must have a similar breadth and depth in terms of our outbreak inquiry. We must look at the efficiency and effectiveness of what has happened this time to ensure that we learn the lessons and can contain outbreaks of this nature in future, and prevent them from occurring whenever possible.

Arweinydd yr Wrthblaid (Ieuan Wyn Jones): Yr wyf yn cydnabod bod y Llywodraeth wedi ymateb yn gadarnhaol drwy gefnogi'r ddau welliant. Bydd hwn yn ymchwiliad arloesol ar un ystyr oherwydd, hyd y gwyddom, dyma fydd yr ymchwiliad cyntaf o dan Ddeddf Archwiliadau 2005, ac felly mae'n gyfle i'r Cynulliad arloesi.

Mae'n bwysig bod y penderfyniad hwn yn cadarnhau y bydd yr ymchwiliad yn gwbl agored a thryloyw ac y bydd yn cael ei gynnal yn gyhoeddus, wrth gwrs.

Hoffwn gadarnhad ar ddau bwynt. Rhaid i'r cyhoedd, ac yn arbennig y teuluoedd sydd wedi'u heffeithio mor ddifrifol yn yr achos hwn, fod yn hyderus bod y system yn gallu cyflawni ymchwiliad lle maent yn ymwybodol o'r hyn sydd yn digwydd ac yn gallu clywed y dystiolaeth. Os oes modd iddynt glywed y dystiolaeth, a hynny'n gyhoeddus, bydd mwy o gyfle iddynt fod yn hyderus o ran unrhyw argymhellion y bydd yn dod allan ar y diwedd.

Yn yr ysbryd y mae'r holl ddadl wedi'i chynnal ynddi, mae'n bwysig ein bod yn cynnal y cytundeb trawsbleidiol. Mae'n dangos y gall y Cynulliad fod yn unol ar fater mor bwysig a difrifol.

The Business Minister (Jane Hutt): As you say, Ieuan Wyn, this will be an innovative inquiry. It needs to be open and transparent, and there needs to be confidence in the system, because, as Leighton and Jenny said, this is about ensuring that we restore public confidence and consider, as I am sure the cross-party committee will do, the whole range of issues and the breadth and depth of them. As Jonathan said earlier, that is what we need to look at in this inquiry. As Leighton said, this is about public confidence

yn siŵr na fyddai'r union gylch gorchwyl yn addas, ond rhaid inni bennu'r un fath o gylch gorchwyl eang a manwl o ran ein hymchwiliad i'r achosion. Rhaid inni edrych ar effeithlonrwydd ac effeithiolrwydd yr hyn a ddigwyddodd y tro hwn er mwyn sicrhau ein bod yn dysgu'r gwersi ac y gallwn reoli achosion o'r fath yn y dyfodol, a'u hatal rhag digwydd lle bynnag y bo modd.

The Leader of the Opposition (Ieuan Wyn Jones): I acknowledge that the Government has responded positively by supporting the two amendments. This will be an innovative inquiry in a sense because, as far as we know, this will be the first inquiry under the Inquiries Act 2005, and therefore it is an opportunity for the Assembly to be innovative.

It is important that this decision confirms that the inquiry will be open and transparent and, of course, that it will be held in public.

I would like confirmation on two issues. The public, and especially the families who have been so seriously affected in this case, must be confident that the system can deliver an inquiry where they are aware of what is happening and can hear the evidence. If they can hear the evidence, and do so in public, it will be more likely that they will have confidence in any recommendations that come out at the end.

In the spirit in which this whole debate has been held, it is important that we maintain cross-party consensus. It shows that the Assembly can be united on such an important and serious matter.

Y Trefnydd (Jane Hutt): Fel y dywedwch, Ieuan Wyn, bydd hwn yn ymchwiliad arloesol. Mae angen iddo fod yn agored ac yn dryloyw, ac mae angen ennyn ymddiriedaeth yn y system, oherwydd, fel y dywedodd Leighton a Jenny, y nod yw sicrhau ein bod yn adfer hyder y cyhoedd ac yn ystyried, fel y gwnaiff y pwyllgor trawsbleidiol, mae'n siŵr, yr holl faterion a hyd a lled y materion hynny. Fel y dywedodd Jonathan yn gynharach, dyna beth mae angen inni ei ystyried yn yr ymchwiliad hwn. Fel y

on a wide range of issues and it is about people understanding what this means for parents. We know that this is the feeling of parents in the village of Deri and all of the communities affected.

As setting up this cross-party inquiry is an innovative move, we do not have Standing Orders, for example, on how to handle it. We need to look at that in relation to the routes to be taken. We could have taken two routes: it could have been delegated to the First Minister, in which case the Welsh Assembly Government would take on the management and financing of the inquiry, but, as it has been delegated to the Assembly, we have to look at the appropriate way of handling the financing, and the Assembly Parliamentary Service will advise the Assembly when the terms of reference have been drawn up.

The key point today, across parties—and I, as Business Minister, agree with this, as does the Minister for Health and Social Services, as he said yesterday—is that this inquiry should be a no-holds-barred inquiry. We want to secure an outcome that restores public confidence and which gets to the bottom of this outbreak and ensures that we can use our powers as an Assembly to do that.

It is important that we now set up the committee. The cross-party membership has been agreed. The committee needs to get on with the job, and we need to ensure that the terms of reference are agreed and that the appropriate delegations are understood across the parties, and then we can take this forward accordingly.

dywedodd Leighton, mae a wnelo hyn ag ennyd hyder y cyhoedd mewn amrywiaeth eang o faterion ac mae a wnelo â sicrhau bod pobl yn deall beth y mae hyn yn ei olygu i rieni. Gwyddom mai dyma deimlad y rhieni ym mhentref Deri a'r holl gymunedau yr effeithiwyd arnynt.

Gan mai rhywbeth arloesol yw sefydlu'r ymchwiliad trawsbleidiol hwn, nid oes Rheolau Sefydlog, er enghraifft, ynglŷn â sut i ymdrin ag ef. Mae angen inni edrych ar hynny o ran y llwybrau i'w dilyn. Gallem fod wedi dilyn dau lwybr: gellid bod wedi'i ddirprwyo i'r Prif Weinidog, ac os felly byddai Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru yn ymgymryd â'r rôl o reoli ac ariannu'r ymchwiliad, ond gan ei fod wedi cael ei ddirprwyo i'r Cynulliad, rhaid inni edrych ar y ffordd briodol o'i ariannu, a bydd Gwasanaeth Seneddol y Cynulliad yn cynghori'r Cynulliad ar ôl i'r cylch gorchwyl gael ei lunio.

Y pwynt allweddol heddiw, ar draws y pleidiau—a chytunaf innau, fel y Trefnydd, â hyn, fel y gwna'r Gweinidog dros Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol, fel y dywedodd ddoe—yw mai ymchwiliad diarbed ddylai fod. Yr ydym am sicrhau canlyniad sy'n adfer hyder y cyhoedd ac sy'n mynd at graidd yr achosion hyn ac yn sicrhau y gallwn ddefnyddio ein pwerau fel Cynulliad i wneud hynny.

Mae'n bwysig ein bod yn sefydlu'r pwyllgor yn awr. Cytunwyd ar aelodaeth drawsbleidiol. Mae angen i'r pwyllgor fwrw ymlaen â'i waith, ac mae angen inni sicrhau y cytunir ar y cylch gorchwyl ac y deallir y dirprwyaethau priodol ar draws y pleidiau, ac yna felly gallwn weithredu ar hyn.

*Gwelliant 1: O blaid 54, Ymatal 0, Yn erbyn 0.
Amendment 1: For 54, Abstain 0, Against 0.*

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

Andrews, Leighton
Barrett, Lorraine
Bates, Mick
Black, Peter
Burnham, Eleanor
Butler, Rosemary

Cairns, Alun
Chapman, Christine
Cuthbert, Jeff
Davidson, Jane
Davies, Andrew
Davies, Glyn
Davies, Janet
Dunwoody, Tamsin
Essex, Sue
Francis, Lisa
German, Michael
Gibbons, Brian
Graham, William
Gregory, Janice
Griffiths, John
Gwyther, Christine
Hart, Edwina
Hutt, Jane
Idris Jones, Denise
Isherwood, Mark
James, Irene
Jones, Alun Ffred
Jones, Ann
Jones, Carwyn
Jones, Elin
Jones, Helen Mary
Jones, Ieuan Wyn
Jones, Laura Anne
Law, Peter
Lewis, Huw
Lloyd, David
Melding, David
Mewies, Sandy
Morgan, Jonathan
Morgan, Rhodri
Neagle, Lynne
Pugh, Alun
Randerson, Jenny
Ryder, Janet
Sargeant, Carl
Sinclair, Karen
Thomas, Catherine
Thomas, Gwenda
Thomas, Owen John
Thomas, Rhodri Glyn
Williams, Brynle
Williams, Kirsty
Wood, Leanne

*Derbyniwyd y gwelliant.
Amendment carried.*

3.20 p.m.

*Gwelliant 2: O blaid 54, Ymatal 0, Yn erbyn 0.
Amendment 2: For 54, Abstain 0, Against 0.*

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

Andrews, Leighton
Barrett, Lorraine
Bates, Mick
Black, Peter
Burnham, Eleanor

Butler, Rosemary
Cairns, Alun
Chapman, Christine
Cuthbert, Jeff
Davidson, Jane
Davies, Andrew
Davies, Glyn
Davies, Janet
Dunwoody, Tamsin
Essex, Sue
Francis, Lisa
German, Michael
Gibbons, Brian
Graham, William
Gregory, Janice
Griffiths, John
Gwyther, Christine
Hart, Edwina
Hutt, Jane
Idris Jones, Denise
Isherwood, Mark
James, Irene
Jones, Alun Ffred
Jones, Ann
Jones, Carwyn
Jones, Elin
Jones, Helen Mary
Jones, Ieuan Wyn
Jones, Laura Anne
Law, Peter
Lewis, Huw
Lloyd, David
Melding, David
Mewies, Sandy
Morgan, Jonathan
Morgan, Rhodri
Neagle, Lynne
Pugh, Alun
Randerson, Jenny
Ryder, Janet
Sargeant, Carl
Sinclair, Karen
Thomas, Catherine
Thomas, Gwenda
Thomas, Owen John
Thomas, Rhodri Glyn
Williams, Brynle
Williams, Kirsty
Wood, Leanne

*Derbyniwyd y gwelliant.
Amendment carried.*

Cynnig NDM2602 fel y'i diwygiwyd:
Motion NDM2602 as amended:

the National Assembly for Wales, in accordance with Standing Order No. 8.1: *Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru, yn unol â Rheol Sefydlog Rhif 8.1:*

1. establishes a committee to consider the terms of reference for an inquiry under the Inquiries Act 2005 into the recent E.coli outbreaks in Wales. *1. yn sefydlu pwyllgor i ystyried cylch gorchwyl ymchwiliad dan Ddeddf Ymchwiliadau 2005 i'r achosion E.coli diweddar yng Nghymru.*

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|---|---|
| <p>2. <i>The title of the committee shall be the Committee on the Inquiry into the E.coli Outbreaks in Wales.</i></p> <p>3. <i>Membership of the committee shall comprise six Assembly Members, three from the Labour Party, and one each from Plaid Cymru, the Welsh Conservative Party and the Welsh Liberal Democrat Party.</i></p> <p>4. <i>The Chair of the committee shall be drawn from a party not represented in the Cabinet.</i></p> <p>5. <i>The terms of reference of the Committee on the Inquiry into the E.coli Outbreaks in Wales will be:</i></p> <p><i>a) to consider the terms and conditions for an inquiry; and</i></p> <p><i>b) to report to the National Assembly by 7 December 2005 on its conclusions.</i></p> <p>6. <i>The committee shall cease to exist on 7 December 2005. (NDM2602)</i></p> | <p>2. <i>Rhaid rhoi'r teitl a ganlyn i'r pwyllgor, sef y Pwyllgor ar yr Ymchwiliad i'r Achosion E.coli yng Nghymru.</i></p> <p>3. <i>Rhaid i aelodaeth y pwyllgor gynnwys chwe Aelod Cynulliad, tri o'r Blaid Lafur, un o Blaid Cymru, un o Blaid Geidwadol Cymru ac un o Blaid Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru.</i></p> <p>4. <i>Rhaid dewis Cadeirydd y pwyllgor o blaid nas cynrychiolir yn y Cabinet.</i></p> <p>5. <i>Cylch gorchwyl Pwyllgor yr Ymchwiliad i'r Achosion E.coli yng Nghymru fydd:</i></p> <p><i>a) ystyried telerau ac amodau'r ymchwiliad; a</i></p> <p><i>b) adrodd i'r Cynulliad Cenedlaethol erbyn 7 Rhagfyr 2005 ynghylch ei gasgliadau.</i></p> <p>6. <i>Rhaid i'r pwyllgor beidio â bod ar 7 Rhagfyr 2005. (NDM2602)</i></p> |
|---|---|

*Cynnig fel y'i diwygiwyd: O blaid 54, Ymatal 0, Yn erbyn 0.
Amended motion: For 54, Abstain 0, Against 0.*

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

Andrews, Leighton
Barrett, Lorraine
Bates, Mick
Black, Peter
Burnham, Eleanor
Butler, Rosemary
Cairns, Alun
Chapman, Christine
Cuthbert, Jeff
Davidson, Jane
Davies, Andrew
Davies, Glyn
Davies, Janet
Dunwoody, Tamsin
Essex, Sue
Francis, Lisa
German, Michael
Gibbons, Brian
Graham, William
Gregory, Janice
Griffiths, John
Gwyther, Christine
Hart, Edwina
Hutt, Jane
Idris Jones, Denise
Isherwood, Mark
James, Irene
Jones, Alun Ffred

Jones, Ann
 Jones, Carwyn
 Jones, Elin
 Jones, Helen Mary
 Jones, Ieuan Wyn
 Jones, Laura Anne
 Law, Peter
 Lewis, Huw
 Lloyd, David
 Melding, David
 Mewies, Sandy
 Morgan, Jonathan
 Morgan, Rhodri
 Neagle, Lynne
 Pugh, Alun
 Randerson, Jenny
 Ryder, Janet
 Sargeant, Carl
 Sinclair, Karen
 Thomas, Catherine
 Thomas, Gwenda
 Thomas, Owen John
 Thomas, Rhodri Glyn
 Williams, Brynle
 Williams, Kirsty
 Wood, Leanne

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig fel y'i diwygiwyd.
 Amended motion carried.*

*Daeth y Dirprwy Lywydd i'r Gadair am 3.21 p.m.
 The Deputy Presiding Officer took the Chair at 3.21 p.m.*

Adroddiad Blynyddol y Pwyllgor Archwilio The Annual Report of the Audit Committee

Janet Davies: I propose that

the National Assembly for Wales, acting under Standing Orders No. 6.6 (vi) and No. 12.2 (iv), notes the annual report of the Audit Committee for the period 2004-05, which was laid in the Table Office on 28 June 2005. (NDM2601)

The Audit Committee's annual report sets out our work to ensure that the Assembly and other public bodies operate to the highest standards in the management of their financial affairs. To do this, the committee considers the reports of the Auditor General for Wales, takes evidence on these from senior officials, and produces its own reports, which make recommendations for improving the use of public funds. During the past year, the committee has published eight reports, which, between them, have included a total of 94 recommendations, the vast majority of which have been accepted by the Welsh

Janet Davies: Cynigiau fod

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru, gan weithredu'n unol â Rheol Sefydlog Rhif 6.6 (vi) a Rhif 12.2 (iv), yn nodi adroddiad blynyddol y Pwyllgor Archwilio ar gyfer y cyfnod 2004-05, a osodwyd yn y Swyddfa Gyflwyno ar 28 Mehefin 2005. (NDM2601)

Mae adroddiad blynyddol y Pwyllgor Archwilio yn nodi ein gwaith i sicrhau bod y Cynulliad a chyrrff cyhoeddus eraill yn gweithredu i'r safonau gorau o ran rheoli eu materion ariannol. Er mwyn gwneud hyn, mae'r pwyllgor yn ystyried adroddiadau Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru, yn cymryd tystiolaeth ar y rhain gan uwch swyddogion, ac yn paratoi ei adroddiadau ei hun, sy'n gwneud argymhellion ar gyfer gwella'r defnydd a wneir o arian cyhoeddus. Yn ystod y flwyddyn ddiwethaf, mae'r pwyllgor wedi cyhoeddi wyth adroddiad, sydd, gyda'i gilydd, wedi cynnwys 94 o argymhellion i

Assembly Government. These eight reports have covered a diverse range of issues, from waste management to museum collections management, and, of course, NHS waiting times. I will outline some of the main themes that have emerged from our work as a whole.

The first and foremost theme has been quality of life, and how public services can be improved to make this better. A prime example of this was our consideration of NHS waiting times. In looking at those, we recognised the detrimental effect of long waiting times on patients, their families and carers, and the personal cost to individuals of operations being cancelled at short notice. Some people had been waiting for a long time or had had to make special arrangements to cover their caring responsibilities.

Our consideration was not a matter of revelling in the problems. We made 13 specific, constructive recommendations to improve the situation. For example, in order to reduce the number of cancellations, we recommended that NHS trusts strengthen their pre-operative assessment processes and extend booking systems to in-patient and day-case treatments.

Over the past year, we also considered how existing resources could be used more wisely. Public bodies hold significant resources, and not just in the form of money; they also include staff, among other things. We have made recommendations to enable the better use of such resources, often through ensuring that management information is sufficiently robust, up to date, and relevant. For example, we found that in NHS trusts there was a general lack of robust data on the causes and cost of staff sickness. This limits the trusts' ability to take action where it is really needed, and prevents assessment of whether the action taken is having the desired effect.

I would also like to draw attention to the issue of better buying. Better procurement can release resources that can be used to

gyd, y mae'r mwyafrif llethol ohonynt wedi cael eu derbyn gan Lywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru. Mae'r wyth adroddiad hyn wedi ymdrin ag amrywiaeth eang o faterion, o reoli gwastraff i reoli casgliadau amgueddfeydd, ac, wrth gwrs, amseroedd aros y GIG. Amlinellaf rai o'r prif themâu sydd wedi deillio o'n gwaith yn ei gyfanrwydd.

Y thema bwysicaf oll fu ansawdd bywyd, a sut y gellir gwella gwasanaethau cyhoeddus i wella ansawdd bywyd. Un enghraifft dda o hyn oedd ein hystyriaeth o amseroedd aros y GIG. Wrth edrych ar y rheini, cydnabuom effaith andwyol amseroedd aros hir ar gleifion, eu teuluoedd a'u gofalwyr, a'r gost bersonol i unigolion pan fo llawdriniaeth yn cael ei chanslo ar fyr rybudd. Yr oedd rhai pobl wedi bod yn aros ers amser maith neu yr oeddent wedi gorfod gwneud trefniadau arbennig ar gyfer eu cyfrifoldebau gofalu.

Nid ymlawenhau yn y problemau a wnaethom wrth ystyried y mater hwn. Gwnaethom 13 o argymhellion adeiladol, penodol i wella'r sefyllfa. Er enghraifft, er mwyn lleihau nifer y llawdriniaethau sy'n cael eu canslo, argymhellwyd gennym y dylai ymddiriedolaethau'r GIG atgyfnerthu eu prosesau asesu cyn rhoi llawdriniaeth ac ymestyn systemau bwcio i driniaethau cleifion mewnol ac achosion dydd.

Dros y flwyddyn ddiwethaf, bu inni ystyried hefyd sut y gellid defnyddio'r adnoddau sydd ar gael eisoes yn fwy doeth. Mae adnoddau sylweddol yn nwylo cyrff cyhoeddus, ac nid ar ffurf arian yn unig; maent hefyd yn cynnwys staff, ymhlith pethau eraill. Yr ydym wedi gwneud argymhellion i'w gwneud yn bosibl i adnoddau o'r fath gael eu defnyddio'n well, yn aml drwy sicrhau bod gwybodaeth reoli yn ddigon cadarn, cyfoes a pherthnasol. Er enghraifft, gwelsom yn ymddiriedolaethau'r GIG fod prinder data cadarn ar achosion a chost salwch ymhlith y staff. Mae hyn yn cyfyngu ar allu'r ymddiriedolaethau i gymryd camau lle y mae eu gwir angen, ac yn eu hatal rhag asesu a yw'r camau a gymerir yn cael yr effaith a ddymunir.

Hoffwn hefyd dynnu sylw at brynu gwell. Gall caffael gwell ryddhau adnoddau y gellir eu defnyddio i wella gwasanaethau

enhance public services, and it can also directly enhance provision. Despite this, procurement is an area that we have often found to be under-resourced or undervalued. We have therefore given it significant attention in the past year. For example, we considered procurement in the further education sector, and identified several areas of particular scope for improvement, such as access to appropriate expertise.

Lastly, I would like to mention good financial management, which is essential to the sound stewardship of public funds. One of our particular concerns was about whether senior managers, outside finance departments, had sufficient information and expertise to control their budgets. We, therefore, recommended that the Welsh Assembly Government support its work to achieve improvement in its financial procedures with suitable training arrangements.

Several of the themes that have emerged from our work, such as better buying, can also be seen in 'Making the Connections'. We welcome this, and we are keen to reinforce the Government's efforts in these directions. We will, of course, not be uncritical in doing so, but we do intend to help by examining performance and ensuring that genuine progress is made.

