



**Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru  
Y Pwyllgor Addysg, Dysgu Gydol Oes a Sgiliau**

**The National Assembly for Wales  
The Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee**

**Dydd Iau, 9 Tachwedd 2006  
Thursday, 9 November 2006**

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Cofnodir y trafodion hyn yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynndi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal,  
cynhwysir cyfieithiad Saesneg o gyfraniadau yn y Gymraeg.

These proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee.  
In addition, an English translation of Welsh speeches is included.

*Aelodau Cynulliad yn bresennol: Peter Black (Cadeirydd), Christine Chapman, Jeff Cuthbert, Jane Davidson (y Gweinidog dros Addysg, Dysgu Gydol Oes a Sgiliau), William Graham, Irene James, Janet Ryder, Owen John Thomas.*

*Swyddogion yn bresennol: Andrew Clark, Pennaeth y System Gynllunio ac Ariannu Genedlaethol; Judith Nedin, Pennaeth Cynllunio Strategol a Chyllidebol, Llywodraeth y Cynulliad; Phillip Rogers, Pennaeth yr Is-adran Ymarferwyr, Llywodraeth y Cynulliad; Elizabeth Taylor, Cyfarwyddwr, y Grŵp Plant ac Ysgolion.*

*Eraill yn bresennol: Bob Benson, Cyfarwyddwr Gweithredol Datblygu Cymunedol, Scope; Stephen Beyer, Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr, Canolfan Cymru ar gyfer Anableddau Dysgu; Gary Brace, Prif Weithredwr, Cyngor Addysgu Cyffredinol Cymru; Jim Crowe, Cyfarwyddwr, Anabledd Dysgu yng Nghymru; Mal Davies, Cadeirydd, Cyngor Addysgu Cyffredinol Cymru; Neil Harvey, Pennaeth Ysgol Craig-y-Parc; Catherine Lewis, Swyddog Datblygu Plant yn Gyntaf (Plant Anabl), Plant yng Nghymru; Hayden Llewellyn, Dirprwy Brif Weithredwr Cymwysterau, Cofrestru a Safonau Proffesiynol Athrawon CACC; Andy Lusk, Cyfarwyddwr Addysg a Blynyddoedd Cynnau, Scope; Laura Morgan, Swyddog Cyfathrebu a Pholisi, Awtistiaeth Cymru; Kay Porretta-White, Cadeirydd Llywodraethwyr Ysgol Craig-y-Parc; Barry Shiers, Cyfarwyddwr, Anabledd Dysgu yng Nghymru; Kate Wood, Ysgol Hen Felin.*

*Gwasanaeth y Pwyllgor: Steve George, Clerc; Ruth Hatton, Dirprwy Glerc.*

*Assembly Members in attendance: Peter Black (Chair), Christine Chapman, Jeff Cuthbert, Jane Davidson (Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills), William Graham, Irene James, Janet Ryder, Owen John Thomas.*

*Officials in attendance: Andrew Clark, Head of the National Planning Framework and Funding System; Judith Nedin, Head of Strategic Planning and Budgeting, Welsh Assembly Government; Phillip Rogers, Head of Practitioner Division, Welsh Assembly Government; Elizabeth Taylor, Director, Children and Schools Group.*

*Others in attendance: Bob Benson, Executive Director, Community Development, Scope; Stephen Beyer, Deputy Director Welsh Centre for Learning Disabilities; Gary Brace, Chief Executive, General Teaching Council for Wales; Jim Crowe, Director, Learning Disability Wales; Mal Davies, Chair, General Teaching Council for Wales; Neil Harvey, Headteacher, Craig-y-Parc School; Catherine Lewis, Children First Development Officer (Disabled Children), Children in Wales; Hayden Llewellyn, Deputy Chief Executive, Teachers Qualifications, Registration and Professional Standards, GCTW; Andy Lusk, Director Education and Early Years, Scope; Laura Morgan, Communications and Policy Officer, Autism Wales; Kay Porretta-White, Chair of Governors Craig-y-Parc School; Barry Shiers, Director, Learning Disability Wales; Kate Wood, Ysgol Hen Felin.*

*Committee Service: Steve George, Clerc; Ruth Hatton, Deputy Clerc.*

*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 9.01 a.m.  
The meeting began at 9.01 a.m.*

## **Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau, Dirprwyon a Datgan Buddiannau Introduction, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest**

[1] **Peter Black:** Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee. I have some housekeeping announcements to make. I welcome Members, officials and members of the public. In an emergency, the ushers will

indicate the nearest safe exit. Headsets are available for translation and amplification. If members of the public are unclear about how to operate them, the ushers will assist you. Members should note that simultaneous translation is available on channel 1, while channel 0 will give you the language of the floor. I ask everyone to switch off any mobile telephones or BlackBerrys completely, as they interfere with the wireless and translation system. I have received no apologies and there are, therefore, no substitutions. Are there any declarations of interest under Standing Order No. 4.6? I see that there are none. In that case, we will plough straight on.