In addition to the committee's regular scrutiny work, the committee has taken a keen interest in the creation of the Wales Audit Office on 1 April 2005. That included considering the income and expenditure estimates of the new office and consideration of the new code of audit and inspection practice for Wales, which provides an overall framework for the work of auditors across the various sectors of public service. The code should help auditors to achieve consistently high standards, regardless of whether they are auditing local or national bodies.

I and other members of the committee also played a significant role in the appointment of the new Auditor General, Mr Jeremy Colman. The new Wales Audit Office, bringing together central and local government audit and all levels of NHS audit in Wales, is a significant step forward in public accountability.

cyhoeddus, a gall hefyd wella darpariaeth yn uniongyrchol. Er gwaethaf hyn, gwelsom yn aml fod caffael yn faes lle y ceir prinder adnoddau neu'n faes sy'n cael ei danbriso. Felly yr ydym wedi rhoi cryn sylw iddo yn ystod y flwyddyn ddiwethaf. Er enghraifft, bu inni ystyried caffael yn y sector addysg bellach, gan nodi sawl maes arbennig y gellir eu gwella, megis cael arbenigedd priodol.

Yn olaf, hoffwn sôn am reolaeth ariannol dda, sy'n hanfodol i ofalu am arian cyhoeddus yn ddoeth. Un o'r pryderon mwyaf inni oedd pa un a oedd uwch reolwyr y tu allan i adrannau cyllid yn meddu ar ddigon o wybodaeth ac arbenigedd i reoli eu cyllidebau. Felly, argymhellwyd gennym y dylai Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru ategu ei waith o wella ei weithdrefnau ariannol drwy drefniadau hyfforddi addas.

Gellir hefyd weld sawl un o'r themâu sydd wedi deillio o'n gwaith, megis prynu gwell, yn 'Creu'r Cysylltiadau'. Croesawn hyn, ac yr ydym yn awyddus i atgyfnerthu ymdrechion y Llywodraeth i'r cyfeiriad hwn. Ni fyddwn, wrth gwrs, yn anfeiriadol wrth wneud hynny, ond bwriadwn helpu drwy archwilio perfformiad a sicrhau y gwneir cynnydd gwirioneddol.

Yn ychwanegol at waith craffu rheolaidd y pwyllgor, mae'r pwyllgor wedi dangos diddordeb mawr yn y broses o greu Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru ar 1 Ebrill 2005. Bu hynny yn cynnwys ystyried amcangyfrifon incwm a gwariant y swyddfa newydd ac ystyried y cod ymarfer archwilio ac arolygu newydd i Gymru, sy'n rhoi fframwaith cyffredinol ar gyfer gwaith yr archwilwyr ar draws y gwahanol sectorau o wasanaeth cyhoeddus. Dylai'r cod helpu archwilwyr i gyrraedd safonau cyson dda, boed iddynt fod yn gyrrff archwilio lleol neu genedlaethol.

Chwaraeais innau ac aelodau eraill o'r pwyllgor ran sylweddol hefyd ym mhenodiad Archwilydd Cyffredinol newydd, Mr Jeremy Colman. Mae Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru, sy'n dwyn ynghyd waith archwilio llywodraeth ganolog a lleol a phob lefel o waith archwilio'r GIG yng Nghymru, yn gam bras ymlaen o ran atebolrwydd cyhoeddus.

Looking to the future, the enhanced access and reporting powers of the Auditor General brought about by the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 should enable the use of public money to be tracked and checked more effectively. It is my sincere hope and expectation, which I am already seeing realised, that the Auditor General will use these powers to the benefit of my committee's scrutiny work. I also hope that these new powers, which allow for examinations that cut across the sectors of public service, including local government, will provide further opportunities for the committee to work with subject committees. Indeed, it is my intention, over the coming year, to seek to develop links with subject committees to facilitate such work.

I mentioned earlier that the Government has, in general, responded positively to the committee's recommendations. However, I must mention that some recent responses have been evasive, superficial and even downright sloppy. I will not let such poor responses pass. Of course, if the Government or another public body has a problem with some of our recommendations, or sees another way to achieve the intended objective, I expect them to set out their thinking in their response in a well-argued way. However, if the committee receives an evasive or superficial response, I intend to invite officials to explain matters fully—if necessary, by giving further evidence before the committee.

More generally, I am keen that our recommendations are followed up to ensure that they are not only acted upon, but also secure the intended benefits. We have occasionally had update reports and memoranda in the past. For example, at its last meeting, which was after the period of this report, the committee considered a memorandum from the Auditor General on progress in pursuing our predecessor committee's recommendations on the procurement of primary care medicines. This enabled us to identify that, while, due to other events, some recommendations had not been

Gan edrych i'r dyfodol, dylai pwerau mynediad ac adrodd ychwanegol yr Archwilydd Cyffredinol a grewyd drwy Ddeddf Archwilio Cyhoeddus (Cymru) 2004 ei gwneud yn bosibl i olrhain a gwirio'r defnydd a wneir o arian cyhoeddus yn fwy effeithiol. Mawr obeithiaf, ac mae hwn yn obaith sydd eisoes yn cael ei wireddu, y bydd yr Archwilydd Cyffredinol yn defnyddio'r pwerau hyn er budd gwaith craffu fy mhwyllgor. Gobeithiaf hefyd y bydd y pwerau newydd hyn, sy'n caniatáu archwiliadau sy'n rhychwantu'r sectorau gwasanaethau cyhoeddus, gan gynnwys llywodraeth leol, yn rhoi cyfleoedd eraill i'r pwyllgor weithio gyda phwyllgorau pwnc. Yn wir, fy mwriad, dros y flwyddyn i ddod, yw ceisio meithrin cysylltiadau â'r pwyllgorau pwnc er mwyn hwyluso gwaith o'r fath.

Soniaf yn gynharach fod y Llywodraeth, yn gyffredinol, wedi ymateb yn gadarnhaol i argymhellion y pwyllgor. Fodd bynnag, rhaid imi sôn am rai ymatebion yn ddiweddar a fu'n osgoi'r mater dan sylw, yn arwynebol a hyd yn oed yn esgeulus. Ni fyddaf yn goddef ymatebion gwael o'r fath. Wrth gwrs, os nad yw'r Llywodraeth neu gorff cyhoeddus arall yn fodlon ar rai o'n hargymhellion, neu'n gweld ffordd arall o gyflawni'r amcan a fwriedir, disgwyliaf iddynt nodi eu syniadau yn eu hymateb gan roi dadleuon clir. Fodd bynnag, os caiff y pwyllgor ymateb arwynebol neu un sy'n osgoi ymdrin â'r mater dan sylw, bwriadaf wahodd swyddogion i esbonio materion yn llawn—drwy gyflwyno rhagor o dystiolaeth gerbron y pwyllgor os oes angen.

Yn fwy cyffredinol, yr wyf yn awyddus bod sylw pellach yn cael ei roi i'n hargymhellion er mwyn sicrhau nid yn unig y gweithredir arnynt ond hefyd eu bod yn sicrhau'r buddiannu a fwriedir. Yr ydym wedi cael adroddiadau diweddar a memoranda o bryd i'w gilydd yn y gorffennol. Er enghraifft, yn ei gyfarfod diwethaf, sef ar ôl cyfnod yr adroddiad hwn, ystyriodd y pwyllgor femorandwm gan yr Archwilydd Cyffredinol ar hynt argymhellion y pwyllgor a'n rhagflaenodd ynglŷn â chaffael meddyginiaethau gofal sylfaenol. Bu hyn yn fodd inni nodi, er nad oedd rhai argymhellion

followed as intended, the Health and Social Care Department had certainly engaged with them, and both significant savings in medicines procurement, and improvements in prescribing practice, were being achieved. This sort of follow-up work seems to me to be a promising way of ensuring that the committee adds value. I am, therefore, asking the Auditor General to provide more in the way of follow-up material, regardless of whether it contains good news or bad.

I will finish with some words of thanks. I thank my fellow committee members for their hard work and disciplined approach. I very much appreciate the fact that, despite our looking at some potentially divisive material, the committee has maintained its positive cross-party way of working. The non-partisan operation of the committee is one of its great strengths. I also thank the committee's secretariat for their diligent and efficient support—not only the current clerk and her predecessor, but the current deputy clerk and her predecessor.

Again, I express my thanks to the former Auditor General, Sir John Bourn, for the work that he did, not just within the period covered by our report, but also before it, in helping us to establish audit and scrutiny arrangements since devolution. I also thank the new Auditor General, Jeremy Colman, and the Wales Audit Office, for their efforts in providing the committee with useful material.

3.30 p.m.

Finally, I thank the senior officials and other witnesses who have provided evidence constructively. Given that answering our questions requires officials to be fully on top of their subject, I appreciate that giving evidence before the committee is not an easy task.

Alun Cairns: Thank you, Dirprwy Lywydd, for giving me the opportunity to contribute to this debate. First, I would like to identify and underline the principle of audit, which is

wedi'u gweithredu yn ôl y bwriad oherwydd digwyddiadau eraill, bod yr Adran Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol yn sicr wedi mynd i'r afael â hwy, a bod arbedion mawr o ran caffael meddyginiaethau a gwelliannau mewn arferion presgripsiynu yn cael eu gweld. Ymddengys imi fod gwaith dilynol o'r fath yn ffordd addawol o sicrhau bod y pwyllgor yn ychwanegu gwerth. Felly bwriadaf ofyn i'r Archwilydd Cyffredinol ddarparu mwy o ddeunydd dilynol, pa un a yw'n cynnwys newyddion da ai peidio.

Gorffennaf drwy roi ychydig o ddiolch. Hoffwn ddiolch i'm cyd-aelodau ar y pwyllgor am eu gwaith caled a'u hymagwedd ddisgybledig. Gwerthfawrogaf yn fawr y ffaith bod y pwyllgor wedi parhau i weithio mewn ffordd drawsbleidiol gadarnhaol, er inni edrych ar ddeunydd a allai fod wedi bod yn gynhennus o bosibl. Mae'r ffordd y mae'r pwyllgor yn gweithredu'n amhleidiol yn un o'i gryfderau mawr. Hoffwn ddiolch hefyd i ysgrifenyddiaeth y pwyllgor am eu cymorth diwyd ac effeithlon—nid yn unig y clerc presennol a'i rhagflaenydd, ond hefyd y dirprwy glerc presennol a'i rhagflaenydd hithau.

Unwaith eto, hoffwn ddiolch i'r cyn-Archwilydd Cyffredinol, Syr John Bourn, am y gwaith a wnaeth, nid yn unig yn ystod y cyfnod a gwmpesir gan ein hadroddiad, ond hefyd cyn hynny, i'n helpu i sefydlu trefniadau archwilio a chraffu ers datganoli. Hoffwn ddiolch hefyd i'r Archwilydd Cyffredinol newydd, Jeremy Colman, a Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru, am eu hymdrechion wrth roi deunyddiau defnyddiol i'r pwyllgor.

Yn olaf, hoffwn ddiolch i'r uwch swyddogion a'r tystion eraill sydd wedi rhoi tystiolaeth yn adeiladol. O gofio bod angen i swyddogion feddu ar wybodaeth drwyadl o'u pwnc wrth ateb ein cwestiynau, gwerthfawrogaf nad yw rhoi tystiolaeth gerbron pwyllgor yn dasg hawdd.

Alun Cairns: Diolch i chi, Ddirprwy Lywydd, am roi cyfle imi gyfrannu i'r ddadl hon. Yn gyntaf, hoffwn nodi a thanlinellu egwyddor archwilio, sy'n rhywbeth eithriadol

exceptionally important to any government, but particularly to the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government. It is one of the tangible benefits—some would say few tangible benefits, others would argue otherwise—of devolution whereby we can demonstrate the significant sums of money that have been saved in the delivery of public services, and in the spending of public bodies. Sir John Bourn, as the former Auditor General, regularly highlighted that every £1 that we spent on his office resulted in seven pounds of savings in the longer term—that is in recognition of the Government generally responding positively to the recommendations, but I will come back to that later on—and that underlines the importance of audit and its remit.

I want to recognise the contribution of Sir John Bourn, as the Cadeirydd highlighted, in helping to form the committee. It was a sad day for the Assembly when he retired from his role as Auditor General for Wales. The clerk, and former clerk, of the committee also need to be recognised, and I understand that the former clerk is now the deputy clerk of the New South Wales Parliament. During the summer, I met the clerk of the New South Wales Parliament, who said that the audit skills gained by the former clerk in Wales are certainly playing a role in her new position in the New South Wales Parliament.

I also want to recognise the role played by the Cadeirydd, Janet Davies. In a brief discussion before this debate, she reminded me that the committee has not once taken a vote, and I believe that that is a great testament to the role that Janet has played as Cadeirydd. Some controversial issues have been discussed, in which, of course, there were party interests, but the non-party-political running of the committee has secured the interest of all parties and encouraged co-operation and collaboration in the interest of the Assembly.

Having thanked Sir John Bourn, I would like to welcome Jeremy Colman, the new Auditor General for Wales, who was involved in the formation of the Wales Audit Office. The feedback from the professions, from journalists and from those who will be audited by Jeremy Colman has been

o bwysig i unrhyw lywodraeth, ond yn arbennig felly i Gynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru a Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru. Dyma un o fanteision diriaethol—un o'r ychydig fanteision diriaethol, meddai rhai, ond byddai eraill yn anghytuno—i ddatganoli lle y gallwn ddangos y symiau sylweddol o arian a arbedwyd o ran darparu gwasanaethau cyhoeddus, a gwariant cyrff cyhoeddus. Amlinellodd Syr John Bourn yn rheolaidd, fel y cyn-Archwilydd Cyffredinol, bod bob £1 a wariwyd ar ei swyddfa yn arwain at saith punt o arbedion yn y tymor hwy—mae hynny mewn cydnabyddiaeth o ymateb cadarnhaol y Llywodraeth ar y cyfan i'r argymhellion, ond dychwelaf at hynny yn ddiweddarach—ac mae hynny yn tanlinellu pwysigrwydd archwilio a'i gylch gwaith.

Hoffwn gydnabod cyfraniad Syr John Bourn, fel yr amlinellodd y Cadeirydd, i helpu i lunio'r pwyllgor. Yr oedd yn ddiwrnod trist i'r Cynulliad pan ymddeolodd o'i swydd fel Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru. Mae angen cydnabod cler, a chyn-glerc, y pwyllgor hefyd, a deallaf fod y cyn-glerc bellach yn ddirprwy glerc Senedd De Cymru Newydd. Yn ystod yr haf, cwrddais â chlerc Senedd De Cymru Newydd, a ddywedodd bod y sgiliau archwilio a ddysgodd y cyn-glerc yng Nghymru yn sicr yn chwarae rôl yn ei swydd newydd yn Senedd De Cymru Newydd.

Hoffwn hefyd gydnabod rôl y Cadeirydd, Janet Davies. Mewn trafodaeth fer cyn y ddadl hon, gwnaeth fy atgoffa nad oedd y pwyllgor wedi cynnal yr un bleidlais, a chredaf fod hynny yn brawf gwych o'r rôl y mae Janet wedi ei chwarae fel Cadeirydd. Trafodwyd rhai materion dadleuol, lle yr oedd, wrth gwrs, buddiannau pleidiol, ond mae'r ffordd y cafodd y pwyllgor ei gynnal heb wleidyddiaeth plaid wedi sicrhau buddiant pob plaid ac wedi annog cydweithio a chydweithredu er budd y Cynulliad.

Wedi diolch i Syr John Bourn, hoffwn groesawu Jeremy Colman, Archwilydd Cyffredinol newydd Cymru, a oedd yn rhan o'r gwaith o greu Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru. Bu'r adborth gan y proffesiynau, gan newyddiadurwyr a'r rhai a gaiff eu harchwilio gan Jeremy Colman yn eithriadol

exceptionally positive, and he is more than capable of following in the footsteps of Sir John Bourn and of maintaining the integrity of the role. The Auditor General for Wales has a greater responsibility than the auditors of other governments because we do not have the close scrutiny of the detail and minutiae of many issues that is provided by some broadsheet newspapers in relation to public bodies in England. We do not have the benefit of that in Wales. Therefore, the responsibility often falls to the Auditor General. Support from both politicians and those being audited, as well as support from journalists, is exceptionally important in maintaining the strength and integrity of the role.

Having looked through the reports over the last 12 months, and having reminded myself of those investigations that the committee conducted, in two alone, the Auditor General identified either waste or saving—depending on how you want to interpret it—of £45 million. The report on NHS waiting times in Wales, which was published in January 2005, highlighted the £36 million that was wasted on the waiting time initiative. The report on the management of sickness absence in further education institutions highlighted the potential for savings of £9 million. It is interesting that we are having this debate the day after the debate on the draft budget. These savings need to be made on an ongoing basis, and they are not the answer to all of the calls and demands from the opposition parties. However, they highlight the potential for savings within the Assembly Government.

Yesterday, the Government highlighted the increase in public spending from just under £8 billion in 1999 to the current level of approximately £14 billion. In having such a large increase in public expenditure, there must be greater potential for savings.

Finally, I highlight the responsibility of the Welsh Assembly Government to act positively on the recommendations. I underline my earlier point that the recommendations were agreed unanimously without the need for a vote. Therefore, if the Welsh Assembly Government refuses to accept them in their entirety, there needs to

o gadarnhaol, ac mae'n fwy nag abl i ddilyn ôl troed Syr John Bourn a chynnal cywirdeb y rôl. Mae mwy o gyfrifoldeb ar ysgwyddau Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru nag archwilwyr llywodraethau eraill gan nad oes yma bapurau trymion yn craffu ar fanylion a manion yr holl faterion sy'n gysylltiedig â chyrrff cyhoeddus fel yn Lloegr. Nid yw'r fantais honno gennym yng Nghymru. Felly, cyfrifoldeb yr Archwilydd Cyffredinol yn aml iawn yw hynny. Mae cefnogaeth gwleidyddion a'r rhai a gaiff eu harchwilio, yn ogystal â chefnogaeth gan newyddiadurwyr yn hynod bwysig i gynnal cryfder a chywirdeb y rôl.

Wedi edrych drwy'r adroddiadau dros y 12 mis diwethaf, ac atgoffa fy hun o'r ymchwiliadau hynny a gynhaliodd y pwyllgor, mewn dau yn unig, canfu'r Archwilydd Cyffredinol naill ai gwastraff neu arbedion—yn dibynnu ar eich dehongliad ohono—o £45 miliwn. Amlinellodd yr adroddiad ar amseroedd aros y GIG yng Nghymru y £36 miliwn a wastraffwyd ar y fenter amseroedd aros. Amlinellodd yr adroddiad ar reoli absenoldeb oherwydd salwch mewn sefydliadau addysg bellach y posibilrwydd o arbed £9 miliwn. Mae'n ddi-ddorol ein bod yn cynnal y ddadl hon y diwrnod ar ôl y gyllideb ddrafft. Mae angen sicrhau bod yr arbedion hyn yn cael eu gwneud yn barhaus, ac nid dyma'r ateb i holl alwadau a gofynion y gwrthbleidiau. Fodd bynnag, maent yn amlygu'r arbedion posibl o fewn Llywodraeth y Cynulliad.

Ddoe, amlinellodd y Llywodraeth y cynnydd mewn gwariant cyhoeddus o ychydig o dan £8 biliwn yn 1999 i'r lefel bresennol, sef tua £14 biliwn. Â chynnydd mor fawr mewn gwariant cyhoeddus, rhaid bod mwy o botensial i wneud arbedion.

Yn olaf, amlinellaf gyfrifoldeb Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru i weithredu'n gadarnhaol ar yr argymhellion. Amlinellaf y pwynt a wneuthum yn gynharach fod y pwyllgor wedi cytuno ar yr argymhellion yn unfrydol heb fod angen pleidlais. Felly, os bydd Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru yn gwrthod eu derbyn yn eu cyfanrwydd, mae angen

be clear justification, because it should always be an exception when recommendations are not accepted.

Denise Idris Jones: I join my committee colleagues in endorsing the annual report and the work of the Audit Committee. I also extend my thanks to the clerk, the staff and the many individuals and organisations that have given evidence and provided invaluable assistance in the production of our many reports.

As a member of the committee, I am aware that publicly, and in the media, the audit agenda is not given the same level of attention as is given to other committees. However, its work is just as important and has a key role in influencing the effective delivery of programmes across the board of Assembly responsibility. One of the most interesting and unique aspects of the work of the Audit Committee over the last year, is the varied subject matter that we have considered, from the highly emotive and topical subject of NHS waiting times, to less widely reported matters such as the regulation of waste management.

As the report states, three of our publications this year highlight how resources could be used more effectively in different contexts, varying from better management of sickness absence within the NHS to ensuring the most effective delivery and maximised benefit to Wales from structural funds and the Objective 1 programme—a subject on which the committee reported back in 2002.

While we have been able to make valuable contributions to the effective delivery of Assembly policy, we are equally limited to the available information, data and statistics. As better data recording and greater statistical information becomes available, I believe that the work of the Audit Committee will become even more refined and valuable.

I look forward to the continuing work of the committee and to its continuing unique contribution, thereby improving efficiency, effective delivery of services and opportunities for the people of Wales.

cyfiawnhad clir dros hynny, oherwydd rhaid mai eithriad yw gwrthod argymhellion bob amser.

Denise Idris Jones: Ymunaf â'm cyd-aelodau ar y pwyllgor i gymeradwyo'r adroddiad blynyddol a gwaith y Pwyllgor Archwilio. Hoffwn hefyd ddiolch i'r cler, y staff a'r holl unigolion a sefydliadau a roddodd dystiolaeth a chymorth gwerthfawr wrth inni gynhyrchu ein llu o adroddiadau.

Fel aelod o'r pwyllgor, yr wyf yn ymwybodol nad yw'r cyhoedd na'r cyfryngau yn rhoi'r un sylw i'r agenda archwilio ag a roddant i bwyllgorau eraill. Fodd bynnag, mae ei waith yr un mor bwysig ac mae ganddo rôl allweddol i ddylanwadu ar ddarparu rhaglenni yn effeithiol ar draws holl gyfrifoldebau'r Cynulliad. Un o'r agweddau mwyaf diddorol ac unigryw ar waith y Pwyllgor Archwilio yn ystod y flwyddyn ddiwethaf yw'r holl faterion amrywiol a ystyriwyd gennym, o destun cynryfiadol ac amserol amseroedd aros y GIG, i faterion eraill a gafodd lai o sylw megis rheoleiddio rheoli gwastraff.

Fel y noda'r adroddiad, mae tri o'n cyhoeddiadau eleni yn amlinellu'r modd y gellid defnyddio adnoddau yn fwy effeithiol mewn cyd-destunau gwahanol, yn amrywio o reoli absenoldeb oherwydd salwch yn well o fewn y GIG i sicrhau'r ddarpariaeth fwyaf effeithiol a'r budd mwyaf posibl i Gymru o gronfeydd strwythurol a rhaglen Amcan 1—pwnc yr adroddodd y pwyllgor yn ôl arno yn 2002.

Er inni allu gwneud cyfraniadau gwerthfawr i'r gwaith o weithredu polisiau'r Cynulliad yn effeithiol, yr ydym hefyd yn gyfyngedig i'r wybodaeth, y data a'r ystadegau sydd ar gael. Wrth i'r gwaith o gofnodi data wella a mwy o wybodaeth ystadegol fod ar gael, credaf y daw gwaith y Pwyllgor Archwilio hyd yn oed yn fwy cywir a gwerthfawr.

Edrychaf ymlaen at barhad gwaith y pwyllgor a pharhad ei gyfraniad unigryw, a thrwy hynny wella effeithlonrwydd, darpariaeth effeithiol o wasanaethau a chyfleoedd i bobl Cymru.

Mick Bates: I start by offering my congratulations and thanks to the officials connected with the committee for the most effective way in which they have presented information and organised witnesses. I think that we often forget that they are responsible for inviting and taking care of our witnesses, and that it is done in such a polite and courteous manner. Those remarks also apply to the role of our Chair who has conducted the committee's work in an inclusive way, and, as other Members have said, has avoided any great conflicts or controversy and retained consensus on the whole aim of the committee.

It has been a special year, in that we have seen the establishment of the Wales Audit Office. In that respect, I also welcome Jeremy Colman and offer thanks to his predecessor, Sir John Bourn.

The Welsh Liberal Democrats welcome the second annual report. The Audit Committee is essential in ensuring that the people of Wales have value for money from the Assembly and other public bodies. It is vital that the Assembly and other public bodies operate to the highest standards of financial management in their affairs.

3.40 p.m.

The word 'audit' can often inspire dread and a sense of some dry issue. However, the key theme for this committee is improving quality of life. That theme focuses on the process of audit and on ensuring that the quality of the lives of ordinary people in Wales is improved by the scrutiny and examination of the delivery of the services that they receive. Take, as an example, the report on national health service waiting times, which noted that, despite the 26 per cent increase in expenditure in the NHS in Wales, waiting times still compared badly with those in England and Scotland. Patients in Wales continue to face unacceptable waiting times.

The committee also looked at encouraging wiser use of existing resources, especially with regard to the management of sickness absence in NHS trusts. It was quite shocking

Mick Bates: Dechreuaf drwy gynnig fy llongyfarchiadau a'm diolch i'r swyddogion sy'n gysylltiedig â'r pwyllgor am y ffordd hynod effeithiol y maent wedi cyflwyno gwybodaeth a threfnu tystion. Teimlaf ein bod yn aml yn anghofio mai hwy sy'n gyfrifol am wahodd ein tystion a gofalu amdanynt, ac y gwneir hynny mewn modd mor foneddigaidd a chwrtais. Mae'r sylwadau hynny hefyd yn berthnasol i rôl ein Cadeirydd sydd wedi cynnal gwaith y pwyllgor mewn modd cynhwysol, ac, fel y dywedodd Aelodau eraill, wedi osgoi unrhyw wrthdaro neu anghydfod mawr ac wedi cynnal consensws ynglŷn â nod y pwyllgor.

Bu'n flwyddyn arbennig, gan inni weld sefydlu Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru. Mewn cysylltiad â hynny, croesawaf hefyd Jeremy Colman a chynnig fy niolech i'w ragflaenydd, Syr John Bourn.

Mae Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru yn croesawu'r ail adroddiad blynyddol. Mae'r Pwyllgor Archwilio yn hanfodol i sicrhau y caiff pobl Cymru werth am arian gan y Cynulliad a chyrrff cyhoeddus eraill. Mae'n hanfodol bod y Cynulliad a chyrrff cyhoeddus eraill yn gweithredu i'r safonau uchaf posibl o ran rheoli eu materion ariannol.

Gall y gair 'archwilio' yn aml godi ofn a gwneud i bobl deimlo mai rhyw fater sych ydyw. Fodd bynnag, y thema allweddol i'r pwyllgor hwn yw gwella ansawdd bywyd. Mae'r thema honno yn canolbwyntio ar y broses archwilio ac ar sicrhau y caiff ansawdd bywyd bobl Cymru ei wella drwy graffu ar y ddarpariaeth o'r gwasanaethau a gânt a'u harchwilio. Ystyriwch, er enghraifft, yr adroddiad ar amseroedd aros y gwasanaeth iechyd gwladol, a nododd, er gwaetha'r cynnydd o 26 y cant yng ngwariant y GIG yng Nghymru, bod amseroedd aros yn parhau i gymharu'n wael â'r rhai yn Lloegr a'r Alban. Mae cleifion yng Nghymru yn parhau i wynebu amseroedd aros annerbyniol.

Edrychodd y pwyllgor hefyd ar annog defnyddio'r adnoddau sydd gennym yn ddoethach, yn arbennig o ran rheoli absenoldeb oherwydd salwch yn

to see that the total value of staff time lost to sickness absence in the NHS in Wales exceeded £66 million. On top of that, a further £14 million was used to cover the work of absent staff. This raises the issue of workplace stress and whether appropriate numbers of staff are being employed in the first place.

Collections and management in the national museums and galleries of Wales was also a cause for concern. We learnt that 4.7 million items are held and never put on display, and that only a third of these are on a computerised database. In both cases, the need for improved management of information is clear.

In NHS trusts, there is a general lack of robust data on the causes and cost of sickness, and on the way that effective data are transferred from one part of the NHS to another. Those of us who live in the border areas know of this issue to our cost, because, sometimes, patients' notes are not transferred quickly and effectively from hospitals across the border to their GPs in Wales.

Another theme that the committee has pursued, and which is very close to my heart, is supporting better buying. Good procurement makes savings, thereby releasing resources to be spent on other items. The committee's examination of procurement in higher education, underlying the need for greater efficiency in this area, highlighted weaknesses in performance measurement systems, and the profile of procurement as a function within higher education institutions was identified as a great weakness. This was particularly true in energy procurement and efficiency.

Good financial management is essential to delivering the best use of public money, and it was of great concern to the committee to learn that the Assembly Government was not using its new computerised financial management system to the best of its ability and was still reliant on a cash-based information management process. The computerised financial system supplies a

ymddiriedolaethau'r GIG. Yr oedd yn ddychrynlyd gweld i werth dros £66 miliwn o amser staff gael ei golli i gyd o ganlyniad i absenoldeb oherwydd salwch yn y GIG yng Nghymru. Ar ben hynny, defnyddiwyd £14 miliwn arall i ymdopi â gwaith y staff absennol. Mae hyn yn codi'r mater o straen yn y gweithle a pha un a gaiff y nifer priodol o staff eu cyflogi yn y lle cyntaf.

Yr oedd casgliadau a rheolaeth o fewn amgueddfeydd ac orielau cenedlaethol Cymru hefyd yn destun pryder. Cawsom ar ddeall bod 4.7 miliwn o eitemau ar gadw ac na chânt fyth eu harddangos, ac mai dim ond traean o'r rhain sydd wedi eu cofnodi ar gronfa ddata gyfrifiadurol. Yn y ddau achos hyn, mae'r angen am well rheolaeth o wybodaeth yn amlwg.

Yn ymddiriedolaethau'r GIG, mae diffyg data cadarn cyffredinol am achosion a chostau salwch, a'r ffordd y caiff data effeithiol ei throsglwyddo o un rhan o'r GIG i ran arall. Mae'r rhai ohonom sy'n byw ar y gororau yn ymwybodol o hyn yn anffodus, oherwydd, weithiau, ni chaiff nodiadau cleifion eu trosglwyddo'n gyflym ac effeithiol o ysbytai dros y ffin i'w meddygon teulu yng Nghymru.

Thema arall y mae'r pwyllgor wedi ei ystyried, ac sy'n agos iawn at fy nghalon, yw'r thema o gefnogi prynu gwell. Gwneir arbedion drwy gaffael da, a thrwy hynny ryddhau adnoddau i gael eu gwario ar eitemau eraill. Drwy archwiliad y pwyllgor o gaffael mewn addysg uwch, a ddangosodd fod angen mwy o effeithlonrwydd yn y maes hwn, amlinellwyd gwendidau yn y systemau mesur perfformiad, a nodwyd bod proffil caffael fel swyddogaeth o fewn sefydliadau addysg uwch yn wendid mawr. Yr oedd hyn yn arbennig o wir mewn cysylltiad â chaffael ac effeithlonrwydd ynni.

Mae rheolaeth ariannol dda yn hanfodol i wneud y defnydd gorau o arian cyhoeddus, ac yr oedd o bryder mawr i'r pwyllgor ddeall nad oedd Llywodraeth y Cynulliad yn defnyddio'i system reolaeth ariannol gyfrifiadurol newydd i'w llawn allu a'i fod yn parhau i ddibynnu ar broses reoli gwybodaeth sy'n seiliedig ar arian parod. Mae'r system ariannol gyfrifiadurol yn

much clearer information picture, and it better tracks, for example, grant expenditure

The committee was disappointed to learn that, in June 2004, 13 public bodies audited by the Auditor General for Wales, still had actions outstanding from the recommendations of 2001-02. Clearly, we have work to do. However, to end on a more positive note, since the instigation of the Assembly and its Audit Committee, it is estimated that savings of £115 million have been made to the taxpayer. As a member of the committee, I look forward to the challenges of improving scrutiny throughout Wales and to the cross-cutting issues that we need to scrutinise with other committees.

Mark Isherwood: I thank Janet Davies for her patience and fairness as Chair of the committee, both committee clerks for their dedication and hard work, and the former Auditor General for Wales, Sir John Bourn, for his advice and guidance. I also praise Jeremy Colman for the valuable contribution that he has already made as the new Auditor General. Last, but not least, tribute must be paid to the staff of the new Wales Audit Office for their professionalism and conduct during the metamorphosis of the Audit Commission in Wales and the National Audit Office in Wales into this new body.

In seeking to apply scrutiny to subjects crossing the full spectrum of the Welsh public sector, the burden on the Wales Audit Office and the Auditor General for Wales is perhaps more demanding than that placed upon equivalent bodies in England. The smaller size and interconnectedness of the Welsh public establishment makes independent and external scrutiny all the more crucial, where many of the checks and balances within and between Welsh public sector bodies can generate conflicts of interest that cannot be addressed without rigorous external accountability. The Welsh Audit Office must be, and remain, a paragon of virtue, independence and impartiality, working to a maxim of 'without fear or favour'.

cynnig gwybodaeth gliriach o lawer, a gall, er enghraifft, gadw llygad ar wariant grant yn well.

Yr oedd yn siom i'r pwyllgor gael ar ddeall bod 13 o gyrff cyhoeddus a archwiliwyd gan Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru ym mis Mehefin 2004 wedi methu â chymryd yr holl gamau gweithredu a oedd yn deillio o argymhellion 2001-02. Mae'n amlwg fod gwaith o'n blaenau o hyd. Fodd bynnag, i orffen ar nodyn mwy cadarnhaol, ers sefydlu'r Cynulliad a'i Bwyllgor Archwilio, amcangyfrifir bod arbedion o £115 miliwn wedi cael eu gwneud i'r trethdalwr. Fel aelod o'r pwyllgor, edrychaf ymlaen at heriau gwella craffu ledled Cymru a'r materion trawsbynciol y mae angen inni graffu arnynt gyda phwyllgorau eraill.

Mark Isherwood: Hoffwn ddiolch i Janet Davies am ei hamynedd a'i thegwch fel Cadeirydd y pwyllgor, dau glerc y pwyllgor am eu hymrwymiad a'u gwaith caled, a chyn-Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru, Syr John Bourn, am ei gyngor a'i arweiniad. Hoffwn ganmol Jeremy Colman hefyd am y cyfraniad gwerthfawr a wnaeth eisoes fel yr Archwilydd Cyffredinol newydd. Ac yn olaf, ond nid yn lleiaf, rhaid talu teyrnged i staff Swyddfa Archwilio newydd Cymru am eu proffesiynoldeb a'u hymddygiad yn ystod y gwaith o drawsnewid y Comisiwn Archwilio yng Nghymru a Swyddfa Archwilio Genedlaethol Cymru yn gorff newydd.

Wrth geisio craffu ar bynciau sy'n rhychwantu'r sector cyhoeddus yng Nghymru, mae'n bur debyg bod y baich ar Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru ac Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru yn drymach nag ydyw ar gyrff cyfatebol yn Lloegr. Mae maint llai a rhyng-gysylltiad sefydliad cyhoeddus Cymru yn golygu bod archwilio annibynnol ac allanol hyd yn oed yn fwy allweddol, lle y gall llawer agwedd ar y broses o gadw cydbwysedd o fewn cyrff y sector cyhoeddus yng Nghymru a rhyngddynt greu gwrthdaro buddiannau na ellir ymdrin â hwy heb atebolrwydd allanol llym. Rhaid i Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru fod yn fodel o rinwedd perffaith, annibyniaeth a didueddrwydd, sy'n gweithio yn ôl yr egwyddor o fod yn ddi-dderbyn-wyneb.

The Welsh Assembly Government has formally accepted 80 of the Audit Committee's 94 recommendations for the improvement of public spending and service delivery. However, this may not always have been quite as straightforward as first appeared.

Time is too short today to examine each of the committee's reports, so I will confine my comments to the report on NHS waiting times. The reality is that, for every four people on a hospital waiting list in May 1999, there are now seven people on a hospital waiting list in 2005. When the Welsh Assembly Government responded to the Audit Committee report on NHS waiting times, the Auditor General told committee that the good news was that some of the partial acceptances appeared to be full acceptances, but that the bad news was that the summary of the Welsh Assembly Government's response did not appear to reflect the detail of it.

It is apparent that the Welsh Assembly Government has displayed a degree of complacency, which has stood as a barrier to future progress. I refer to evidence given to the Audit Committee by Wrexham Local Health Board, which confirmed that an increase in delayed transfers of care had been caused by a shortage of provision for the elderly mentally infirm, by inadequate local authority resources impacting on the social services budget, and by cuts in the independent care-homes sector.

When an efficient administration is shown problems and solutions, it will be moved to act, recognising that success depends on knowing what works, and bringing resources to the problem. However, too often, the dogma, self-flattery and lack of expertise of this Welsh Assembly Government have led it to substitute clever words for effective action. This denial of reality and accountability by a Government that is poor at drawing on the knowledge and experience of those who know more is handicapping the whole public sector in Wales.

Mae Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru wedi derbyn yn ffurfiol 80 o 94 o argymhellion y Pwyllgor Archwilio ar gyfer gwella gwariant cyhoeddus a'r ddarpariaeth o wasanaethau. Fodd bynnag, efallai na fu hyn mor syml ag y tybiwyd ar y dechrau.

Nid oes digon o amser heddiw i archwilio pob un o adroddiadau'r pwyllgor, felly cyfyngaf fy sylwadau i'r adroddiad ar amseroedd aros y GIG. Y gwir amdani yw, am bob pedwar person a oedd ar restr aros ysbyty ym mis Mai 1999, bod saith o bobl bellach ar restr aros ysbyty yn 2005. Pan ymatebodd Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru i adroddiad y Pwyllgor Archwilio ar amseroedd aros y GIG, dywedodd yr Archwilydd Cyffredinol wrth y pwyllgor mai'r newyddion da oedd yr ymddengys bod rhai o'r bobl a dderbyniwyd yn rhannol wedi'u derbyn yn llawn, ond y newyddion drwg oedd nad ymddengys fod y crynodeb o ymateb Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru wedi adlewyrchu'r manylion hyn.

Mae'n amlwg bod Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru wedi bod ychydig yn hunanfodlon, a fu yn rhwystr i wneud cynnydd yn y dyfodol. Cyfeiriaf at dystiolaeth a roddwyd i'r Pwyllgor Archwilio gan Fwrdd Iechyd Lleol Wrecsam, a gadarnhaodd fod cynnydd yn nifer yr achosion o oedi wrth drosglwyddo gofal oherwydd diffyg darpariaeth ar gyfer henoed eiddil eu meddwl, oherwydd adnoddau annigonol awdurdodau lleol yn effeithio ar gyllideb y gwasanaethau cyhoeddus, ac oherwydd toriadau yn y sector cartrefi gofal annibynnol.

Pan ddangosir problemau ac atebion i weinyddiaeth effeithlon, bydd yn cael ei hysgogi i weithredu, gan gydnabod bod angen gwybod beth sy'n gweithio, a darparu adnoddau ar gyfer y broblem er mwyn llwyddo. Fodd bynnag, yn rhy aml, mae dogma, hunan-dyb a diffyg profiad Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru wedi golygu ei bod yn dweud geiriau clyfar yn hytrach na gweithredu'n effeithiol. Mae'r amharodrwydd hwn i dderbyn realiti ac atebolrwydd ar ran Llywodraeth nad yw'n mynd ati i fanteisio ar wybodaeth a phrofiad y rhai sy'n gwybod mwy yn rhoi'r holl sector cyhoeddus yng Nghymru o dan anfantais.

This was highlighted by the Auditor General in committee on 23 June, when he described the Welsh Assembly Government's response to the Audit Committee report on Environment Agency Wales's regulation of waste management as unsatisfactory. He said that the Welsh Assembly Government appeared to have rejected the committee recommendations that were important, and that it was unusual for a response to be as unhelpful as this.

This reinforces the crucial role played by the Wales Audit Office and the Audit Committee in ensuring that such matters should not be left to rest, and that local and national Government, as well as public sector bodies in Wales, must be subject to the forensic searchlight of public audit. While deregulation and decentralisation must be prioritised, and power devolved to the front line, the role of external accountability will become ever more essential if we are to truly establish open Government in Wales.

In this context, I conclude by condemning, and sounding alarm bells about, Ministers using their reports to their own committees to criticise and even politicise reports by the Wales Audit Office. I will not name the Minister concerned, but they will know who I am talking about. This is particularly chilling given their own track record for shooting the messenger when auditors have previously highlighted areas of concern within Labour local government. We must all be on our guard.

The Business Minister (Jane Hutt): I endorse this latest annual report of the Audit Committee, and thank the committee for its continued excellent work. I thank Janet Davies in particular; as Chair of the committee, she has maintained the high standards that she has been instrumental in setting.

We have all referred to the inclusive way in which the committee works, delivering positive outcomes. As speakers have identified, this is about ensuring that the Audit Committee helps improve the

Amlygwyd hyn gan yr Archwilydd Cyffredinol yn y pwyllgor ar 23 Mehefin, pan nododd fod ymateb Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru i adroddiad y Pwyllgor Archwilio ar y ffordd y mae Asiantaeth yr Amgylchedd Cymru yn rheoleiddio rheoli gwastraff yn anfodddhaol. Dywedodd fod Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru wedi gwrthod argymhellion pwysig y pwyllgor i bob golwg, ac mai anarferol oedd cael ymateb mor negyddol.

Mae hyn yn atgyfnerthu'r rôl allweddol a chwaraeir gan Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru a'r Pwyllgor Archwilio i sicrhau na ddylid gadael i faterion o'r fath fod, ac y dylai Llywodraeth leol a chenedlaethol, yn ogystal â chyrrff y sector cyhoeddus yng Nghymru, fod yn agored i archwiliad cyhoeddus manwl. Er bod rhaid rhoi blaenoriaeth i ddadroleiddio a datganoli, a bod rhaid datganoli pŵer i'r rheng flaen, bydd rôl atebolrwydd allanol yn mynd yn fwyfwy pwysig os ydym am sefydlu Llywodraeth wirioneddol agored yng Nghymru.

Yn y cyd-destun hwn, gorffennaf drwy gondemnio a thynnu sylw at Weinidogion sy'n defnyddio eu hadroddiadau i'w pwyllgorau eu hunain i feirniadu adroddiadau gan Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru a hyd yn oed rhoi elfen wleidyddol iddynt. Nid enwaf y Gweinidog dan sylw, ond fe wŷr pwy yr wyf yn siarad amdano. Mae hyn yn arbennig o frawychus o ystyried ei record ei hun am feio'r negesydd ar ôl i archwilwyr amlygu meysydd sy'n peri pryder o fewn llywodraeth leol Lafur yn y gorffennol. Rhaid inni oll fod yn ochelgar.