9.02 a.m.

### **Cylch Cynllunio'r Gyllideb The Budget Planning Round**

[2] **Peter Black:** In this item, we will consider the education and training elements of the draft budget laid on 17 October 2006. We have a raft of officials here to support the Minister. I ask the Minister to introduce her paper.

[3] **The Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Jane Davidson):** I am pleased to present my draft budget paper to the committee for its scrutiny and comment. You will notice that there is a growth of 11 per cent over the current budget. The views expressed by Members will be considered carefully alongside those of others, who can comment on the laid draft prior to the presentation of the final budget in December.

[4] In the paper, I have set out the Assembly Government's 'Wales: A Better Country' commitments in relation to education and lifelong learning. I have indicated how our resources are being used to deliver on these commitments. I have also made specific reference to how the proposed budget will address the key priorities of the committee, as set out in its letter to me in July. The paper provides a detailed explanation of how the proposed additional funding in this year's budget planning round, together with the additional resources allocated in earlier settlements will enable me to deliver on my commitments in the eight education and lifelong learning spending programme areas—otherwise known as SPAs.

[5] Increased recurrent revenue funding of £2.5 million has been made available to support the roll-out of the foundation phase for additional training to increase the supply of staff, primarily classroom assistants, trained to NVQ level 3 in early years education and childcare. The proposals include an additional £7 million to continue the improvement of school buildings, which brings the actual and projected total investment to over £667 million in the period 2004-05 to 2007-08, which is significantly more than our commitment to provide £560 million over the lifetime of the Assembly. Our proposals also include an additional £6 million for special educational needs, £5 million of which is included in the education, lifelong learning and skills main expenditure group, which will be transferred to the revenue support grant in the final budget, and an additional £1 million that has been added directly to the RSG by the Finance Minister in recognition of the increasing costs associated with providing for the complex needs of children with special educational needs. The proposed draft budget also includes an increase in the learning provision budget expenditure line of £7 million, to take into account pay and price pressures not considered in earlier budget rounds to contribute to the costs of lecturers' spine-point progression.

[6] Under separate cover, I have made available to Members a copy of the report from the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales on funding differentials between Wales and England. HEFCW's work confirms the complexity of the question asked, and the range of numbers that it has suggested highlights how difficult it is to find an answer. It is important to remind Members that over 95 per cent of the budget allocations have formed part of the three-

year budget plan, which was first agreed by the Assembly in 2004, agreed again in 2005, and is now represented in the 2006 draft budget. Delivery organisations have based their delivery plans on these precisely agreed budgets. In 2007, a newly elected Government will have an opportunity to develop a three-year spending plan and that will be the opportunity to develop any new priorities over a further three-year period.

[7] **Peter Black:** Thank you, Minister. Are there any questions or comments?

[8] **Janet Ryder:** It is always pleasing to see more money going into education, but it is how that money is spent that is important. I will pick up a few points. The Minister finished by saying that these spending plans were settled and agreed, yet a number of schools, in the past year, have seen money being taken off them and redistributed to other schools, due to the Minister's decision on the distribution of the raising attainment and individual standards in education grant—RAISE. The Minister's aim, as stated in 'Wales: A Better Country', was that the worst-performing schools would catch up with the best, and that, to a large extent, was how county councils were using that money. As it says in this paper, RAISE has targeted the link between deprivation and attainment. They are both worthy aims, but if a guarantee has been given that the worst-performing schools will catch up with the best, why has the Minister taken money away from some of the worst-performing schools when they were starting to turn the corner and had delivered it, through a mechanism of her own choosing, to other schools? We would like to know whether the RAISE money will continue to be distributed in the way that it has been distributed. Will schools face uncertainty regarding whether that RAISE money will continue?