Y Trefnydd (Jane Hutt): Cymeradwyaf adroddiad blynyddol diwethaf y Pwyllgor Archwilio, a diolchaf i'r pwyllgor am barhau â'i waith ardderchog. Hoffwn ddiolch yn arbennig i Janet Davies; fel Cadeirydd y pwyllgor, mae wedi cynnal y safonau uchel y cyfrannodd at eu sefydlu.

Mae pob un ohonom wedi cyfeirio at y modd cynhwysol y mae'r pwyllgor yn gweithio, gan arwain at ganlyniadau cadarnhaol. Fel y nodwyd gan siaradwyr, mae hyn yn golygu sicrhau bod y Pwyllgor Archwilio yn helpu i

management of public services and public resources. As you say, Mick, the delivery of public services is about improving people's quality of life, and about helping to ensure that public bodies, including the Assembly, operate to the highest possible financial standards.

As you say, Janet, audit has to be about a rigorous process, and you adhere to that in the committee. The Government gives the highest credence to this process, and to the role and status of the Audit Committee. There is a place to discuss policy, and to scrutinise that policy, in the Chamber and at subject committees, Mark, and the Minister for Health and Social Services has been fully engaged in that in terms of the reports that you comment on. We must use audit as an opportunity for the Government to respond in that inclusive way.

3.50 p.m.

The Assembly Government, Alun, has taken on board nearly all the recommendations of the Audit Committee and followed them up to ensure that they were implemented as soon as possible.

I also thank Janet for acknowledging the positive outcomes that have shown the savings and the impact of the health and social care department's work. This is what the public want to know, namely that the process has delivered savings, better management and better public services. On Denise's point, work can be even more refined and valuable as a result of the strengthening and the experience of the Audit Committee.

In conclusion, as Business Minister, I am reassured by the ongoing work of the committee, and I will ensure, along with my Cabinet colleagues, that all reports and recommendations are given our full attention.

Janet Davies: First, I thank the Minister and Members for their positive comments about the committee's work. I will bring out two points. Alun Cairns said that this was one of the particularly beneficial results of

wella'r ffordd y caiff gwasanaethau cyhoeddus ac adnoddau cyhoeddus eu rheoli. Fel y dywedwch, Mick, mae darparu gwasanaethau cyhoeddus yn golygu gwella ansawdd bywyd pobl, a helpu i sicrhau bod cyrff cyhoeddus, gan gynnwys y Cynulliad, yn gweithredu i'r safonau ariannol uchaf posibl.

Fel y dywedwch, Janet, rhaid i'r broses archwilio fod yn un lem, ac yr ydych yn glynu wrth hynny yn y pwyllgor. Rhydd y Llywodraeth y goel fwyaf ar y broses hon, ac ar rôl a statws y Pwyllgor Archwilio. Ceir cyfle i drafod polisi, ac i graffu ar y polisi hwnnw, ac yn y Siambr ac yn y pwyllgorau pwnc, mae Mark, a'r Gweinidog dros Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus wedi cymryd rhan lawn yn hynny o ran yr adroddiadau yr ydych yn rhoi sylwadau arnynt. Rhaid inni ddefnyddio'r broses archwilio fel cyfle i'r Llywodraeth ymateb yn y ffordd gynhwysol honno.

Alun, mae Llywodraeth y Cynulliad wedi derbyn bron bob un o argymhellion y Pwyllgor Archwilio ac wedi rhoi sylw pellach iddynt er mwyn sicrhau eu bod yn cael eu gweithredu cyn gynted â phosibl.

Hoffwn ddiolch i Janet hefyd am gydnabod y canlyniadau cadarnhaol sydd wedi dangos yr arbedion ac effaith gwaith yr adran iechyd a gofal cymdeithasol. Dyma beth y mae'r cyhoedd am ei wybod, sef bod y broses wedi sicrhau arbedion, rheolaeth well a gwasanaethau cyhoeddus gwell. O ran pwynt Denise, gall y gwaith fod hyd yn oed yn fwy cywir a gwerthfawr o ganlyniad i'r gwaith a wnaed i atgyfnerthu'r Pwyllgor Archwilio ac o ganlyniad i brofiad y Pwyllgor Archwilio.

I gloi, fel y Trefnydd, caf fy sicrhau gan waith parhaus y pwyllgor, a byddaf yn sicrhau, ynghyd â'm cyd-Weinidogion yn y Cabinet, ein bod yn rhoi ein sylw llawn i bob adroddiad ac argymhelliad.

Janet Davies: I ddechrau, hoffwn ddiolch i'r Gweinidog ac i'r Aelodau am eu sylwadau cadarnhaol am waith y pwyllgor. Cyfeiriaf at ddau bwynt. Dywedodd Alun Cairns mai hwn oedd un o ganlyniadau buddiol iawn

devolution. However, it is also important for devolution that the Audit Committee is seen, clearly, to be doing the work that it is meant to do. The other point that I wanted to refer to was the issue of good data. Too often, the Wales Audit Office has to go around the houses a bit to try to get data that it feels it can rely upon. More work needs to be done to ensure that there is robust and comparable data throughout Wales and, where appropriate, between Wales and England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Those are the only points that arose from the debate, and I thank you all again.

datganoli. Fodd bynnag, mae hefyd yn bwysig ar gyfer datganoli bod y Pwyllgor Archwilio yn cael ei weld yn gwneud y gwaith y dylai ei wneud. Y pwynt arall yr hoffwn gyfeirio ato oedd y mater o ddata da. Yn rhy aml, mae Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru wedi gorfod gwneud llawer o waith ymchwil er mwyn cael data y cred y gall ddibynnu arno. Mae angen gwneud mwy o waith er mwyn sicrhau bod data cadarn a chymharol ledled Cymru a, lle y bo'n briodol, rhwng Cymru a Lloegr, yr Alban a Gogledd Iwerddon. Dyna'r unig bwyntiau a gododd o'r ddadl, a diolch ichi i gyd eto.

*Cynnig (NDM601): O blaid 30, Ymatal 0, Yn erbyn 0.
Motion (NDM601): For 30, Abstain 0, Against 0.*

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

Andrews, Leighton
Barrett, Lorraine
Bates, Mick
Black, Peter
Burnham, Eleanor
Butler, Rosemary
Cairns, Alun
Chapman, Christine
Cuthbert, Jeff
Davidson, Jane
Davies, Janet
Dunwoody, Tamsin
Francis, Lisa
Gibbons, Brian
Graham, William
Gregory, Janice
Gwyther, Christine
Hutt, Jane
Idris Jones, Denise
Isherwood, Mark
James, Irene
Jones, Ann
Law, Peter
Lewis, Huw
Morgan, Rhodri
Randerson, Jenny
Ryder, Janet
Sargeant, Carl
Thomas, Catherine
Thomas, Gwenda

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig.
Motion carried.*

Dadl Fer Short Debate

Addysg Uwch: Llwybrau Allan o Dlodi Higher Education: Pathways out of Poverty

Jeff Cuthbert: I have received requests, in the following order, from Members who wish to contribute to this debate; Huw Lewis, Leighton Andrews, Peter Black, William Graham and Janet Ryder.

Education has always provided vital pathways out of poverty for deprived communities in Wales, none more so than in the south Wales Valleys. Social mobility too has always lain at the heart of the Labour Party, with the firm belief that worth, not birth, should be the basis of personal advancement. The new higher education arrangements have the potential to be a new beginning for Valleys communities by delivering enhanced support for part-time students.

Educational attainment and basic skills levels in the south Wales Valleys are still low. This is especially worrying given that the population of the Valleys accounts for over 30 per cent of the entire population of Wales. According to the 2001 census, 39 per cent of the population of Caerphilly still have no qualifications, with only 12 per cent obtaining an initial degree or higher. With social conditions such as this present in modern Wales, it is clear that our deprived communities should be the major focus and beneficiary of our current higher education reforms. Social justice within higher education can, and must, be achieved, and it can only be achieved if we meet the unique needs of deprived communities and deliver true equality between part-time and full-time students. The new higher education funding agreement has the potential to deliver on the Labour promise of advancement on worth, while delivering new pathways out of poverty for Valleys communities.

If we are to engender a culture of participation in higher education in the Valleys, then skills and learning must be taken into communities and local delivery encouraged. This must be balanced, however,

Jeff Cuthbert: Yr wyf wedi derbyn ceisiadau, yn y drefn ganlynol, gan Aelodau sy'n dymuno cyfrannu at y ddadl hon; Huw Lewis, Leighton Andrews, Peter Black, William Graham a Janet Ryder.

Mae addysg wedi bod yn llwybr pwysig allan o dlodi ar gyfer cymunedau difreintiedig yng Nghymru erioed, ac yn anad dim yng Nghymoedd y De. Mae symudedd cymdeithasol erioed wedi bod wrth wraidd y Blaid Lafur hefyd, gyda'r gred gadarn mai gwerth person yn hytrach na'i gefndir ddylai fod yn sail i ddatblygiad personol. Mae gan y trefniadau addysg uwch newydd y potensial i greu dechrau newydd i gymunedau'r Cymoedd drwy ddarparu cymorth gwell i fyfyrwyr rhan-amser.

Mae cyrhaeddiad addysgol a sgiliau sylfaenol yn wael o hyd yng Nghymoedd y De. Mae hyn yn peri pryder arbennig o gofio bod dros 30 y cant o holl boblogaeth Cymru yn byw yn y Cymoedd. Yn ôl cyfrifiad 2001, nid oes gan 39 y cant o boblogaeth Caerffili unrhyw gymwysterau o hyd, a dim ond 12 y cant sydd â gradd gychwynnol neu gymhwyster uwch. Gydag amodau cymdeithasol o'r fath yn y Gymru fodern, mae'n amlwg mai ar ein cymunedau difreintiedig y dylai prif ffocws ein diwygiadau addysg uwch presennol fod ac mai hwy a ddylai elwa'n bennaf. Gellir cyflawni cyfiawnder cymdeithasol o fewn addysg uwch, a rhaid cyflawni hyn, a dim ond drwy ddiwallu anghenion unigryw cymunedau difreintiedig a sicrhau cydraddoldeb gwirioneddol rhwng myfyrwyr rhan-amser a myfyrwyr llawn amser y gellir cyflawni hyn. Mae gan y cytundeb ariannu addysg uwch newydd y potensial i gyflawni addewid Llafur i ddatblygiad ar sail gwerth, tra'n rhoi llwybrau newydd allan o dlodi i gymunedau'r Cymoedd.

Er mwyn inni greu diwylliant o gyfranogiad mewn addysg uwch yn y Cymoedd, rhaid darparu sgiliau a dysgu mewn cymunedau ac annog darpariaeth leol. Fodd bynnag, rhaid cydbwysu hyn gyda strategaeth gyffredinol

by an overall strategy that delivers effectively across local authority boundaries. The strategic framework for the Heads of the Valleys could be a vehicle to implement our higher education reforms.

Students enter access courses and higher education because they want a job at the end of the course. Our higher education system is more inclusive than it has ever been. Labour is passionate about increasing the number of new entrants from Communities First areas. Results reflect the progress that the Assembly Government has made. Fifteen per cent of young full-time entrants to Welsh higher education institutions come from low participation neighbourhoods, compared with 12.5 per cent in England. Given this success, it is now necessary to seek to do the same for adult learners who are studying part time. The task and finish group on part-time students must ensure that we do not create disincentives for HE institutions to continue to invest in part-time courses.

The south Wales Valleys have also got a long and proud tradition of supporting adult education. The National Union of Mineworkers, the National Council of Labour Colleges and the Workers' Educational Association have been at the forefront of the adult education movement for many decades. The secret of their success is that they have shaped their courses to suit the needs of their learners. In recent times, the work of the Open University, the community university of the Valleys partnership and the access policies of the University of Glamorgan and University of Wales, Newport have taken forward this tradition. This has led to a huge increase in part-time and flexible study and has contributed to the fact that 49 per cent of first-year students in Wales are now part-time students. A great deal of hard work is being done all over Wales to give people from deprived communities the opportunities of a new start and a new job.

The European Union's Lisbon agenda on research and development points towards Wales's future lying with the creation of a

sy'n darparu'n effeithiol ar draws ffiniau awdurdodau lleol. Gallai'r fframwaith strategol ar gyfer Blaenau'r Cymoedd fod yn gyfrwng i weithredu ein diwygiadau addysg uwch.

Mae myfyrwyr yn dilyn cyrsiau mynediad ac addysg uwch am eu bod am gael swydd ar ddiwedd y cwrs. Mae ein system addysg uwch yn fwy cynhwysol nag erioed o'r blaen. Mae Llafur yn credu'n gryf mewn cynyddu nifer y myfyrwyr sy'n dilyn cyrsiau o ardaloedd Cymunedau yn Gyntaf. Mae'r canlyniadau yn adlewyrchu'r cynnydd a wnaed gan Lywodraeth y Cynulliad. Daw 15 y cant o fyfyrwyr sy'n dechrau dilyn cyrsiau llawn amser mewn sefydliadau addysg uwch yng Nghymru o gymdogaethau â chyfranogiad isel, o'i chymharu â 12.5 y cant yn Lloegr. O ystyried y llwyddiant hwn, mae angen yn awr inni geisio gwneud yr un peth ar gyfer dysgwyr sy'n oedolion sy'n astudio'n rhan-amser. Rhaid i'r grŵp gorchwyl a gorffen ar fyfyrwyr rhan-amser sicrhau nad ydym yn creu unrhyw wrthanogaeth i sefydliadau AU i beidio â pharhau i fuddsoddi mewn cyrsiau rhan amser.

Mae gan Gymoedd y De draddodiad hir a balch o gefnogi addysg i oedolion. Bu Undeb Cenedlaethol y Glowyr, Cyngor Cenedlaethol Colegau Llafur a Chymdeithas Addysg y Gweithwyr yn arwain y mudiad addysg i oedolion ers sawl degawd. Cyfrinach eu llwyddiant yw eu bod wedi addasu eu cyrsiau i ddiwallu anghenion eu dysgwyr. Yn ddiweddar, mae gwaith y Brifysgol Agored, partneriaeth prifysgol gymunedol y Cymoedd a pholisïau mynediad Prifysgol Morgannwg a Phrifysgol Cymru, Casnewydd wedi adeiladu ar y traddodiad hwn. Mae hyn wedi arwain at gynnydd anferth mewn astudiaeth ran-amser ac astudiaeth hyblyg ac mae wedi cyfrannu at y ffaith bod 49 y cant o fyfyrwyr yn eu blwyddyn gyntaf yng Nghymru bellach yn fyfyrwyr rhan-amser. Gwneir llawer o waith caled ledled Cymru i roi cyfleoedd i ddechrau o'r newydd ac i gael swyddi newydd i bobl o gymunedau difreintiedig.

Mae agenda Lisbon yr Undeb Ewropeaidd ar ymchwil a datblygu yn awgrymu mai drwy greu economi gref ac ystwyth sy'n gallu

strong and agile economy that is able to respond to the demands of the global marketplace. Recommendations 9 and 10 of the Rees report properly see the future of higher education in the provision of bespoke courses, in partnership with business, that provide a route back to the labour market.

The modern educational experience has shifted from a three-year full-time course to a more complex interaction with higher education institutions that may last a lifetime. The labour force of the twenty-first century must be continually learning and improving, and the higher education sector has a vital role to play in the provision of suitable courses that accommodate the needs for part-time, flexible, bite-size and bespoke courses.

Part-time access courses are key to driving up participation rates among low participation neighbourhoods. Many students could be juggling their course between family life and a part-time job. The recent review of overindebtedness in Wales, carried out by the Deputy Minister for social justice, points to the good work already done to break the link between deprivation and educational attainment.

Access courses, therefore, should be channelled through local providers that offer free crèche facilities and basic-skills assistance as standard. An initiative called Newport Learning Communities is doing this in my constituency. Working out of St Ilan's Community Education Centre in Caerphilly, it gives adult learners a stepping stone back into the world of work. Education within the community, basic skills help and a free crèche are seen as the essential keys to this project's success.

Let it not be forgotten that part-time students have always had to pay variable fees. I hope, therefore, that the task and finish group looks at recommendation 4 of the Rees report, which calls for the Assembly learning grant to reinforce the widening of access for part-time students. This would be a welcome move. Rees also calls for the national bursary scheme to be open to part-time students studying 30 credits or more per year as part

ymateb i ofynion y farchnad fyd-eang y mae dyfodol Cymru. Mae argymhellion 9 a 10 adroddiad Rees yn ystyried mai dyfodol addysg uwch yw darpariaeth o gyrsiau pwrpasol, mewn partneriaeth â busnes, sy'n rhoi llwybr yn ôl i'r farchnad lafur.

Mae'r profiad addysgol modern wedi newid o gwrs llawn amser tair blynedd i gysylltiad mwy cymhleth gyda sefydliadau addysg uwch a allai barhau am oes. Rhaid i lafurllur unfed ganrif ar hugain ddysgu a gwella'n barhaus, ac mae gan y sector addysg uwch rôl hanfodol i'w chwarae i ddarparu cyrsiau addas sy'n ateb y galw am gyrsiau rhan-amser, hyblyg, byr a phwrpasol.

Mae cyrsiau mynediad rhan-amser yn allweddol i gynyddu cyfraddau cyfranogiad ymysg cymdogaethau â chyfranogiad isel. Mae'n bosibl bod llawer o fyfyrwyr yn gwneud amser i ddilyn cwrs rhwng bywyd teuluol a swydd ran-amser. Noda'r adolygiad diweddar ar orddyled yng Nghymru, a gynhaliwyd gan y Dirprwy Weinidog dros Gyfiawnder Cymdeithasol, y gwaith da a wnaed eisoes i dorri'r cysylltiad rhwng amddifadedd a chyrhaeddiad addysgol.

Felly, dylid sianelu cyrsiau mynediad drwy ddarparwyr lleol sy'n cynnig cyfleusterau crèche am ddim a chymorth gyda sgiliau sylfaenol fel mater o reol. Mae menter o'r enw Cymunedau Dysgu Casnewydd yn gwneud hyn yn fy etholaeth i. Fe'i lleolir yng Nghanolfan Addysg Gymunedol Sant Ilan yng Nghaerffili, ac mae'n rhoi llwybr yn ôl i fyd gwaith i ddysgwyr sy'n oedolion. Ystyrir mai addysg yn y gymuned, cymorth gyda sgiliau sylfaenol a chyfleuster crèche am ddim yw'r elfennau sy'n allweddol i lwyddiant y prosiect hwn.

Ni ddylid anghofio bod myfyrwyr rhan-amser wedi gorfod talu ffioedd amrywiol erioed. Gobeithiaf, felly, y bydd y grŵp gorchwyl a gorffenn yn edrych ar argymhelliad 4 adroddiad Rees, sy'n galw ar grant dysgu'r Cynulliad i atgyfnerthu'r gwaith o ehangu mynediad i fyfyrwyr rhan-amser. Byddai hwn yn gam i'w groesawu. Mae Rees hefyd yn galw am sicrhau bod y cynllun bwrsari cenedlaethol yn agored i fyfyrwyr rhan-amser

of a recognised scheme of study leading to a qualification. This, too, is to be encouraged.

The Assembly Government has done a great deal to remove barriers and widen participation in higher education. The Assembly learning grant and the individual learning accounts are key policies that have enabled many from deprived backgrounds to access learning—often for the first time. The abolition of upfront fees for full-time students will result in debts only becoming repayable when the student graduates and begins earning at a reasonable level. I believe that current proposals will provide this assurance. The introduction of the fee remission grant is also welcome but it comes with no income assessment attached. This is a missed opportunity. It underlines the importance of the national bursary scheme being available to part-time students from deprived communities.

4.00 p.m.

The prospect of a Wales where more people are earning while learning is also within our grasp. Partnerships between educationalists and business are vital for the future prosperity of Wales. The development of the skills and employment action plans are central to ensuring that our learning is in step with business needs.

Participating in accredited courses under a graduate apprenticeship scheme is one of the other significant suggestions of the Rees report. Under a reformed system, Welsh higher education institutions have the potential to offer students a year of paid work experience as they study. This is a clear way forward for higher education in Wales and it offers new pathways out of poverty for Valleys communities in particular.

The Assembly Government is right to establish the four Reaching Wider partnerships across Wales. The Aim Higher partnerships in England are now actively engaged with the emerging sector skills councils. The Higher Education Funding Council for England actively ensures that

sy'n astudio 30 o greydau neu fwy y flwyddyn fel rhan o gynllun astudio cydnabyddedig sy'n arwain at gymhwyster. Rhaid annog hyn hefyd.

Mae Llywodraeth y Cynulliad wedi gwneud llawer i ddileu rhwystrau ac ehangu cyfranogiad mewn addysg uwch. Mae grant dysgu'r Cynulliad a'r cyfrifon dysgu unigol yn bolisiau allweddol sydd wedi galluogi llawer o bobl o gefndiroedd difreintiedig i gael mynediad i ddysgu—a hynny am y tro cyntaf yn aml. Bydd diddymu ffioedd ymlaen llaw ar gyfer myfyrwyr llawn amser yn golygu mai dim ond pan fydd myfyrwyr yn graddio ac yn dechrau ennill cyflog gweddol y bydd yn rhaid iddynt ad-dalu eu dyledion. Credaf y rhydd y cynigion presennol y sicrwydd hwn. Croesawaf y penderfyniad i gyflwyno'r grant i dalu am ffioedd hefyd ond ni cheir asesiad incwm ynghlwm wrtho. Cyfle a gollwyd yw hwn. Mae'n tanlinellu pwysigrwydd sicrhau bod y cynllun bwrsari cenedlaethol ar gael i fyfyrwyr rhan-amser o gymunedau difreintiedig.

Mae'r gobraith o greu Cymru lle mae mwy o bobl yn ennill wrth ddysgu hefyd o fewn ein gafael. Mae partneriaethau rhwng addysgwyr a busnesau yn hanfodol er mwyn sicrhau ffyniant Cymru yn y dyfodol. Mae datblygu sgiliau a chynlluniau gweithredu cyflogaeth yn ganolog i sicrhau bod ein dysgu yn gydnaws â'n hanghenion busnes.

Mae cyfrannu mewn cyrsiau achrededig o dan gynllun prentisiaeth i raddedigion yn un o awgrymiadau arwyddocaol eraill adroddiad Rees. O dan system ddiwygiedig, mae gan sefydliadau addysg uwch yng Nghymru y potensial i gynnig blwyddyn o brofiad gwaith â thâl i fyfyrwyr wrth iddynt astudio. Mae hon yn ffordd glir ymlaen i addysg uwch yng Nghymru ac mae'n cynnig llwybrau allan o dlodi i gymunedau'r Cymoedd yn arbennig.

Mae Llywodraeth y Cynulliad yn iawn i sefydlu'r pedair partneriaeth Ymgynghraedd yn Ehangach ledled Cymru. Mae'r partneriaethau Anelu'n Uwch yn Lloegr yn ymwneud yn weithredol yn awr â'r cynghorau sgiliau sector sy'n cael eu datblygu. Mae'r Cyngor Cyllido Addysg

access money is strategically spent, which is an interesting development from across the border.

The report by the Deputy Minister for social justice has already highlighted the fear of debt in deprived communities, so there is a job of work to do to ensure that these students see loans not as a debt, but as an investment in their future. Students must be fully informed of the benefits that higher education can bring and not be scared away by the fear of debt. Communities First partnerships could help a great deal in spreading the word among low-participation groups.

If we are to continue the progress made by the Assembly Government on the widening access agenda, we must ensure that higher education institutions in Wales use the additional access premium, of some £250 per student, wisely. Paying institutions more for accepting students from deprived backgrounds is not the same as ensuring that mechanisms are in place to meet students' unique needs once they are inside the university gates.

The next year will see further reforms that seek to widen access to higher education in Wales; I look forward to the outcome of that work.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There is about a minute for each of the five short contributions.

Huw Lewis: I congratulate Jeff on his thoughtful short debate and on the sincerity of his passion for educational fairness for people in the south Wales Valleys. I echo what Jeff said and emphasise the importance of the role of the Heads of the Valleys strategy. It is now time for the higher and further education sectors to co-operate fully and start work on a joined-up response to that strategy. During conversations and meetings that I have had, it has become apparent to me that there are still those in the higher and further education sectors in the Valleys region who are unaware of the possible implications and opportunities that might

Uwch yn Lloegr yn gweithio i sicrhau y caiff arian mynediad ei wario'n strategol, sy'n ddatblygiad diddorol ar draws y ffin.

Mae'r adroddiad gan y Dirprwy Weinidog dros gyfiawnder cymdeithasol eisoes wedi amlygu ofn dyled yn y cymunedau difreintiedig, felly mae angen gwneud pob ymdrech i sicrhau nad yw'r myfyrwyr hyn yn gweld benthyciadau fel dyled, ond yn hytrach fel buddsoddiad yn eu dyfodol. Rhaid i fyfyrwyr gael eu hysbysu'n llawn o'r buddiannau a all ddeillio o addysg uwch ac ni ddylent gael eu dychryn gan ofn dyled. Gallai partneriaethau Cymunedau yn Gyntaf helpu gryn dipyn i ledaenu'r gair ymhlith grwpiau â chyfranogiad isel.

Er mwyn inni barhau â'r cynnydd a wnaed gan Lywodraeth y Cynulliad ar yr agenda ehangu mynediad, rhaid inni sicrhau bod sefydliadau addysg uwch yng Nghymru yn defnyddio'r premiwm mynediad ychwanegol, sef tua £250 fesul myfyriwr, yn ddoeth. Nid yw talu mwy o arian i sefydliadau am dderbyn myfyrwyr o gefndiroedd difreintiedig yr un peth â sicrhau bod dulliau ar waith i ddiwallu anghenion unigryw myfyrwyr unwaith y byddant y tu allan i gatiâu'r brifysgol.

Gwelir diwygiadau pellach yn ystod y flwyddyn nesaf i ehangu mynediad i addysg uwch yng Nghymru; edrychaf ymlaen at ganlyniad y gwaith hwnnw.

Y Dirprwy Lywydd: Mae tua munud ar gyfer pob un o'r pum cyfraniad byr.

Huw Lewis: Llongyfarchaf Jeff ar ei ddadl fer ystyriol ac ar ddiwylledd ei frwdfrydedd dros degwch addysgiadol i bobl yng Nghymoedd y De. Adleisiaf yr hyn a ddywedodd Jeff a phwysleisiaf bwysigrwydd rôl strategaeth Blaenau'r Cymoedd. Mae bellach yn bryd i'r sectorau addysg uwch ac addysg bellach gydweithio'n llawn a dechrau gweithio ar ymateb cydgyssylltiedig i'r strategaeth honno. Yn ystod sgrysiâu a chyfarfodydd a gefais, daeth yn amlwg i mi bod pobl yn y sectorau addysg uwch ac addysg bellach yn ardal y Cymoedd yn parhau i fod yn anymwybodol o'r goblygiadau a'r cyfleoedd posibl a allai

arise through the 'Heads We Win' strategy as it rolls out. Education and Learning Wales also needs to be there, facilitating it. With regard to 'Heads We Win' and the Wales spatial plan, it is time now, as Ebbw Vale and Merthyr Tydfil are mentioned as 'university towns' in those documents—and I hope that Jeff will not mind me mentioning those towns—for us to explore what that means and accelerate the programme that will make it a reality.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I quickly remind Members that there is now less than a minute each.

Leighton Andrews: I congratulate Jeff on the way in which he introduced the subject. I was the first in my family to go to university and I did so on a full grant because of the income of my family—I grew up in a one-parent family. The important thing that we have still to complete, as a result of the Rees work, is how we encourage more people from low-income backgrounds to go into higher education. However, as the Rees commission said, that work has to start at a young age, with the emphasis being on the under-threes and certainly on the under-fives.

I am delighted that the number of young people going into higher education in the Rhondda has increased so significantly since 1997, but I think that we have to look carefully at how we can implement further recommendations in relation to part-time students, because a high number of students from the Rhondda who enter higher education do so on a part-time basis, and support for them is important. I want to place on record my gratitude for the work done by the University of Glamorgan, in particular, in supporting the growth of part-time education.

Peter Black: I thank Jeff for allowing me this minute and I congratulate him on his speech, which was comprehensive. I would certainly support the intentions behind the speech: to try to get people from poorer backgrounds into university. Education is essential in getting people out of poverty. The issue of debt is very important. It is very difficult to persuade people to think of debt

ddeillio o'r strategaeth 'Blaenau'r Cymoedd ar y Blaen' wrth iddi gael ei chyflwyno. Mae angen i Dysgu ac Addysgu Cymru chwarae rhan hefyd, i hwyluso'r strategaeth. O ran 'Blaenau'r Cymoedd ar y Blaen' a chynllun gofodol Cymru, mae'n hen bryd yn awr, gan fod sôn am Lynebwy a Merthyr Tudful fel 'treffi prifysgol' yn y dogfennau hynny—a gobeithiaf na fydd gwahaniaeth gan Jeff fy mod yn crybwyll y treffi hynny—inni archwilio beth yw ystyr hynny a chyflymu'r rhaglen a fydd yn ei gwneud yn realiti.

Y Dirprwy Lywydd: Atgoffaf Aelodau yn gyflym fod llai na munud yr un i bawb yn awr.

Leighton Andrews: Llongyfarchaf Jeff ar y ffordd y cyflwynodd y pwnc. Fi oedd y cyntaf o'm teulu i fynd i'r brifysgol a gwneuthum hynny ar grant llawn oherwydd incwm fy nheulu—fe'm magwyd mewn teulu ag un rhiant. Y peth pwysicaf y mae'n rhaid inni gyflawni o hyd, o ganlyniad i waith Rees, yw sut i annog mwy o bobl o gefndiroedd ag incwm isel i fynd ymlaen i addysg uwch. Fodd bynnag, fel y dywedodd comisiwn Rees, rhaid i'r gwaith hwnnw ddechrau gyda phlant bach, gyda'r pwyslais ar blant o dan dair oed ac yn sicr ar blant o dan bump oed.

Yr wyf yn falch bod nifer y bobl ifanc sy'n mynd ymlaen i addysg uwch yn y Rhondda wedi cynyddu'n sylweddol ers 1997, ond credaf fod yn rhaid inni edrych yn ofalus ar sut y gallwn weithredu rhagor o argymhellion mewn perthynas â myfyrwyr rhan amser, oherwydd bod nifer uchel o fyfyrwyr o'r Rhondda sy'n mynd i addysg uwch yn gwneud hynny ar sail ran amser, ac mae'n bwysig eu bod yn cael cefnogaeth. Hoffwn gofnodi fy ngwerthfawrogiad o'r gwaith a wnaed gan Brifysgol Morgannwg., yn arbennig, wrth gefnogi twf addysg ran amser.

Peter Black: Diolchaf i Jeff am ganiatáu imi gael y funud hon ac fe'i llongyfarchaf ar ei araith, a oedd yn gynhwysfawr. Byddwn yn bendant yn cefnogi'r bwriadau sy'n sail i'r araith: i geisio annog pobl o gefndiroedd tlotach i fynd i'r brifysgol. Mae addysg yn hanfodol i gael pobl allan o dlodi. Mae mater dyled yn bwysig iawn. Mae'n anodd iawn perswadio pobl i feddwl am dyled fel

as an investment in the future. There is evidence to show that single-parent families particularly view debt differently. One survey indicated that children from single-parent families were less inclined to take on the sort of debt involved in having a university education. Those issues must be overcome if we are to get more people into higher education.

William Graham: I concur with previous speakers and congratulate Jeff Cuthbert on this debate. It is essential that we attract more people to higher education, to make a real pathway out of poverty. It is therefore regrettable that the number of university students from state schools has fallen. Will the Minister address that, particularly in view of Peter Black's point about high debts? Such debts must put people off, and I am grateful that the Assembly sees fit to try to reduce those debts.

Janet Ryder: I take the opportunity again to raise the point that people who come from a family with a joint income of anything over £16,065 cannot qualify for an Assembly learning grant. Jeff stressed the importance of the Assembly learning grant in financially supporting people in that very low income bracket to enter further education. We really need to have a serious look at that cut-off level to ensure that we encourage people from a low socio-economic background to continue in, or return to, education.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I am grateful to Members for ensuring that everyone got time to speak.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning (Jane Davidson): I am pleased to have the opportunity to respond to this important debate. The Assembly Government remains absolutely committed to meeting the needs of potential students, young and old, from our most disadvantaged communities. Widening access to higher education is at the heart of 'Reaching Higher', the strategy for the higher education sector. It is fair to acknowledge that Welsh higher education institutions can point to a successful track record in widening participation. We all want

buddsoddiad yn y dyfodol. Ceir tystiolaeth sy'n dangos bod teuluoedd ag un rhiant yn ystyried dyled mewn ffordd wahanol. Nododd un arolwg fod plant o deuluoedd ag un rhiant yn llai tebygol o ymgymryd â'r math o ddyled sy'n gysylltiedig â chael addysg prifysgol. Rhaid goresgyn y problemau hynny er mwyn inni ddenu mwy o bobl i addysg uwch.

William Graham: Cytunaf â siaradwyr blaenorol a llongyfarchaf Jeff Cuthbert ar y ddadl hon. Mae'n hanfodol ein bod yn denu mwy o bobl i addysg uwch, i sicrhau llwybr gwirioneddol allan o dlodi. Mae'n ofidus felly bod nifer y myfyrwyr prifysgol o ysgolion gwladol wedi gostwng. A wnaiff y Gweinidog ymdrin â hynny, yn enwedig mewn perthynas â phwynt Peter Black ynglŷn â dyledion uchel? Rhaid bod dyledion o'r fath yn digalonni pobl, ac yr wyf yn ddiolchgar bod y Cynulliad yn cytuno bod angen lleihau'r dyledion hynny.

Janet Ryder: Manteisiaf ar y cyfle eto i godi'r pwynt na all pobl sy'n dod o deulu sydd ag incwm ar y cyd o unrhyw beth dros £16,065 gymhwyso ar gyfer grant dysgu'r Cynulliad. Pwysleisiodd Jeff bwysigrwydd grant dysgu'r Cynulliad i roi cefnogaeth ariannol i bobl sydd yn y dosbarth incwm isel iawn hwnnw i fynd ymlaen i addysg bellach. Mae gwir angen inni edrych o ddifrif ar y terfyn hwnnw i sicrhau ein bod yn annog pobl o gefndir economaidd-gymdeithasol isel i barhau mewn addysg, neu i ddechrau iddi.

Y Dirprwy Lywydd: Yr wyf yn ddiolchgar i Aelodau am sicrhau bod pawb wedi cael cyfle i siarad.

Y Gweinidog dros Addysg a Dysgu Gydol Oes (Jane Davidson): Yr wyf yn falch o gael y cyfle i ymateb i'r ddadl bwysig hon. Mae Llywodraeth y Cynulliad yn parhau i fod yn gwbl ymrwymedig i ddiwallu anghenion darpar fyfyrwyr, hen ac ifanc, o'n cymunedau mwyaf difreintiedig. Mae ehangu mynediad i addysg uwch wrth wraidd 'Anelu'n Uwch', y strategaeth ar gyfer y sector addysg uwch. Mae'n deg cydnabod y gall sefydliadau addysg uwch yng Nghymru gyfeirio at record lwyddiannus wrth ehangu cyfranogiad. Yr ydym oll am sicrhau bod addysg uwch ar gael

to ensure that higher education is available to all with the potential to benefit from it, regardless of social or economic background. As you say, Jeff, it is worth, not birth that matters.

Our broad policies, aimed at strengthening higher education, received a real boost with the Assembly agreement on tuition fees, which sent a very clear message that we in Wales are committed to a higher education system that can compete on the world stage. We have delivered on our commitment that the sector in Wales should not be financially disadvantaged by the introduction of variable fees in England. We must now look to institutions to take advantage of the platform that this provides. Excellence must continue to be our byword, and that must be as true with regard to institutional efforts to widen access as it is with regard to preparations for the next research assessment exercise.

Once again, I am pleased to be able to place on record my appreciation, as Jeff clearly did in his speech, for the work of Professor Teresa Rees and her working group, which was instrumental in enabling us to reach the agreement on fees. The group's recommendation that Wales should introduce a system of flexible fees was soundly evidence-based. Two aspects of its evidence are particularly noteworthy, given the subject of today's debate.

Peter, you talked about young people's attitudes to debt. I think that you should read the research commissioned by Professor Teresa Rees, and supported by all her group, which suggested clearly that young people are able to identify certain sorts of financial commitments, such as study loans, as an investment in their future.

The other crucial piece of evidence was that, as Professor Rees showed clearly, young people with the right qualifications go on to higher education regardless of their social backgrounds. That was a very important finding. The challenge of widening participation is not that of persuading individuals with good qualifications to go on to higher education, but of ensuring that more young people of talent and ability gain the

i bawb gyda'r potensial i elwa arni, waeth beth fo'r cefndir cymdeithasol neu economaidd. Fel y dywedwch, Jeff, gwerth, nid magwraeth sy'n bwysig.

Cafodd ein polisiau eang, a anelir at atgyfnerthu addysg uwch, hwb go iawn gan gytundeb y Cynulliad ar ffioedd dysgu, a anfonodd neges glir iawn ein bod ni yng Nghymru yn ymrwymedig i system addysg uwch a all gystadlu ar lwyfan y byd. Yr ydym wedi gweithredu i ar ein hymrwymiad na ddylai'r sector yng Nghymru fod o dan anfantais ariannol o ganlyniad i gyflwyno ffioedd amrywiadwy yn Lloegr. Rhaid inni ddisgwyl i sefydliadau yn awr fanteisio ar y llwyfan y mae hyn yn ei ddarparu. Rhaid inni barhau i anelu at ragoriaeth, a rhaid i hynny fod yr un mor wir o ran ymdrechion sefydliadol i ehangu mynediad ag ydyw o ran paratoadau ar gyfer yr ymarfer asesu ymchwil nesaf.

Unwaith eto, yr wyf yn falch o allu cofnodi fy ngwerthfawrogiad, fel y gwnaeth Jeff yn amlwg yn ei araith, o waith yr Athro Teresa Rees a'i gweithgor, a oedd yn allweddol i'n galluogi i ddod i gytundeb ar ffioedd. Yr oedd argymhelliad y grŵp y dylai Cymru gyflwyno system o ffioedd hyblyg yn seiliedig ar dystiolaeth gadarn. Dylid nodi dwy agwedd ar ei dystiolaeth yn arbennig, o ystyried testun dadl heddiw.

Peter, bu ichi siarad am agweddau pobl ifanc tuag at ddyled. Credaf y dylech ddarllen yr ymchwil a gomisiynwyd gan yr Athro Teresa Rees, ac a gefnogwyd gan bob aelod o'i grŵp, a awgrymodd yn glir y gall pobl ifanc nodi mathau penodol o ymrwymadau ariannol, megis benthyciadau astudio, fel buddsoddiad yn eu dyfodol.

Y darn hanfodol arall o dystiolaeth, fel y dangosodd yr Athro Rees yn glir, oedd bod pobl ifanc sy'n meddu ar y cymwysterau cywir yn mynd ymlaen i addysg uwch waeth beth fo'u cefndiroedd cymdeithasol. Yr oedd hwnnw'n ganfyddiad pwysig iawn. Nid yw'r her o ehangu cyfranogiad yn ymwneud â pherswadio unigolion sy'n meddu ar gymwysterau da i fynd ymlaen i addysg uwch, ond yn hytrach, sicrhau bod mwy o

qualifications that they require to be university-ready.

Allied to this, the current consultation on improvements to the higher education admissions process seeks to make the admissions system fairer to all applicants, recognising that the existing reliance on predicted grades may disadvantage some people from groups with little history of participation in higher education. Better information for students, coupled with better information about students can only improve opportunities for all applicants to secure the right access to higher education.

4.10 p.m.

Professor Rees reminded us, as did Jeff and Leighton, that, if we are to address the needs of this latter group, we must start at an early age. I think that it is recommendation 7 in Professor Rees's report that states that the commitment to widening educational opportunities is already recognised as an essential characteristic of our broader education policies. However, if we are going to increase the number of those from more disadvantaged backgrounds, we must make additional investment in early years education. Economic evidence the world over shows that this must be the case, which is why the programmes that we put in place, all the way through from Sure Start, Flying Start, the breakfasts and the foundation phase, are all crucial aspects of ensuring that children can be ready to take qualifications and benefit from them as they move on to further learning.

As Members have strongly supported, we are also in the business of transforming the education options available to 14 to 19-year-olds. Young people have a wider range of options to suit their learning needs. We recognise that young people should have a wide range of skills in addition to those that can be classed as academic, which will enhance life learning and life opportunities. This is where the introduction of the baccalaureate has been so important. We know that higher education will not be the most appropriate next step for every young person, but our aim must be to increase the

bobl ifanc sydd â thalent a gallu yn ennill y cymwysterau sydd eu hangen arnynt i fod yn barod ar gyfer y brifysgol.

Yn gysylltiedig â hyn, mae'r ymgynghoriad cyfredol ar welliannau i broses dderbyn addysg uwch yn ceisio gwneud y system dderbyn yn decach i bob ymgeisydd, gan gydnabod y gallai'r ddibyniaeth bresennol ar raddau disgwylidig roi rhai pobl o grwpiau sydd â hanes prin o gyfranogi mewn addysg uwch o dan anfantais. Dim ond gwella cyfleoedd i bob ymgeisydd sicrhau'r mynediad cywir i addysg uwch y gall gwell gwybodaeth i fyfyrwyr, ynghyd â gwell gwybodaeth am fyfyrwyr ei wneud.

Bu i'r Athro Rees ein hatgoffa, fel y gwnaeth Jeff Leighton, os ydym am ddiwallu anghenion y grŵp olaf hwn, bod angen inni ddechrau gyda phlant bach. Credaf mai argymhellad 7 yn adroddiad yr Athro Rees sy'n datgan bod yr ymrwymiad i ehangu cyfleoedd addysgol eisoes wedi'i gydnabod fel nodwedd hanfodol o'n polisïau addysg ehangach. Fodd bynnag, os ydym yn mynd i gynyddu nifer y bobl o gefndiroedd mwy difreintiedig, rhaid inni wneud buddsoddiad ychwanegol mewn addysg blynnyddoedd cynnar. Dengys tystiolaeth economaidd ar draws y byd mai felly y mae, a dyma pam mae'r rhaglenni a roddwn ar waith, o Gychwyn Cadarn, Cychwyniad Da, y brecwastau a'r cyfnod sylfaen, oll yn agweddau hanfodol ar sicrhau y gall plant fod yn barod i ennill cymwysterau ac elwa arnynt wrth iddynt symud ymlaen i addysg bellach.