[9] I am pleased to see £7 million going into further education, but I think that last year's request was for £7 million to go in to help colleges to provide the community education and further education that is needed, instead of us seeing the year-on-year decrease in the number of courses that are provided. A number of years ago, the Minister gave a commitment that she would fund the new pay spine and those pensions. Therefore, that £7 million should have been coming in any case to pay for previous commitments made by the Minister. It was obvious that that money had not been included in previous years and I am pleased, for that reason, to see that it is going in now. I would like to see where new money is going in, purely and simply to allow further education to provide those much-needed courses in communities, which everyone knows need to be there.

[10] There is one issue that I would like the Minister to look at, although I would not expect her to look at it in this budget round. The issue becomes obvious when you look at how the budget headings are split up and see that there is money for asylum seekers and ethnic minority achievement grants and so on. I wonder whether the Minister would look at the need now to support the educational needs of the children of migrant workers who might fall into a slightly different category. I would not expect that to come through in this budget round, but I hope that the Minister will take that on board and look at that increasing demand that councils have to face.

[11] There are three main issues that I would like to raise. The first is the increasing effect that the 1 per cent efficiency saving is having on schools and school budgets. That has become increasingly obvious over the summer months, when it has worked its way through into school budgets and they are starting to realise what the effect will be next year. Even for those schools that have not yet had to make the 1 per cent efficiency saving, we know that, next time around, the councils that have not already passed it on will be in an extremely difficult situation if they do not pass on that saving. Therefore, I think that Plaid Cymru and the other opposition parties would like the Minister to address that situation and the impact that it is having on school funding.

[12] The last two main issues relate to higher education. The Higher Education Funding

Council for Wales report that we have before us today, for which we have been waiting nearly a year, still does not seem to come to any conclusions. I can appreciate what the Minister is saying because, having read it, I know that it is a very complex document that puts forward many different methodologies for reasoning out what that funding gap might be at many different levels. However, you cannot get away from the fact that they all say that there is a funding gap that needs to be addressed, and that the size of that funding gap seems to be growing incredibly. If we are going to see higher education as a driver for the economy, then it needs a political decision on the part of the Government to address that funding gap. Plaid Cymru would expect the Government to address that funding gap considerably in this budget round, and not to use money set aside for the HE part-time provision, as outlined in the Graham review, as part of that closing-the-gap money. There is a great danger that that £10.6 million that has been identified might be used by the Government to say that it is closing that funding gap. It must be seen as new money, on top of everything else, for part-time provision.

9.10 a.m.

[13] Will the Minister confirm, as these budget papers clearly show, that it is not £10.6 million of new money, but £6.5 million of new money? How was that figure arrived at, and what methodology was used for arriving at it? That figure—even £10.6 million—does not seem to relate to the figures that the review put forward. The latest figures being put forward from the sector, relating to part-time education, might put the cost as high as £19.6 million, to implement the full recommendations in Heather Graham's review. Therefore, I would like to know the methodology that was chosen to arrive at that £6.5 million, and I would like a confirmation that it will not be used to close the funding gap.

[14] I would also like confirmation that we will see new money going into HE, to close that funding gap. Will the Minister also confirm that, in terms of the HEFCW report, and particularly when you consider state or Government support and grants for HE, the money that is going in now to support universities, as the fee waiver, if you like—the money that is going in to compensate for the fees that are being paid in England—is not being calculated in this, that that money is over and above that money as well, and that that does not come into this scenario? Would the Minister also confirm how she intends to use the increased money in the 16-19 baccalaureate roll-out? How will that be implemented, how will it be used, and how will it be distributed?

[15] **Peter Black:** As this is quite complex, and there were many questions there, could you deal with each Member's questions individually, Minister, rather than having a collection of questions?

[16] **Jane Davidson:** Okay. On RAISE, what we had in the system already was £3 million, if you remember. That £3 million was distributed between local authorities, and we asked them to concentrate the funding on schools that were not performing as well as they might be. The evaluation of that, as I have reported on several occasions, demonstrated unequivocally that what local authorities have done is spread that money so widely that it was not doing that job. That is why we were confident in pulling that money in with the £13 million of new money that was allocated from Gordon Brown in this year's budget, in terms of having a £16 million-worth RAISE grant. Schools are moving well ahead on this, which is significant, and it is supported by all unions. I had my joint union meeting recently, and it is seen as exciting; the tender is out there for an independent evaluation of the programme. We will allocate the funding in the same way for two years, subject to an independent evaluation of the programme in terms of how we move forward subsequently.