Fel y mae Aelodau wedi cefnogi'n gryf, yr ydym hefyd wrthi'n trawsnewid yr opsiynau addysg sydd ar gael i blant 14 i 19 mlwydd oed. Mae gan bobl ifanc ystod ehangach o opsiynau i gydweddu â'u hanghenion dysgu. Cydnabyddwn y dylai fod gan bobl ifanc ystod eang o sgiliau yn ychwanegol at y rhai y gellid eu nodi yn rhai academaidd, a fydd yn gwella dysgu gydol oes a chyfleoedd bywyd. Dyma lle y bu cyflwyno'r fagloriaeth yn gam mor bwysig. Gwyddom nad addysg uwch fydd y cam nesaf mwyaf priodol i bob person ifanc, ond dylem anelu at gynyddu nifer y bobl ifanc y dylai fod yn opsiwn

number of young people for whom it should be an important option.

I am pleased that you mentioned the graduate apprenticeship proposals, and the idea of a year's paid work experience. Rees recommended that we commission a scoping study to address issues of enhancing students' employability, to ensure that paid work while studying would contribute more educationally, tying in earning and learning. The report specifically proposes that the study should explore establishing a graduate apprenticeship scheme, and we are keen to take this work forward.

Through the Reaching Wider agenda, across the length and breadth of Wales, we are funding activities that raise aspirations and attainment levels in producing more university-ready students. Student mentoring is one of exciting projects being supported. Invaluable one-to-one tuition supports disadvantaged students, but, importantly, it brings young people into contact with positive role models, usually from similar backgrounds. There is no greater inspiration for young people than seeing the success of their peers, and being persuaded that they too can succeed.

We have supported the four Reaching Wider partnerships since 2002 at a level of some £2 million per annum. Those partnerships are engaged in a wide range of projects designed to promote higher education to those whose families and communities have no tradition of going to university. Early indicators demonstrate the success of our policies, with a growing number of people from Communities First areas now starting to access higher education. These pupils are from our most deprived communities, and the partnerships are making a real difference. I remember Huw talking to young people from Merthyr who had been to summer schools at Lampeter and Aberystwyth; they had felt so warmly welcomed while there at summer school that they then chose to attend university in those places. That is a key aspect.

pwysig ar eu cyfer.

Yr wyf yn falch ichi sôn am y cynigion prentisiaeth i raddedigion, a'r syniad o flwyddyn o brofiad gwaith â thâl. Argymhellodd Rees ein bod yn comisiynu astudiaeth gwmpasu i fynd i'r afael â materion ynglŷn â gwella cyflogadwyedd myfyrwyr, i sicrhau y byddai gwaith â thâl wrth astudio yn cyfrannu mwy yn addysgiadol, gan gysylltu ennill a dysgu. Mae'r adroddiad yn cynnig yn benodol y dylai'r astudiaeth archwilio'r syniad o sefydlu cynllun prentisiaeth i raddedigion, ac yr ydym yn awyddus i weithredu ar hyn.

Drwy gyfrwng yr agenda Ymgynraedd yn Ehangach, ar hyd a lled Cymru, yr ydym yn ariannu gweithgareddau sy'n gwella dyheadau a chodi lefelau cyrhaeddiad i gynhyrchu mwy o fyfyrwyr sy'n barod ar gyfer y brifysgol. Mae mentora myfyrwyr yn un o'r prosiectau cyffrous sy'n cael eu cefnogi. Mae hyfforddiant un i un amhrisiadwy yn cynorthwyo myfyrwyr difreintiedig, ond, yn bwysicach, mae'n dod â phobl ifanc i gysylltiad â modelau rôl cadarnhaol, sydd, fel arfer, yn dod o gefndiroedd tebyg. Nid oes mwy o ysbrydoliaeth i bobl ifanc na gweld llwyddiant eu cyfoedion, a chael eu darbwyllo y gallant hwy hefyd lwyddo.

Yr ydym wedi cefnogi'r pedair partneriaeth Ymgynraedd yn Ehangach ers 2002 ar lefel o tua £2 filiwn y flwyddyn. Mae'r partneriaethau hynny yn gysylltiedig ag ystod eang o brosiectau a gynlluniwyd i hyrwyddo addysg uwch i'r rheini nad oes gan eu teuluoedd a'u cymunedau hanes o fynd i brifysgol. Dengys dangosyddion cynnar lwyddiant ein polisiau, wrth i nifer gynyddol o bobl o ardaloedd Cymunedau yn Gyntaf ddechrau cael mynediad i addysg uwch erbyn hyn. Daw'r disgyblion hyn o'n cymunedau mwyaf difreintiedig, ac mae'r partneriaethau yn gwneud gwahaniaeth go iawn. Cofiaf Huw yn siarad â phobl ifanc o Ferthyr a fu i ysgolion haf yn Llanbedr Pont Steffan ac Aberystwyth; bu iddynt gael cymaint o groeso gwresog yno fel y gwnaethant ddewis mynychu'r brifysgol yn y lleoedd hynny. Mae honno'n agwedd allweddol.

I pay tribute to the Open University and to the Community University of the Valleys and the Community University of North Wales in this context as well, because those partnerships in higher learning, close to home, can make it more relevant to all other parts of our communities. We are focused on what is going on in the south Wales Valleys. Creating and enhancing learning opportunities in local communities lies at the heart of the Ebbw Vale learning campus initiative and is a core objective of the Merthyr Tydfil College and University of Glamorgan collaboration. As a Government, we stand by our commitment, in the Heads of the Valleys strategy, to look at ways in which Merthyr and Ebbw Vale can, in partnership, become university towns and can deliver university provision on the doorstep.

The message about not having disincentives is important in the system, particularly for part-time education. We wholeheartedly welcome the establishment of the independent review under the chairmanship of Dr Heather Graham, director of the Open University in Wales. We want to create an affordable, practical, simple and transparent system of fees and student support for part-time students. For many, part time is the only available option of study, because of domestic or work commitments. Part-time students are currently able to access a more generous package of support in Wales than their counterparts can in other parts of the United Kingdom. We must not jeopardise the learning opportunities for these part-time learners, but neither should we delude ourselves that there is any straightforward way to establish a level playing field for part-time study following the introduction of higher tuition fees.

It is worth pointing out that the sum of the Assembly learning grant/higher education grant for the poorest in our communities is greater than the sum of the education maintenance allowance. Therefore, students from our poorest communities will be able to benefit from the age of 16, which is what we care about in terms of the social justice agenda, in moving through school and college and on to university.

In terms of pathways out of poverty, we need

Talaf deyrnged i'r Brifysgol Agored ac i Brifysgol y Gymuned y Cymoedd a Phrifysgol y Gymuned Gogledd Cymru yn hyn o beth hefyd, oherwydd gall y partneriaethau hynny mewn dysgu uwch, yn agos at gartref, ei gwneud yn fwy perthnasol i bob rhan arall o'n cymunedau. Yr ydym yn canolbwyntio ar yr hyn sy'n digwydd yng Nghymoedd y De. Mae creu a gwella cyfleoedd dysgu mewn cymunedau lleol wrth wraidd menter campws dysgu Glynebwy ac mae'n un o amcanion craidd y cydweithredu rhwng Coleg Merthyr Tudful a Phrifysgol Morgannwg. Fel Llywodraeth, yr ydym yn glynu wrth ein hymrwymiad, yn strategaeth Blaenau'r Cymoedd, i edrych ar ffyrdd y gall Merthyr a Glynebwy, mewn partneriaeth, ddod yn drefi prifysgol a darparu gwasanaeth prifysgol ar garreg y drws.

Mae'r neges ynglŷn â pheidio â chael unrhyw wrthanogaeth yn bwysig yn y system, yn enwedig ar gyfer addysg ran amser. Yr ydym yn llwyr groesawu sefydlu'r adolygiad annibynnol o dan gadeiryddiaeth Dr Heather Graham, cyfarwyddwr y Brifysgol Agored yng Nghymru. Yr ydym am greu system ffioedd a chymorth myfyrwyr i fyfyrwyr rhan amser sy'n fforddiadwy, yn ymarferol, yn syml ac yn dryloyw. I lawer ohonynt, rhan amser yw'r unig opsiwn astudio sydd ar gael iddynt, o ganlyniad i ymrwymadau yn y cartref neu yn y gwaith. Ar hyn o bryd gall myfyrwyr rhan amser fanteisio ar becyn cymorth mwy hael yng Nghymru na'u cydfyfyrwyr mewn rhannau eraill o'r Deyrnas Unedig. Ni ddylem beryglu y cyfleoedd dysgu ar gyfer y dysgwyr rhan amser hyn, ond ni ddylem ychwaith dwyllo'n hunain fod unrhyw ffordd syml o roi triniaeth gyfartal i astudio'n rhan amser yn sgîl cyflwyno ffioedd dysgu uwch.

Mae'n werth tynnu sylw at y ffaith bod swm grant dysgu/grant addysg uwch y Cynulliad ar gyfer y bobl dlotaf yn ein cymunedau yn uwch na swm y lwfans cynhaliaeth addysg. Felly, bydd myfyrwyr yn ein cymunedau tlotaf sy'n 16 oed neu'n hŷn yn gallu elwa ar hynny, a dyma sy'n bwysig inni o ran yr agenda cyfiawnder cymdeithasol, o ran symud drwy'r ysgol a'r coleg ac ymlaen i'r brifysgol.

O ran llwybrau allan o dlodi, mae angen inni

to consider the impact of the new student finance arrangements. Student Finance Wales will be active for students entering higher education in or after September of next year. This will provide us with an important new policy tool to support the Assembly Government's commitment to widening access.

The first aspect of the new arrangements to be emphasised is that, from 2006 onwards, students will not pay fees in advance of receiving their education—the first Rees report determined this to be the greatest deterrent to students, particularly to students from low income backgrounds, even though they did not have to pay the fees—but they will pay the deferred fees. Every student will receive a loan that will cover the fee in its entirety. Students will only begin to repay the loan on graduation, and once they are earning more than £15,000.

From 2007-08, Welsh-domiciled students attending Welsh universities will receive the tuition fee grant worth up to £1,800, and will be able to obtain a loan to cover the remaining £1,200 tuition fee for which they are liable. Students attending Welsh institutions will also be eligible for support under the national bursary scheme, at least one element of which will be targeted at those from the lowest income groups. Students attending English institutions will also be eligible for bursaries from the individual institutions, some of which, we know, will be very significant.

We will boost the level of the Assembly learning grant. Students from lower income households currently qualify for a grant of up to £1,500. From September 2006, they will qualify for an Assembly learning grant of up to £2,700, and students will be able to take out the partially means-tested maintenance loan, which is currently worth up to £4,195, and up to £5,175 for those who study in London.

The points you make about the Lisbon agenda are extremely important. We need to ensure that university is appropriately used,

ystyried effaith y trefniadau cyllid myfyrwyr newydd. Bydd Cyllid Myfyrwyr Cymru yn weithredol ar gyfer myfyrwyr sy'n dechrau mewn addysg uwch ym mis Medi y flwyddyn nesaf neu ar ôl hynny. Bydd hyn yn rhoi dull polisi newydd pwysig inni i gefnogi ymrwymiad Llywodraeth y Cynulliad i ehangu mynediad.

Yr agwedd gyntaf ar y trefniadau newydd y dylid ei phwysleisio yw, o 2006 ymlaen, ni fydd myfyrwyr yn talu ffioedd cyn derbyn eu haddysg—penderfynodd adroddiad cyntaf Rees mai dyma oedd yr ataliad mwyaf i fyfyrwyr, yn arbennig myfyrwyr o gefndiroedd incwm isel, er nad oedd rhaid iddynt dalu'r ffioedd—ond byddant yn talu'r ffioedd wedi'u gohirio. Bydd pob myfyriwr yn cael benthyciad a fydd yn talu'r ffi gyfan. Dim ond ar ôl i fyfyrwyr raddio y byddant yn dechrau ad-dalu'r benthyciad, ac unwaith y byddant yn ennill mwy na £15,000.

O 2007-08, bydd myfyrwyr sy'n hanu o Gymru sy'n mynychu prifysgolion yng Nghymru yn derbyn y grant ffioedd dysgu o hyd at £1,800, a byddant yn gallu cael benthyciad i dalu'r £1,200 sy'n weddill o'r ffioedd dysgu y maent yn atebol i'w dalu. Bydd myfyrwyr sy'n mynychu sefydliadau yng Nghymru hefyd yn gymwys i gael cymorth o dan y cynllun bwrsariaeth cenedlaethol, a bydd o leiaf un elfen ohono yn cael ei thargedu at y grwpiau incwm isaf. Bydd myfyrwyr sy'n mynychu sefydliadau yn Lloegr hefyd yn gymwys i gael bwrsariaethau gan y sefydliadau unigol, y bydd rhai ohonynt, gwyddom hynny, yn sylweddol iawn.

Byddwn yn hybu lefel grant dysgu'r Cynulliad. Mae myfyrwyr o deuluoedd incwm isel yn gymwys ar hyn o bryd i gael grant o hyd at £1,500. O fis Medi 2006 ymlaen, byddant yn gymwys i gael grant dysgu'r Cynulliad o hyd at £2,700, a bydd myfyrwyr yn gallu cael y benthyciad cynhaliath sy'n seiliedig yn rhannol ar brawf modd, sy'n werth hyd at £4,195 ar hyn o bryd, a hyd at £5,175 ar gyfer y rheini sy'n astudio yn Llundain.

Mae'r pwyntiau a wnewch am yr agenda Lisbon yn hynod bwysig. Mae angen inni sicrhau bod y brifysgol yn cael ei

often in partnership with business in terms of specific areas of skills development. Many young people who go through modern apprenticeships, particularly those who have been recruited by firms such as Airbus, go on to university education as part of their work experience. We must ensure that there is a consistent flow.

We have a long-standing commitment to widening participation, and the devolution of student finance powers provides us with a new set of policy tools to pursue this aim. A strengthened higher education sector lies at the heart of our policies for a better and more prosperous Wales. Higher education will also play a part in ensuring that prosperity is within the reach of those in our most disadvantaged communities. It must continue to do so, and we must always be focused on those people.

defnyddio'n briodol, yn aml mewn partneriaeth â busnesau o ran meysydd penodol o ddatblygu sgiliau. Mae llawer o bobl ifanc sy'n dilyn prentisiaethau modern, yn arbennig y rheini a gafodd eu recriwtio gan gwmnïau megis Airbus, yn mynd ymlaen i addysg yn y brifysgol fel rhan o'u profiad gwaith. Rhaid inni sicrhau bod llif cyson.

Mae gennym ymrwymiad hirsefydlog i ehangu cyfranogiad, ac mae datganoli pwerau cyllid myfyrwyr yn rhoi set newydd o ddulliau polisi inni weithredu ar y nod hwn. Mae sector addysg uwch sydd wedi ei atgyfnerthu yn ganolog i'n polisiau ar gyfer Cymru well a mwy ffyniannus. Bydd addysg uwch hefyd yn chwarae rhan yn y gwaith o sicrhau bod ffyniant o fewn cyrraedd y bobl hynny yn ein cymunedau mwyaf difreintiedig. Rhaid iddi barhau i wneud hynny, a rhaid inni bob amser ganolbwyntio ar y bobl hynny.

Dadl Fer Short Debate

Teledu Digidol i Bawb? Digital Television for All?

Eleanor Burnham: Yr wyf wedi cytuno i gyfraniadau gan Owen John Thomas, Denise Idris Jones a Lisa Francis.

Cymru fydd un o'r rhanbarthau cyntaf yn y Deyrnas Unedig i droi at deledu digidol yn 2009. Mae'n hanfodol bwysig bod y Cynulliad yn sicrhau y bydd pawb ar hyd a lled Cymru yn gallu manteisio ar deledu digidol ac y byddwn, drwy'r newid hwn, yn ymateb yn gadarnhaol tuag at yr anghydraddoldeb ac anghysondeb sy'n bodoli yn y byd darlledu cyfoes.

Hoffwn gyfeirio'n benodol at ddau fater, a'r cyntaf yw derbyniad gwasanaeth teledu, sy'n rhywbeth y mae'r rhan fwyaf ohonom yn ei gymryd yn ganiataol. Yr ail fater yw'r derbyniad ar gyfer y tlawd a'r bregus—pobl hŷn ac anabl. Os gallwn ddelio'n ddigonol gyda'r ddwy her hyn—ac yr wyf o'r farn y gallwn—byddwn yn creu Cymru digidol y gallwn oll elwa ohoni.

I'r rhai ohonoch sy'n gwyllo'r ddadl hon ar S4C2, ac i'r rhai sydd yma heddiw, yr ydych

Eleanor Burnham: I have agreed to contributions from Owen John Thomas, Denise Idris Jones and Lisa Francis.

Wales will be one of the first regions in the United Kingdom to turn digital in 2009. It is crucial that the Assembly ensures that everyone across Wales will be able to take advantage of digital television and that, through this change, we respond positively to the inequality and inconsistency which currently exists in broadcasting.

I wish to refer specifically to two issues, the first being the reception of television signals, something which most of us take for granted. The second issue is reception for the poor and the vulnerable—the elderly and the disabled. If we can deal with these two challenges adequately—and I believe that we can—we will create a digital Wales that we can all benefit from.

For those watching this debate on S4C2, and for those of you here today, you are more

yn fwy ffodus nag y sylweddolwch, gan fod gennych ddewis. Fodd bynnag, nid oes gan 85,000 o bobl ar hyd y gororau ac yng ngogledd Cymru ddewis i allu gwyllo'r hyn sy'n digwydd yn y Cynulliad.

4.20 p.m.

Mae'r bobl hyn yn byw yng Nghymru ac maent wedi talu am drwydded llawn ond maent yn cael eu gwahardd rhag gwyllo gwasanaeth darlledu cyhoeddus Cymreig. Yn lle, maent yn derbyn gwasanaeth darlledu rhanbarthol o Loegr ac, er bod y darlledu hynny o safon, mae gennym ddemocratiaeth Gymreig, diwylliant Cymreig a'r iaith Gymraeg.

Broadcasting plays a pivotal role in the survival and growth of the Welsh language, which in turn shapes our identity and culture. The 85,000 people who cannot receive a Welsh television signal are excluded from all of this through no fault of their own. That is the equivalent of two average constituencies. A general election was held in May, and it would have been unthinkable to stop two whole constituencies from voting and taking part in the most basic right in any modern democracy. Yet, what is happening here is little different. Preventing 85,000 people from having access to Welsh television, simply because of where their homes are, creates second-class citizens.

The problem of coverage and access is not new. Read the 1974 Crawford report on broadcasting: for those of you who have followed Ofcom's reports on broadcasting and digital switchover over the last two years, it will make familiar reading. It highlighted the problems of coverage in north Wales and along the border region. People either received no coverage at all or English public service broadcasting only. The problem has remained broadly the same, because no-one has dealt with it. You can see from the map that I have here, shown in Digital UK's advertisement, that most of north Wales is in Granada's area.

Despite the opportunity that digital

privileged than you realise, because you have a choice. However, 85,000 people on the Welsh border and in north Wales do not have that choice to watch what goes on in the Assembly

These people live in Wales and have paid for a full licence fee but are prevented from receiving a Welsh public broadcasting service. Instead, they receive regional programming from England and, although it is quality programming, we have Welsh democracy, Welsh culture and the Welsh language.

Mae darlledu yn chwarae rhan allweddol yng ngoroesiad a thwf yr iaith Gymraeg, sydd yn eu tro yn ffurfio'n hunaniaeth a'n diwylliant. Caiff y 85,000 o bobl na allant dderbyn gwasanaeth teledu o Gymru eu heithrio o hyn oll a hynny heb fod yn fai arnynt hwy. Mae hynny'n gyfystyr â dwy etholaeth gyffredin. Cynhaliwyd etholiad cyffredinol ym mis Mai a byddai wedi bod y tu hwnt i amgyffred pe byddai dwy etholaeth gyfan wedi'u hatal rhag pleidleisio a chymryd rhan yn un o hawliau mwyaf sylfaenol unrhyw ddemocratiaeth fodern. Eto, nid oes fawr o wahaniaeth rhwng hynny a'r hyn sy'n digwydd yn y fan hyn. Mae atal 85,000 o bobl rhag derbyn teledu o Gymru oherwydd lleoliad eu cartrefi yn unig, yn creu dinasyddion eilradd.

Nid yw'r broblem derbyn gwasanaeth yn broblem newydd. Darllener adroddiad 1974 Crawford ar ddarlledu: i'r rheini ohonoch sydd wedi dilyn adroddiadau Ofcom ar ddarlledu a'r trosglwyddiad i deledu digidol dros y ddwy flynedd diwethaf, bydd yn edrych yn gyfarwydd. Yr oedd yn amlygu problemau derbyn gwasanaeth yn y Gogledd ac ar hyd y gororau. Un ai yr oedd pobl yn derbyn gwasanaeth darlledu cyhoeddus Saesneg yn unig neu'n methu â derbyn gwasanaeth o gwbl. Mae'r broblem wedi parhau'n gymharol ddigyfnawid am nad oes unrhyw un wedi mynd i'r afael â hi. Gallwch weld o'r map sydd gennyf yma, a ddangosir yn hysbysebu Digital UK, fod y rhan fwyaf o'r Gogledd yn ardal Granada.

Er gwaethaf y cyfle a ddaw yn sgîl

switchover presents, the Government has decided that the level of coverage after switchover will remain the same as that under analogue. Only 98.5 per cent of the population will eventually receive digital television and the Government has decided that it is not worth the effort to extend that to 100 per cent so as to include an Abergele constituent, for instance, who is cross at being among those who cannot receive a Sky signal. When I recently challenged the First Minister on the issue, he said that the technology is about extending the number of channels that you can get if you are already lucky enough to have coverage. Whether you get coverage should not be a question of luck. If you pay the full licence fee, you are entitled to the full service. The Assembly Government has repeatedly stated how important broadcasting is, yet the First Minister's comment betrays an ambivalence towards coverage. When challenged again, the First Minister cited the topography of Wales as an almost insurmountable problem. When the First Minister sees a hill, he goes around it or makes his excuses and avoids it altogether. The Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport, a keen mountaineer, should inform the First Minister that hills are not insurmountable challenges, just hard work. The technology exists to address the problem but the political will is lacking.

The Welsh Assembly Government must commit to ensuring that the people of Wales have universal access to public and commercial Welsh digital television, which allows everyone the freedom to access both Welsh-language and English-language programmes. Securing universal access to digital television is a key requirement to ensure social inclusion and civil engagement. Thirty years after the Crawford report, there is no excuse. The digital switchover provides one last chance to give people what they pay for.

Minister, in your response to Ofcom's review of public service broadcasting, you stated that coverage, post-switchover, must remain at

trosglwyddo i deledu digidol, mae'r Llywodraeth wedi penderfynu y bydd lefel derbyn y gwasanaeth yn dilyn y trosglwyddiad yn parhau yr un peth ag o dan analog. Dim ond 98.5 y cant o'r boblogaeth a fydd yn gallu derbyn teledu digidol yn y pen draw ac mae'r Llywodraeth wedi penderfynu nad yw'n werth yr ymdrech i ymestyn hynny i 100 y cant er mwyn cynnwys etholwr yn Abergele, er enghraifft, sy'n ddig am ei fod ymhlith y rheini na all dderbyn gwasanaeth Sky. Pan heriais y Prif Weinidog yn ddiweddar ar y mater hwn, dywedodd mai ymestyn nifer y sianelau a gewch, os ydych eisoos yn ddigon ffodus i dderbyn y gwasanaeth, yw diben y dechnoleg. Ni ddylai fod yn fater o ffawd pa un a allwch dderbyn y gwasanaeth ai peidio. Os ydych yn talu ffi'r drwydded yn llawn mae hawl gennych i dderbyn y gwasanaeth yn llawn. Mae Llywodraeth y Cynulliad wedi datgan droeon pa mor bwysig yw darlledu, eto, mae sylwadau'r Prif Weinidog yn datgelu deuliaeth meddwl tuag at y mater. Ar ôl cael ei herio unwaith eto, nododd y Prif Weinidog fod topograffi Cymru yn broblem na ellir ei goresgyn bron. Pan wêl y Prif Weinidog fryn, aiff o'i amgylch neu gwna ei esgusodion a'i osgoi'n gyfan gwbl. Dylai'r Gweinidog dros Ddiwylliant, yr Iaith Gymraeg a Chwaraeon, sy'n ddringwr brwd, hysbysu'r Prif Weinidog nad heriau anorchfygol yw bryniau, dim ond gwaith caled. Mae'r dechnoleg yn bodoli i fynd i'r afael â'r broblem, ond mae'r ewyllys wleidyddol yn ddiffygiol.

Mae'n rhaid i Lywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru fod yn ymrwymedig i sicrhau bod gwasanaeth teledu digidol Cymreig cyhoeddus a masnachol ar gael i bobl Cymru yn ddiwahân, a fydd yn caniatáu rhyddid i bawb dderbyn rhaglenni Cymraeg a Saesneg eu hiaith. Mae sicrhau gwasanaeth teledu digidol i bawb yn allweddol i sicrhau cynhwysiant cymdeithasol ac ymgysylltiad sifil. Ddeng mlynedd ar hugain wedi adroddiad Crawford, nid oes esgus. Mae'r broses o drosglwyddo i wasanaeth teledu digidol yn cynnig un cyfle olaf i sicrhau bod pobl yn derbyn yr hyn y maent yn talu amdano.

Weinidog, yn eich ymateb i adolygiad Ofcom o ddarlledu cyhoeddus, dywedasoch y dylai'r derbyniad, yn dilyn y trosglwyddiad, barhau

the very least the same as it is now. Asking for things not to be worse, and hoping that they will stay the same, is extremely feeble. You should be fighting for what the people of Wales need, not rolling over and hoping for the best. You should insist on universal access to coverage.

As in other areas, the Labour Assembly Government appears to lack the stomach to tell Westminster what Wales needs and to fight for it. Even if universal access is not immediately achievable after switchover, it must become a long-term Assembly commitment. I have already lodged a statement of opinion calling for universal access, and I urge Members of all parties to support and sign it.

The second area that I wish to discuss is the problem that digital technology presents for the most vulnerable in our society, namely the poor, the disabled and the elderly. Digital technology is not always affordable, usable or accessible for these groups, yet these are precisely the people who stand to gain the most from digital broadcasting. It has the potential to break down the traditional barriers that can lead to exclusion and it will enable people to see, and participate in, the world around them from their own homes.

I will give the Assembly an idea of the scale of the problem. The Department for Work and Pensions estimates that 24 per cent of households in Wales are in receipt of income-related benefit. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has estimated that the cost of digital conversion could be up to £200. After 2009, if you want to watch the television, you will have no choice but to pay for a digital service. There are over 0.5 million people over retirement age in Wales. Of these, over 150,000 are in receipt of pension credit. As I am sure that the Minister is aware, he represents 17,703 pensioners in his constituency of Clwyd West, 4,400 of whom receive pension credit. When you add to that the fact that one in six people in Wales is disabled, you can see that there is a significant group of vulnerable people who need to be given as much assistance as possible, or they will be left behind.

fel yr hyn ydyw yn awr, o leiaf. Mae gofyn i bethau beidio â bod yn waeth, gan obeithio y byddant yn parhau'n ddigyfnewid, yn wan eithriadol. Dylech fod yn brwydro am yr hyn sydd ei angen ar bobl Cymru ac nid bodloni ar y sefyllfa a gobeithio'r gorau. Dylech fynnu bod y gwasanaeth ar gael i bawb.

Yn yr un modd ag mewn meysydd eraill, ymdengys nad yw Llywodraeth Lafur y Cynulliad yn ddigon dewr i ddweud wrth San Steffan beth sydd ei angen ar Gymru nac i frwydro amdano. Hyd yn oed os nad yw'n bosibl sicrhau gwasanaeth i bawb ar unwaith yn dilyn y trosglwyddiad, rhaid iddo fod yn ymrwymiad hirdymor i'r Cynulliad. Yr wyf eisoes wedi cyflwyno datganiad barn yn galw am fynediad i bawb ac anogaf Aelodau o bob plaid i'w gefnogi a'i lofnodi.

Yr ail faes yr wyf am ei drafod yw'r broblem a wynebir gan aelodau mwyaf agored i niwed ein cymdeithas, sef y tlawd, yr anabl a'r oedranus, yn sgîl technoleg ddigidol. Nid yw'r grwpiau hyn bob amser yn gallu fforddio, defnyddio neu gael mynediad i dechnoleg ddigidol, ac eto, dyma'r union bobl ddylai elwa fwyaf o wasanaeth darlledu digidol. Mae ganddo'r potensial i gael gwared ar y rhwystrau traddodiadol a all arwain at allgau a bydd yn galluogi pobl i weld, a chyfranogi yn y byd o'u hamgylch, o'u cartrefi.

Rhoddaf syniad i'r Cynulliad o faint y broblem. Amcangyfrifa'r Adran Gwaith a Phensiynau fod 24 y cant o gartrefi yng Nghymru yn derbyn budd-dal yn gysylltiedig ag incwm. Mae'r Adran dros Ddiwylliant, y Cyfryngau a Chwaraeon wedi amcangyfrif y gallai cost trosglwyddo i ddigidol fod hyd at £200. Ar ôl 2009, os ydych am wyllo'r teledu, ni fydd gennych ddewis ond talu am wasanaeth digidol. Mae dros 0.5 miliwn o bobl dros oedran ymddeol yng Nghymru. O'r rheini, mae dros 150,000 yn cael credyd pensiwn. Fel y gŵyr y Gweinidog, mae'n siŵr, cynrychiola 17,703 o bensiynwyr yn ei etholaeth, Gorllewin Clwyd ac mae 4,400 o'r rheini yn cael credyd pensiwn. Pan ychwanegwch at hynny y ffaith bod un o bob chwe pherson yng Nghymru yn anabl, gwelwch fod grŵp sylweddol o bobl ddiamddiffyn yn bodoli y dylid rhoi cymaint o gymorth iddynt â phosibl neu fe gânt eu

gadael ar ôl.

A Government study on the digital switchover and vulnerable households gives a warning of the problems that we face. It defines a vulnerable person as anyone over the age of 75 or with some form of disability. A recent study conducted in Ferryside and Llansteffan in south Wales found that well over a third of vulnerable households needed some form of practical assistance to install digital television equipment. The study also concluded that vulnerable people needed more help to adapt to the new technology. Many households found it easier to use digital television equipment once they had been shown how.

Mae astudiaeth gan y Llywodraeth ar y trosglwyddiad i ddigidol a chartrefi diamddiffyn yn ein rhybuddio o'r problemau a wynebwn. Diffinia berson diamddiffyn fel unrhyw un dros 75 oed neu unrhyw un sydd â rhyw ffurf ar anabledd. Yn ôl astudiaeth a gynhaliwyd yn ddiweddar yng Nglanyfferi a Llansteffan yn y De, canfuwyd bod angen cymorth ymarferol ar ymhell dros draean y cartrefi diamddiffyn, er mwyn gosod offer teledu digidol. Daeth yr astudiaeth i'r casgliad bod angen mwy o gymorth ar bobl ddiamddiffyn er mwyn addasu i'r dechnoleg newydd. Yr oedd llawer o gartrefi yn ei chael yn haws defnyddio offer teledu digidol unwaith i rywun ddangos iddynt sut yr oedd yr offer yn gweithio.

In addition to assistance with the cost, there will have to be an education programme about digital television, both before and after installation, to enable people such as me, for example, to understand the new technology.

Yn ogystal â chymorth gyda'r gost, bydd angen sicrhau rhaglen addysgol ar deledu digidol cyn ac ar ôl gosod yr offer, er mwyn galluogi pobl fel myfi, er enghraifft, i ddeall y dechnoleg newydd.

I do not want to paint a picture of doom and gloom. As I said earlier, vulnerable groups have the most to gain from digital television. However, the switchover presents significant problems, which must be addressed in detail as a matter of urgency. On 15 September, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport announced the timetable for the switchover. She also sketched out in broad terms the assistance that would be available to vulnerable groups. You would be forgiven for not knowing this, because it was only mentioned in the specialist press. In the absence of any statement, I will tell you what she said. She stated that the BBC has a £400 million digital fund to assist vulnerable groups. The DCMS has announced that the money will go to households where one person is aged 75 or over. However, there is a very narrow definition of vulnerability, and this risks leaving people behind because they do not fit neatly into the boxes.

Nid wyf am bortreadu sefyllfa o anobaith. Fel y dywedais yn gynharach, grwpiau diamddiffyn fyddai fwyaf ar eu hennill yn sgîl teledu digidol. Fodd bynnag, mae'r trosglwyddiad i ddigidol yn peri problemau sylweddol ac mae'n rhaid mynd i'r afael â'r rhain yn fanwl ac ar fyrder. Ar 15 Medi, cyhoeddodd yr Ysgrifennydd Gwladol dros Ddiwylliant, y Cyfryngau a Chwaraeon, yr amserlen ar gyfer trosglwyddo i deledu digidol. Amlinellodd yn fras hefyd y cymorth a fyddai ar gael i grwpiau diamddiffyn. Maddeuir i chi am beidio â gwybod hyn oherwydd mai dim ond yn y wasg arbenigol y crybwyllwyd hyn. Yn absenoldeb unrhyw ddatganiad, dywedaf wrthyhych yr hyn a ddywedodd. Nododd fod gan y BBC gronfa ddigidol gwerth £400 miliwn i gynorthwyo grwpiau diamddiffyn. Mae'r DCMS wedi cyhoeddi y bydd yr arian yn mynd i gartrefi lle mae un person yn 75 oed neu'n hŷn. Fodd bynnag, mae diffiniad cul iawn o'r hyn yw person diamddiffyn, ac mae hyn yn golygu bod perygl y caiff pobl eu gadael ar ôl am nad oes modd eu labelu'n dwt.

The Government also tells us that over 60 per cent of people have already converted to digital, which is true. However, the

Dywed y Llywodraeth wrthym hefyd fod dros 60 y cant o bobl eisoes wedi trosglwyddo i ddigidol, sy'n wir. Fodd

remaining 40 per cent will be the hardest to convert, and includes the most vulnerable groups of people. A Government report published today has concluded that by 2012, fewer than 10 per cent of the population will not have digital television. Given that we switch over in 2009 in Wales, that is not good enough.

Despite the importance of the announcement, our Minister has not made a statement to inform the Assembly about it. One could be forgiven for thinking that the Labour Assembly Government was not interested. Only after being challenged by my colleague, Mick Bates, last week did the Minister make any comment on the Secretary of State's announcement. The people of Wales need a champion. The 17,000 pensioners in your constituency, Minister, need a champion. The Assembly, and the Government drawn from it, is supposed to be that champion and to fight the Welsh fight. It is not good enough for you to shrug your shoulders and say that this is not a devolved issue. If it not devolved, then it is your duty to be Wales's chief lobbyist. You are lobbied enough, Minister, and I would have thought that you would have some idea of how to go about it by now.

Minister, we need to be told what is happening, what guarantees you have secured, and what arrangements you have made with the DCMS and Ofcom. The issue is being led by the DCMS, as we know, and there is no Welsh representative on Ofcom's main UK board. You, Minister, are our only real representative, and you are a very quiet one. One can only assume that since we hear little, little is being done.

The impression that we have is one of you and the First Minister washing your hands of this. It is not too late to act, Minister. You have the opportunity in your response to address the questions of access for the poor and vulnerable and to outline your plan for Wales. Will the DCMS resolve the issue of coverage? Will it absolve itself? What proposals are you putting forward to secure universal access? The technology is there and

bynag, y 40 y cant sy'n weddill fydd y bobl anoddaf i'w darbwylo, ac mae'r rhain yn cynnwys y grwpiau sydd fwyaf agored i niwed. Mae adroddiad gan y Llywodraeth a gyhoeddwyd heddiw wedi dod i'r casgliad mai dim ond llai na 10 y cant o'r boblogaeth fydd heb deledu digidol erbyn 2012. O gofio y byddwn yn trosglwyddo i ddigidol yn 2009 yng Nghymru, nid yw hyn yn ddigon da.

Er gwaethaf pwysigrwydd y cyhoeddiad, nid yw'n Gweinidog wedi gwneud datganiad i hysbysu'r Cynulliad yn ei gylch. Gellid maddau i rywun am feddwl nad oedd diddordeb gan Lywodraeth Lafur y Cynulliad. Dim ond ar ôl cael ei herio gan fy nghyd-Aelod, Mick Bates, yr wythnos diwethaf, y bu i'r Gweinidog wneud sylw ar gyhoeddiad yr Ysgrifennydd Gwladol. Mae angen eiriolwr ar bobl Cymru. Mae angen eiriolwr ar y 17,000 o bensiynwyr yn eich etholaeth, Weinidog. Y Cynulliad, a Llywodraeth y Cynulliad hwnnw ddylai weithredu fel yr eiriolwr hwnnw ac i frwydro dros Gymru. Nid yw'n ddigon da ichi godi'ch ysgwyddau gan ddweud nad mater datganoledig ydyw. Os nad yw'n fater datganoledig, eich dyletswydd chi yw gweithredu fel prif lobïwr Cymru. Mae digon yn eich lobïo chi, Weinidog, onid oes gennych syniad bellach ynglŷn â sut mae gwneud hynny?

Weinidog, mae angen inni gael gwybod beth sy'n digwydd, pa warantau a sicrhawyd gennych a pha drefniadau yr ydych wedi'u gwneud gyda DCMS ac Ofcom. Y DCMS, fel y gwyddom, sy'n arwain y mater hwn ac nid oes cynrychiolydd o Gymru ar brif fwrdd Ofcom yn y DU. Chi, Weinidog, yw'n hunig gynrychiolydd ac yr ydych yn gynrychiolydd tawel iawn. Gallwn ond tybio mai ychydig iawn a gaiff ei wneud am mai ychydig iawn a glywn.

Yr argraff sydd gennym yw eich bod chi a'r Prif Weinidog yn golchi'ch dwylo o'r mater hwn. Nid yw'n rhy hwyr i weithredu, Weinidog. Mae'r cyfle gennych yn eich ymateb i fynd i'r afael â'r cwestiynau ynghylch mynediad i'r tlawd ac i'r rheini sy'n ddiameddiffyn ac i amlinellu eich cynllun ar gyfer Cymru. A wnaiff y DCMS ddatrys problem derbyn y gwasanaeth? A fydd yn esgusodi'i hun? Pa gynigion yr ydych yn eu

it is a winnable fight. I hope that you will join me and my colleagues in pressing the Westminster Government for change.

What will the announcement by the DCMS of assistance for vulnerable people mean? What will it mean for the 500,000 elderly people in Wales? Is the assistance good enough? Wales has a higher proportion of disabled people than the rest of the UK. Will this be reflected in the help that Wales receives? What representations have you made to the DCMS on this?

When pushed, Minister, you have said that you are in constant discussion with Ofcom and the DCMS. Not once have you said what the discussions have yielded. It is time for you to start detailing what you are doing. Platitudes and opaque answers will no longer suffice.

I look forward to your response, Minister, and I hope that you will give some substance to your work. I hope that we can all work together to address these issues. One lesson drawn from the Crawford report published 30 years ago is that you cannot rely on Westminster to address broadcasting issues that are specific to Wales. Broadcasting might not be devolved, but that does not absolve us of responsibility or, more importantly, our ability to do something about this issue.

Denise Idris Jones: I thank Eleanor for allowing me to contribute to her short debate. I agree that it is vital that all residents in Wales have access to the Welsh news, be it in Welsh or English.

4.30 p.m.

As you have already mentioned, some areas of north-east Wales near Wrexham, areas that are particularly Welsh, have experienced problems in accessing these Welsh programmes, particularly S4C, BBC Wales and HTV Wales, due to technical difficulties

cyflwyno i sicrhau bod y gwasanaeth ar gael i bawb? Mae'r dechnoleg yno ac mae'n frwydr y gellir ei hennill. Gobeithiaf y byddwch yn ymuno â mi a'm cyd-Aelodau wrth bwysu ar Lywodraeth San Steffan i newid y sefyllfa.

Beth fydd y cyhoeddiad gan y DCMS ynghylch cymorth i bobl ddiameddifyn yn ei olygu? Beth fydd yn ei olygu i'r 500,000 o bobl oeddrannus yng Nghymru? A yw'r cymorth yn ddigonol? Mae gan Gymru gyfran uwch o bobl anabl na gweddill y DU. A gaiff hyn ei adlewyrchu yn y cymorth y bydd Cymru yn ei dderbyn? Pa gynrychioliadau yr ydych wedi'u gwneud i'r DCMS ar y mater hwn?

Pan bwysir arnoch, Weinidog, yr ydych wedi dweud eich bod mewn trafodaethau parhaus ag Ofcom a'r DCMS. Nid ydych unwaith wedi dweud wrthym beth yw ffrwyth y trafodaethau hyn. Mae'n bryd i chi ddechrau rhoi manylion o'r hyn yr ydych yn ei wneud. Ni fydd cyffredinedd ac atebion annelwig yn ddigon da bellach.

Edrychaf ymlaen at eich ymateb, Weinidog, a gobeithiaf y byddwch yn rhoi rhyw sylwedd i'ch gwaith. Gobeithiaf y gallwn oll weithio gyda'n gilydd i fynd i'r afael â'r materion hyn. Un wers a ddaeth yn sgîl adroddiad Crawford a gyhoeddwyd 30 mlynedd yn ôl yw na allwch ddibynnu ar San Steffan i fynd i'r afael â materion darlledu sy'n benodol i Gymru. Hwyrach nad mater datganoledig yw darlledu, ond nid yw hynny yn ein rhyddhau o gyfrifoldeb i wneud rhywbeth ynglŷn â'r mater hwn nac ychwaith, ac yn bwysicach, ein gallu i wneud rhywbeth ynglŷn â'r mater hwn.

Denise Idris Jones: Diolchaf i Eleanor am ganiatáu imi gyfrannu at ei dadl fer. Cytunaf ei fod yn hanfodol bod newyddion o Gymru, boed yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg, ar gael i bawb sy'n byw yng Nghymru.

Fel yr ydych wedi sôn eisoes, mae rhai ardaloedd o'r Gogledd-ddwyrain ger Wrecsam, sef ardaloedd sy'n arbennig o Gymraeg, wedi cael problem wrth dderbyn y rhaglenni Cymraeg hyn, yn arbennig S4C, BBC Cymru a HTV Cymru, oherwydd

or lack of equipment. It has not always been due to lack of money; it was sometimes a case of not being able to get your aerial in the right place. It is important that these problems are addressed properly before the switchover.

Dechrau Canu, Dechrau Canmol is probably the most-watched programme among many older residents in Wales, and I hope that it remains as such, particularly when S4C digital is available to all as a truly Welsh-language station having lost the constraints of Channel 4 programming.