[17] The key point on the performance of schools generally is also dealt with in policy terms. As you rightly say, it is how you use money—you would have been happy to keep £3 million in the system that was being used insufficiently; we, as a Government, are not happy

with that. That is why we moved the money, but also why we have the new policy on partnerships—which we consulted on back in 2003, if you remember—between local authorities and individual schools over the setting of appropriate targets for school improvement, which will come into place for September 2007. I believe that we will be making the regulations on that in the spring.

[18] On further education, the sums, in terms of the issue on FE pay on which we had all-party agreement, are annually negotiated as lecturers move through the incremental scales because they are real sums of money related to the people in the system at the moment. There is £26 million for post-16 education, which is a 4.8 per cent increase and, overall, in the 14-19 agenda, we have £32.5 million, I think, which is a big increase from where we were this year in terms of driving forward the 14 to 19 learning pathways. The allocations for that have already gone out, subject to agreement on the budget. So, we can report to the committee in policy terms on future arrangements. The agenda for the meeting on 22 November is full, but we can report to the next committee on how those allocations have gone out and how they are being used by local authorities.

[19] As I have said to you before, we are concerned that we have a substantially increased number of migrant workers' children in the system. That is an issue for you and for us all, because we want to ensure that migrant workers' children receive appropriate education, which they are fully entitled to. However, that may mean that we need to put extra investment in. Work is ongoing on that at the moment, not just on the education perspective, but across the Assembly Government in terms of looking at the impact of having additional migrant workers and their children in the system. I am surprised that you did not also mention the adult issues, because there are adult Welsh and English language learning issues, for example, that we have to support solidly in this context.

[20] The committee may make representations on the efficiency savings to my colleague, the Finance Minister, but they are not in the budget allocated in front of us today, and I know that Members understand that. It is a complex situation in terms of higher education. I mentioned this in my short introductory note because I wanted Members to read the report and to understand the complexities. There is a danger in this regard, and, in fact, this was mentioned in the Chamber yesterday. Plaid Cymru seems to be obsessed at the moment with the notion of always making comparisons with England in terms of expenditure—*[Interruption.]* That leads to an enormous amount of effort being put in to try to marry up our different systems of delivery and expenditure. It takes a great deal of time, and it takes people away from their day job in the delivery of functions in Wales.

[21] Producing information, as you said in terms of this report, is extremely complex. You could use a range of figures in the report. If we look at the per capita spend on higher education, which your leader tried to use in the Assembly Chamber the other day as a stick to beat us with, we see that it remains substantially higher than that in England. If you use that measure, it is £8 million more than spend per head on higher education in England, because we had so many students from England and other places coming into Wales. We welcome that, and we think that it is important. If we use the figures in terms of grant-in-aid funding for full-time equivalent students, then there is a gap of between £32 million and £41 million, depending on the method used. However, the funding issues are dependent on what the spend costs are in an area, so if you take London out of the equation—and the comparison with London is fully accepted by HEFCW as being an inappropriate comparison—it changes the figure again.

[22] So, we continue to do more work on these issues, but I think that the report demonstrates the complexity. As the Government of Wales, we are focused on Wales, and it is important that we are looking at this budget now in terms of how we should use our money most effectively. As Assembly Members of all parties, we have already made a commitment

regarding putting additional funding into student support, which you quite rightly say does not address some of the issues here. Are you also suggesting that, for example, if we move that additional £33 million for student support, we could close that gap immediately? In a sense, you need to take a less hypocritical position on these areas. We are putting substantial investment in higher education, in the learner support mechanisms and in the fees mechanism.

9.20 a.m.

[23] Heather Graham's report, in terms of the combined model, specifically suggested elements to go into fees, and that is the £6.5 million in additional funding in the fees element, as well as elements that would go into an additional funding stream in mainstream budgets for higher education. On your budget sheets, you will see that, under the higher level learning spending programme area, the second row down shows the part-time student support—the additional £6.5 million in the learner support element. However, above that, alongside 'HEFCW: Reaching Higher', you have an additional £4.7 million, which includes the £4.1 million from the Graham review. So, there is an additional £10.6 million going into Graham, £4.1 million of which sits in the 'Reaching Higher' budget. We parked it there because, you will notice, the 'Reaching Higher' budget has gone up from £14 million in 2006-07, by adding the £4.7 million, to £18.7 million in 2007-08. We parked the higher education element, as it were, as opposed to the learner support element of that, in that budget for the moment so that, when we come to the delivery of mechanisms, higher education is confident. I have already talked to its representatives about the fact that it does have that extra money in the higher education element as well as the £6.5 million in the learner support element.

[24] I assure you that we, as a Government, are not saying in any way that the additional funding in the supplementary income stream is contributing to the funding differentials outlined in the HEFCW report, but I reiterate that the £33 million in the supplementary income stream that goes into learner support is funding that the Assembly has determined we want to spend on learner support.

[25] In terms of new money that has gone to higher education, in the HEFCW current budget expenditure line, there is £2 million, and the HEFCW capital budget expenditure has £3 million, which we put in as an additional allocation from last year. Obviously, there is the overall uplift for 2007-08, which is in addition to the £4.7 million that has gone to the 'Reaching Higher' BEL.

[26] **Janet Ryder:** Given what the Minister has just said, can we have confirmation that only £0.5 million of new money is going to 'Reaching Higher' for everything other than part-time students?

[27] **Jane Davidson:** Effectively, £14.6 million remains in 'Reaching Higher', and that is over and above the allocation to the institutions. The £14.6 million is there for opportunities in collaboration and reconfiguration, and that has been very successful of late, with a wide range of reconfigurations, collaborations and strategic partnerships coming forward, which will prepare Wales even better for our research assessment exercise submission in 2008.

[28] **Peter Black:** So, there is an extra £600,000 on the current year, is there?

[29] **Jane Davidson:** Yes, on the current year, in the 'Reaching Higher' budget. That is right, is it not?

[30] **Peter Black:** I attended the Local Government and Public Services Committee meeting yesterday as a substitute member, and I can confirm that the 1 per cent efficiency savings are not in its budget either, because it has held back £35 million to cover that. So, local government will not be seeing that money either. Anyway, that is its budget.



[31] **William Graham:** On the proposals for the chartered teacher qualification, assuming that they are agreed, I see that you have already identified funding of around £2 million. Will this be found within an existing budget, and, if so, where?

[32] Can you outline the funding for cross-portfolio issues to promote healthy lifestyles, exercise and sporting activities, and to support campaigns to tackle substance abuse, which we have talked about previously in committee? Also, can you identify the funding for promoting an acceptance and awareness of the Welsh baccalaureate among employers, and particularly in educational institutions outside Wales? Is there scope for additional funding for school meals to offset the apparent impact of the healthier menu?

[33] You touched on the Graham report and the funding for part-time higher education. I ask you again to identify the funding streams for the Welsh union learning fund, and the ASL for non-HE and part-time studies.

[34] **Jane Davidson:** Sorry, will you repeat the question?

[35] **William Graham:** It is on the funding streams for the Welsh union learning fund, and the ASL for non-HE and part-time studies. I fail to understand why you are so hostile—

[36] **Peter Black:** We are talking about the Assembly learning grant.

[37] **William Graham:** Yes. The Minister for education and the First Minister showed hostility this week towards the legitimate calls of higher education for more money. We understand and respect the fact that everyone will ask for more money, and that it is a question of determining priorities, which the Minister must do. However, to try to rubbish their findings and explanations is extraordinary. Higher education has told us about this time and again and it has given us the available evidence. We have agreed that London is a particular case in point for all, and there is no doubt of that, but I cannot imagine why you make these people out to be liars and cheats. You know that they need more money. Representations have been made to you as well as to opposition parties. Why do you ignore their recommendations so often?

[38] **Jane Davidson:** I will start with that point, because that is a total calumny in terms of what I said. I said that the HEFCW report is very complicated. My job as Minister is to work with the higher education sector to look at its immediate priorities. As a Government, we believe in the something-for-something agenda. For example, if you were talking to me about the areas that are extremely important in terms of ensuring that higher education delivers on the ambitions in 'The Learning Country: Vision into Action', I would say that how we ensure that higher education gets more money out of research councils, how we ensure that more money is accessed in terms of the big charities such as the Wellcome Trust, and how we look at creating opportunities for more postgraduates in the Welsh context stacks up very well, as we know from the report that looks at the employability of graduates in Wales, which I have mentioned in committee previously. I would be very happy to have discussions with you about how we ensure that we work with our partners in higher education on the delivery of the pay framework and how we look at delivering on the reconfiguration and collaboration agenda to make Wales stronger, as I have those discussions with higher education.