Lisa Francis: I thank Eleanor for an enlightening debate and for allowing me to speak. While we are told that the price of converting to digital is becoming increasingly affordable—the cost now starting from as little as £35 for a digital terrestrial television set-up box—you must be aware of the problems, particularly after what Eleanor and Denise have said, in the north-east of Wales, where there are pockets that cannot receive digital television without purchasing new aerials, which are prohibitively expensive. That sometimes amounts to hundreds of pounds for elderly and vulnerable communities.

On another issue, my colleague, Mark Isherwood, was approached by the British Deaf Association earlier this year, which has had problems in accessing digital television for the deaf community. This is interactive programmes about NHS facilities, situations where they can order food and that sort of thing. It is very helpful for deaf people. Can you give us an assurance, Minister, that, for people who are part of the deaf community, Wales will follow Scotland in supporting this important service for people who are already excluded through their disability so that they are not further excluded when we go digital?

The Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport (Alun Pugh): It has been an interesting debate. Broadcasting is not a devolved responsibility, but it has a huge impact on many aspects of Welsh society, and it is, therefore, entirely proper that Eleanor Burnham tabled this debate.

anawsterau technegol neu ddiffyg offer. Nid yw bob amser wedi bod oherwydd diffyg arian; yr oedd ar brydiau yn achos o fethu â rhoi eich erial yn y lle cywir. Mae'n bwysig ymdrin â'r problemau hyn yn briodol cyn y broses o drosglwyddo i deledu digidol.

Dechrau Canu, Dechrau Canmol yw un o'r rhaglenni a wylir fwyaf ymhlith trigolion hŷn Cymru, fwy na thebyg, a gobeithiaf y bydd hynny'n parhau, yn enwedig pan fydd S4C digidol ar gael i bawb fel sianel wirioneddol Gymraeg ei hiaith ar ôl colli cyfyngiadau rhaglennu Channel 4.

Lisa Francis: Diolchaf i Eleanor am ddadl ddiddorol ac am ganiatáu imi siarad. Er y dywedir wrthym fod y pris o newid i ddigidol yn fwyfwy fforddiadwy—mae'r gost bellach yn dechrau o gyn lleied â £35 am flwch teledu daearol digidol—rhaid eich bod yn ymwybodol o'r problemau, yn enwedig ar ôl yr hyn a ddywedodd Eleanor a Denise, yn y Gogledd-ddwyrain lle y mae ardaloedd na allant dderbyn teledu digidol heb brynu erialau newydd, sy'n ofnadwy o ddrud. Mae hynny'n swm o gannoedd o bunnoedd ar adegau ar gyfer cymunedau hen a diamddiffyn.

O ran mater arall, cysylltwyd â'm cyd-Aelod, Mark Isherwood, yn gynharach eleni gan Gymdeithas Pobl Fyddar Prydain sydd wedi cael problemau wrth dderbyn teledu digidol ar gyfer y gymuned fyddar. Rhaglenni rhyngweithiol ynglŷn â chyfleusterau'r GIG, sefyllfaoedd lle y gallant archebu bwyd a'r math hwnnw o beth yw hyn. Mae'n ddefnyddiol iawn i bobl fyddar. A allwch ein sicrhau, Weinidog, y bydd Cymru, ar gyfer pobl sy'n rhan o'r gymuned fyddar, yn dilyn yr Alban wrth gefnogi'r gwasanaeth pwysig hwn ar gyfer pobl sydd eisoes wedi'u heithrio oherwydd eu hanabledd fel na chânt eu heithrio ymhellach pan drosglwyddwn i deledu digidol?

Y Gweinidog dros Ddiwylliant, y Gymraeg a Chwaraeon (Alun Pugh): Mae wedi bod yn ddadl ddiddorol. Nid yw darlledu yn gyfrifoldeb datganoledig, ond caiff effaith fawr ar lawer o agweddau ar gymdeithas Cymru, ac felly, mae'n hollol briodol bod Eleanor Burnham wedi cyflwyno'r dadl

However, I was disappointed with some of the tone and content of her speech.

Technology impacts on many aspects of our lives, and mass media and broadcasting is certainly one. In the case of digital radio, we can have more channels and better sound; that is currently a reality, which is why digital radios are outselling analogue radios at present. The internet makes everyone a publisher and it is revolutionising e-commerce. The world of digital television is certainly a great step forward. It is a much better system than the old analogue system, where we literally had a handful of channels, and a multi-channel world is certainly an improvement, regardless of whether your taste is for live football, movies, documentaries, 24-hour news channels, or, as Eleanor said, for listening to live and uninterrupted coverage of institutions such as the UK Parliament, the Scottish Parliament and, of course, the National Assembly for Wales.

However, it is not a world entirely without problems. One of the great joys of living in Wales is that we have an interesting topography. It is great to be a mountaineer living in Wales, but topography gets in the way of television, radio and mobile telephone signals. We can do something to engineer our way around that, but we cannot change the laws of physics. The changeover to digital is taking place in terms of terrestrial platforms and satellite platforms. I will take terrestrial first. There are six major transmitters in Wales, which all transmit the current analogue and digital services, but, as well as those six major transmitters, which would be perfectly adequate if Wales was a flatter nation, we need hundreds of relay stations to get into valleys and around the back of hills. At present, only a small number of relay transmitters carry digital signals, which leads some people to conclude that if they have a set-top box and they cannot currently get digital television, they will lose all their television pictures when the analogue signal is switched off. That is not the case. The relays will undergo extensive engineering work well in advance of the digital switchover, so that if you currently get a decent analogue picture—even if you cannot get digital—you will certainly get it when the

hon. Fodd bynnag, fe'm siomwyd gan naws a chynnwys ei haraith i raddau.

Mae technoleg yn effeithio ar lawer o agweddau ar ein bywydau, ac mae'r cyfryngau torfol a darlledu yn bendant yn un ohonynt. Yn achos radio digidol, gallwn gael mwy o sianelau a gwell sain; mae hynny'n wir yn awr, a dyna pam mae radios digidol yn fwy poblogaidd na radios analog ar hyn o bryd. Mae'r rhyngwrwyd yn gwneud pawb yn gyhoeddwr ac mae'n chwyldroi e-fasnach. Mae byd teledu digidol yn bendant yn gam mawr ymlaen. Mae'n system lawer gwell na'r hen system analog, lle bu gennym yn llythrennol lond llaw o sianelau, ac mae byd aml-sianel yn sicr yn welliant, waeth a yw ydych yn hoff o bêl-droed fyw, ffilmiau, rhaglenni dogfen, sianelau newyddion 24-awr, neu, fel dywedodd Eleanor, o wrando ar ddarllediadau byw di-dor o sefydliadau megis Senedd y DU, Senedd yr Alban ac, wrth gwrs, Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru.

Fodd bynnag, nid yw hwn yn fyd heb broblemau'n llwyr. Un o bleserau mawr byw yng Nghymru yw bod gennym dopograffi diddorol. Mae'n wych bod yn fynyddwr sy'n byw yng Nghymru, ond mae topograffi yn rhwystro signalau teledu, radio a ffonau symudol. Gallwn wneud rhywbeth i ddatrys hynny, ond ni allwn newid deddfau ffiseg. Mae'r trosglwyddiad i ddigidol yn digwydd o ran llwyfannau daearol a llwyfannau lloeren. Byddaf yn trafod llwyfannau daearol yn gyntaf. Mae chwe phrif drosglwyddydd yng Nghymru, sydd oll yn trosglwyddo'r gwasanaethau analog a digidol presennol, ond, yn ogystal â'r chwe phrif drosglwyddydd hynny, a fyddai'n ddigonol petai Cymru'n wlad fwy gwastad, mae angen cannoedd o orsafoedd drosglwyddo i gyrraedd y cymoedd a'r tu ôl i fryniau. Ar hyn o bryd, dim ond nifer fach o orsafoedd trosglwyddo sy'n cludo signalau digidol, sy'n gwneud i rai pobl ddod i'r casgliad os oes ganddynt flwch pen set ac na allant dderbyn teledu digidol ar hyn o bryd, y byddant yn colli eu llun teledu yn gyfan gwbl pan ddiffoddir y signal analog. Nid yw hynny'n wir. Caiff gwaith peirianegol sylweddol ei wneud i'r gorsafoddd trosglwyddo ymhell cyn trosglwyddo i ddigidol, felly os oes gennych lun analog da ar hyn o bryd—hyd yn

analogue signal is switched off.

Eleanor talked about people who live in Wales and do not receive Welsh television pictures. This is complicated. Some people who live in Wales choose to receive transmissions from across the border—sometimes because they have moved across the border and would rather get English television—while others who are born and bred in Wales choose to point their aerials at the English transmitter because of the availability of Channel 4. One of the great things about the digital switchover is that everyone in Wales who has access to the digital signal will be able to receive a good picture on both S4C and Channel 4. There will, therefore, be a significant improvement in choice for broadcasting consumers.

Turning to satellite, the network of six major terrestrial transmitters and 200 relays is a good infrastructure for a small nation, but there will always be people who cannot get an adequate picture from a terrestrial relay system. This is where satellite increases coverage significantly. It also provides greater choice—you have some 30 channels on digital terrestrial television, rather than a handful, but satellite television can provide hundreds of channels. The current satellite system already provides over 200 channels, and satellite will get into virtually all of the parts of Wales that the digital terrestrial relays cannot reach. We currently have a system for Sky that is free to air, so you do not have to buy a subscription in order to watch the channels provided. There is widespread misapprehension that in order to have satellite television, you have to pay a subscription, but that is not the case. There is a well-established Sky free-to-air service, and there will be further developments in this area when Freesat becomes available in due course.

I think that Eleanor mentioned that around 60 per cent of Welsh households currently have access to digital television. The figure is, in fact, slightly higher than that. Over 70 per cent of Welsh households already have digital television, so the task between now

and then will be to ensure that the analogue signal is switched off.

Siaradodd Eleanor am bobl sy'n byw yng Nghymru ac nad ydynt yn derbyn lluniau teledu Cymraeg. Mae hyn yn gymhleth. Mae rhai pobl sy'n byw yng Nghymru yn dewis derbyn eu rhaglenni o Loegr—weithiau oherwydd eu bod wedi symud dros y ffin a byddai'n well ganddynt dderbyn teledu Saesneg—tra bod eraill a anwyd ac a fagwyd yng Nghymru yn dewis troi eu herialau tuag at drosglwyddydd yn Lloegr er mwyn derbyn Channel 4. Un o'r pethau gwych am y trosglwyddiad i ddigidol yw y bydd pawb yng Nghymru sy'n derbyn signal digidol yn gallu derbyn llun da ar S4C yn ogystal â Channel 4. Felly, bydd gwelliant sylweddol yn y dewis sydd ar gael i ddefnyddwyr darlledu.

O ran gwasanaeth lloeren, mae'r rhwydwaith o chwe phrif drosglwyddydd daearol a 200 o orsafoedd trosglwyddo yn seilwaith da ar gyfer cenedl fach, ond bydd bob tro pobl na allant dderbyn llun digonol drwy ddefnyddio system drosglwyddo ddaearol. Dyma lle mae gwasanaeth lloeren yn cyrraedd llawer mwy o gartrefi. Mae hefyd yn rhoi mwy o ddewis—mae gennych ryw 30 o sianelau ar deledu daearol digidol, yn hytrach na llond llaw, ond gall teledu lloeren ddarparu cannoedd o sianelau. Mae'r system loeren bresennol eisoes yn darparu dros 200 o sianelau, a bydd system lloeren yn gallu cyrraedd fwy neu lai bob rhan o Gymru na all trosglwyddyddion daearol digidol eu cyrraedd. Ar hyn o bryd mae gennym system ar gyfer Sky y gellir ei chael am ddim, felly nid oes rhaid ichi brynu tanysgrifiad er mwyn gwyllo'r sianelau a ddarperir. Mae camddealltwriaeth eang fod angen ichi dalu tanysgrifiad er mwyn cael teledu lloeren, ond nid yw hynny'n wir. Mae gwasanaeth Sky sefydledig, am ddim, a bydd datblygiadau pellach yn y maes hwn pan fydd Freesat ar gael maes o law.

Credaf i Eleanor sôn am y ffaith bod tua 60 y cant o gartrefi Cymru yn gallu derbyn teledu digidol ar hyn o bryd. Mae'r ffigur, mewn gwirionedd, ychydig yn uwch na hynny. Mae gan dros 70 y cant o gartrefi Cymru deledu digidol eisoes, felly y gwaith rhwng yn awr a

and switchover in 2009, when Wales will become the third part of the UK to be switched over, will be to make sure that we get that figure as close to 100 per cent as we can possibly get it.

I want to say something about special support for those who most need it. I fully recognise that some households will find the switchover difficult. This is not so much because of the cost of the equipment, and, as has been mentioned this afternoon, digital terrestrial boxes that were over £100 not so long ago, are now rapidly becoming affordable for just about everyone. Some households may need extra help to understand what they need to do, what option is best for them, and the practical business of how to install and use the equipment. This comes easily to teenagers and people in their 20s, but it is not the same for everyone in society. We have some further evidence from the digital technical trial that took place in Ferryside and Llansteffan earlier this year. It showed that most people coped pretty well with the switchover, provided—and this is the ‘if’—that they are given sufficient information about what to do and when to do it. Only a small minority needed a lot of support—mostly very elderly and disabled people.

A huge amount of information and advice will be provided to the people of Wales prior to switchover, and that is entirely appropriate. As well as that general information and advice, a special support scheme will be set up to help those aged 75 and over, and those with severe disabilities regardless of age. This special scheme will focus on practical assistance and will be established and funded by the BBC. Support is also being considered for those who are registered blind, so that they will be able to take advantage of the new audio description technology.

4.40 p.m.

The issue of the deaf community has been raised this afternoon. I offer an open door to the deaf community, because, if members of that community want to take this up as a special issue with me, I would be happy to meet them and meet Assembly Members. I would also be happy to make representations as a result of that to the Department for

2009, pan fydd Cymru yn trosglwyddo i deledu digidol fel y drydedd ran o'r DU i wneud hynny, fydd sicrhau bod y ffigur hwnnw mor agos at 100 y cant â phosibl.

Hoffwn ddweud rhywbeth am gymorth arbennig i'r rhai sydd ei angen fwyaf. Cydnabyddaf yn llwyr y bydd rhai cartrefi yn cael y newid yn anodd. Nid yw hyn gymaint oherwydd cost yr offer, ac, fel y dywedwyd y prynhawn yma, mae blychau daearol digidol oedd yn £100 ychydig yn ôl, bellach yn gynyddol fforddiadwy i bron pawb. Efallai y bydd angen cymorth ychwanegol ar rai cartrefi i'w helpu i ddeall beth y mae angen iddynt ei wneud, pa ddewis yw'r gorau iddynt, a'r mater ymarferol o sut i osod a defnyddio'r offer. Mae hyn yn hawdd i bobl yn eu harddegau a'u 20au, ond nid yw felly i bawb yn y gymdeithas. Mae gennym dystiolaeth bellach o'r treial technegol digidol a gynhaliwyd yng Nglanyfferi a Llansteffan yn gynharach eleni. Dangosodd i'r mwyafrif o bobl ymdopi'n eithaf da â'r newid, ar yr amoda dyma'r 'os'—y rhoddir digon o wybodaeth iddynt ynglŷn â beth i'w wneud a phryd i'w wneud. Dim ond i leiafrif bach yr oedd angen rhoi llawer o gymorth-yr henoed a phobl anabl yn bennaf.

Caiff llawer iawn o wybodaeth a chynngor eu rhoi i bobl Cymru cyn y trosglwyddiad i ddigidol, ac mae hynny'n gwbl briodol. Yn ogystal â'r wybodaeth a'r cynngor cyffredinol, caiff cynllun cymorth arbennig ei sefydlu i helpu'r rhai sy'n 75 oed a hŷn, a'r rhai ag anableddau difrifol, waeth beth fo'u hoedran. Bydd y cynllun arbennig hwn yn canolbwyntio ar gymorth ymarferol a chaiff ei sefydlu a'i ariannu gan y BBC. Ystyrir rhoi cymorth hefyd i'r rhai sydd wedi'u cofrestru'n ddall, fel y gallant fanteisio ar y dechnoleg ddisgrifio sain newydd.

Codwyd y mater o ran y gymuned fyddar y prynhawn yma. Cynigaf ddrws agored i'r gymuned fyddar, oherwydd, os bydd aelodau o'r gymuned honno am drafod hwn fel pwnc arbennig gyda mi, byddwn yn fwy na pharod i gwrdd â hwy ac Aelodau Cynulliad. Byddwn hefyd yn fwy na pharod i gyflwyno sylwadau o ganlyniad i hynny i'r Adran dros

Culture, Media and Sport.

Ddiwylliant, y Cyfryngau a Chwaraeon.

To conclude, an all-digital system will be a change for the better. It will increase choice and availability, and it will mean that more Welsh-language television is available to more people. That is a step in the right direction. However, we will need to protect the most vulnerable members of our society, which is precisely what the Labour Governments in Cardiff and in London will do.

I gloi, bydd system gwbl ddigidol yn newid er gwell. Bydd yn cynyddu dewis ac argaeledd, a bydd yn golygu y bydd mwy o deledu Cymraeg ar gael i fwy o bobl. Mae hynny'n gam i'r cyfeiriad cywir. Fodd bynnag, bydd angen inni ddiogelu aelodau mwyaf diamddiffyn ein cymdeithas, sef yn union yr hyn y bydd y Llywodraethau Llafur yng Nghaerdydd a Llundain yn ei wneud.

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

Y Dirprwy Lywydd: Daw hynny â chyfarfod heddiw i ben.

*Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 4.40 p.m.
The meeting ended at 4.40 p.m.*

**Aelodau a'u Pleidiau
Members and their Parties**

Andrews, Leighton (Llafur – Labour)
 Barrett, Lorraine (Llafur – Labour)
 Bates, Mick (Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru – Welsh Liberal Democrats)
 Black, Peter (Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru – Welsh Liberal Democrats)
 Bourne, Nick (Ceidwadwyr Cymru – Welsh Conservatives)
 Burnham, Eleanor (Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru – Welsh Liberal Democrats)
 Butler, Rosemary (Llafur – Labour)
 Cairns, Alun (Ceidwadwyr Cymru – Welsh Conservatives)
 Chapman, Christine (Llafur – Labour)
 Cuthbert, Jeff (Llafur – Labour)
 Davidson, Jane (Llafur – Labour)
 Davies, Andrew (Llafur – Labour)
 Davies, David (Ceidwadwyr Cymru – Welsh Conservatives)
 Davies, Glyn (Ceidwadwyr Cymru – Welsh Conservatives)
 Davies, Janet (Plaid Cymru – The Party of Wales)
 Davies, Jocelyn (Plaid Cymru – The Party of Wales)
 Dunwoody, Tamsin (Llafur - Labour)
 Elis-Thomas, Dafydd (Plaid Cymru – The Party of Wales)
 Essex, Sue (Llafur – Labour)
 Francis, Lisa (Ceidwadwyr Cymru – Welsh Conservatives)
 German, Michael (Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru – Welsh Liberal Democrats)
 Graham, William (Ceidwadwyr Cymru – Welsh Conservatives)
 Gregory, Janice (Llafur – Labour)
 Griffiths, John (Llafur – Labour)
 Gibbons, Brian (Llafur – Labour)
 Gwyther, Christine (Llafur – Labour)
 Hart, Edwina (Llafur – Labour)
 Hutt, Jane (Llafur – Labour)
 Idris Jones, Denise (Llafur – Labour)
 Isherwood, Mark (Ceidwadwyr Cymru – Welsh Conservatives)
 James, Irene (Llafur – Labour)
 Jones, Alun Ffred (Plaid Cymru – The Party of Wales)
 Jones, Ann (Llafur – Labour)
 Jones, Carwyn (Llafur – Labour)
 Jones, Elin (Plaid Cymru – The Party of Wales)
 Jones, Helen Mary (Plaid Cymru – The Party of Wales)
 Jones, Ieuan Wyn (Plaid Cymru – The Party of Wales)
 Jones, Laura Anne (Ceidwadwyr Cymru – Welsh Conservatives)
 Law, Peter (Annibynnol – Independent)
 Lewis, Huw (Llafur – Labour)
 Lloyd, David (Plaid Cymru – The Party of Wales)

Lloyd, Val (Llafur – Labour)
Marek, John (Cymru Ymlaen – Forward Wales)
Melding, David (Ceidwadwyr Cymru – Welsh Conservatives)
Mewies, Sandy (Llafur – Labour)
Morgan, Jonathan (Ceidwadwyr Cymru – Welsh Conservatives)
Morgan, Rhodri (Llafur – Labour)
Neagle, Lynne (Llafur – Labour)
Pugh, Alun (Llafur – Labour)
Randerson, Jenny (Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru – Welsh Liberal Democrats)
Ryder, Janet (Plaid Cymru – The Party of Wales)
Sargeant, Carl (Llafur – Labour)
Sinclair, Karen (Llafur – Labour)
Thomas, Catherine (Llafur – Labour)
Thomas, Gwenda (Llafur – Labour)
Thomas, Owen John (Plaid Cymru – The Party of Wales)
Thomas, Rhodri Glyn (Plaid Cymru – The Party of Wales)
Williams, Brynle (Ceidwadwyr Cymru – Welsh Conservatives)
Williams, Kirsty (Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru – Welsh Liberal Democrats)
Wood, Leanne (Plaid Cymru – The Party of Wales)