[39] There is a fundamental difference in terms of what seems to be a very weak approach that says that we always look for a gap and try to backfill, irrespective of what we want to get out of the other end. We must always invest to get some kind of improvement in the system. We must always look at using money wisely and well. Therefore, although we fully accept that there are differentials—and I said that in my opening remarks—we are also very ambitious about our higher education system. When we talk about it in Wales, we must also

look at the fact that it is tremendously successful. Only this week, we heard news that a Nobel prize winner from the Max Planck institute in Baden-Württemberg is coming to Cardiff. We know that Swansea is very ambitious, with £35 million-worth of plans for next year, and Peter will know more about that as a member of the governing council.

[40] We know that the strategic alignments in terms of creating new institutes and bringing institutions together to play to their strengths are levering in more money and more opportunities for funding. So, that is the dialogue that we should be having on higher education. I will reiterate the point that the First Minister, the Finance Minister and I made: we are responsible for the budget in Wales and for looking at what we want to achieve. We want to achieve the best outcomes based on our dialogue with sectors. Just looking at a negative input and a gap that happened two years ago—because you can track figures historically only—does not tell us what we should be doing in terms of improving higher education, because we always want to ensure that any additional spend is targeted appropriately.

9.30 a.m.

[41] That is why I have been happy, for example, that Wales is already leading the way on part-time provision. We could have sat back, but we did not, because we thought that it was really important to put the appropriate funding into that context, because we had more people going into part-time provision and we wanted to ensure that they were dealt with more effectively.

[42] On the chartered teacher qualification proposals, which you will, of course, hear more about a little later this morning, the proposals suggest that the delivery of the chartered teacher proposals will cost £2 million, but they need to be piloted first. We have already had discussions with the General Teaching Council for Wales so that we can sort out the piloting within existing budgets. The piloting would be from 2007, so this would come up in future budget planning rounds, subject to the piloting being successful. The figures are in the budget lines for the healthy lifestyle scheme, the baccalaureate, school meals and so on. I will ask Judith to take you through where they are, and, if you want to follow up with any questions about the delivery, I will be extremely happy to answer them.

[43] The baccalaureate, in a sense, is covered in three ways, because we have had the funding for the baccalaureate as a pilot, but now that it is accepted as a curriculum, the baccalaureate funding will go into the qualifications element now that it is, in a sense, moving from the pilot stage to delivery. I will shortly be writing to committee about that, because when we move funding from budget to budget, we notify the committee. However, because of this big £32.5 million budget that sits in the 14-19 line, there is also the question of how people can access the baccalaureate, and the fundamental delivery of roll-out is also partly in there. We will be utilising funding as appropriate to deliver that context.

[44] There is currently £1 million a year in the Wales union learning fund, and we are just about to agree the next round of pilot projects. The Assembly learning grant money now comes into the learner support money, because, following the introduction of the Assembly learning grant, I was delighted to see that our colleagues in England introduced the new higher education grant. The Assembly learning grant remains as a sort of top-up issue for people who are eligible for that in Wales, but not for the higher education grant, because it has a higher threshold.

[45] **Ms Nedin:** Starting with the healthy lifestyle funding, we have an increase from £1.8 million to £3 million in the physical education and sports budget, which is an account within the support for improving standards budget expenditure line, which is in spending programme area 3. The Welsh baccalaureate funding, at the moment, as the Minister said, sits in the

support for improving standards BEL and will move to the qualifications BEL. That budget is increasing by £1.8 million and will go up to £4.35 million. In the nutritional standards in school BEL, there is £1.4 million for nutrition in schools. As the Minister said, the Wales union learning fund is £1 million and that is in the other learning support BEL, which is part of SPA 8, which is the lifelong learning skills for young people and adults SPA.

[46] **Jeff Cuthbert:** Where is that?

[47] **Peter Black:** It is on the last page, Jeff, at the top of the last SPA, under 'other learning support'.

[48] **Ms Nedin:** It is other learning support in SPA 8. Finally, the ALG for non-higher-education students is in SPA 6, which is support for learning and it is within the targeted awards. There is a total of £14.1 million, which is split between sixth forms or schools and further education institutions.

[49] **Jeff Cuthbert:** Many of my points have been dealt with by the Minister in her responses so far, so I can cut this back a bit.

[50] I also want to ensure that RAISE is targeted as well as possible and that it benefits the greatest number of children who are suffering in terms of their education. Could you confirm that it is not just a question of this initial sum of money that is being spent, and that it is about value for money and the development of good, longer-term projects that have value and can be rolled out across schools in the years to come? That will surely benefit all children in schools, even after the work of RAISE comes to an end.

[51] I support additional funding for community education, because that is a key part of our lifelong learning role and, while I note that there is more money for pay issues, it is surely important that we take this opportunity to encourage the maximum collaboration between the further education and voluntary sectors, such as that between the Workers' Educational Association and community education departments in local education authorities, to make the very best use of resources and money to deliver for local people.

[52] I fully understand that it is wrong to pass on the 1 per cent efficiency savings just to schools, as some local authorities are doing—unfortunately, including my own, so this is not a party-political issue—and local education authorities should be reminded that the issue is about addressing genuine efficiency savings in education terms, such as those of surplus places, rather than just passing on, mechanistically, 1 per cent to each school budget.

[53] I think that you have answered most of the points on higher education, but it is important to say that, while higher education must, of course, be adequately funded, we need the maximum information and data. It is clear from HEFCW's figures and the summary that you provided that this is a complicated issue. We need to be sure that we are comparing like with like, that we are not skewing things by also comparing with London and the south east, and that we are taking account of up-to-date spending plans and figures, including moneys that we are allocating for those part-time students, which are so important, so that the full picture is before us before those important decisions are made.

[54] It is also important to say that there is a concentration on higher education. I understand the lobbying that is going on and, half an hour before this committee began, I received an apologetic e-mail from Higher Education Wales with its briefing. That is quite ridiculous. I have not had time to examine it thoroughly, but, from a quick scan of it, it just seems to be a repetition of some of the key points from HEFCW's analysis, so it does not really add anything, in my view, to the debate, although I have not had a chance to look at it properly. However, it is just not acceptable to have something as late as that. It is important

that higher education, although key for the economy, is just one of the issues that we face in terms of our education agenda, and if we are talking about driving the economy forward, it is just as important, and potentially more important, that we also look at the other end of that spectrum. I welcome the fact that there has been an 11 per cent increase for basic skills funding, but it is critical that, if we have more money in the system, that area of spend is given attention that is at least equal to that given to the higher education end of things. I would welcome your comments on that, Minister.

[55] I also very much welcome William's support for the Wales union learning fund.

[56] **William Graham:** I supported it only after I knew where the money was coming from.

[57] **Jane Davidson:** There are some real opportunities with the RAISE programme. We have been working very closely with the Welsh Local Government Association. Co-ordinators will be operating across the four consortia, which we have been using in terms of the teacher workload issues. Those partnerships between local authorities have worked very successfully and the WLGA is working with us on ensuring that those co-ordinators are there to do exactly as you say: to take good practice out of individual RAISE schools and to share that more widely. That will influence those statutory partnerships that I mentioned earlier, which are unique to Wales: the improvement partnerships for which we will make regulations in the spring—certainly by March. It will be one of the final acts of this Assembly to put the last piece of the jigsaw in place in that context.

9.40 a.m.

[58] The issues relating to community education are very important. On the voluntary sector, people always talk about the fact that it is often engagement with the voluntary sector that provides them with the first opportunity to take a learning route and that they can then be nurtured. In your own area, there is a very effective lifelong learning network in RISE, for example. The opportunities are there to use European funding and we are talking about substantial additional European funding coming into Wales under the convergence programme. We are looking to ensure that we are strategic about that delivery, and skills are right at the top of that agenda.

[59] On the 1 per cent efficiency savings, we understand that this is a very vexed issue, which is why Sue Essex asked the Wales Audit Office to evaluate the efficiency savings plans of local authorities to ensure that they were efficiency savings and not just budget cuts to a third party. In a sense, neither Sue Essex nor I could be clearer or more consistent about that because we have been absolutely clear and consistent about the fact that our expectation is that there are proper efficiency savings and that people should look at procurement, energy and other areas. We would want to see school budgets sustained where that is needed in individual schools. That is the job of the local authorities because they have the responsibility of funding their local schools' populations. Sue Essex has already indicated that she and I will write jointly—we have already written separately—to local government to make it clear what actions it should take.

[60] You are right to suggest that an area of efficiency savings relates to surplus places. We must remember that the evidence, however much people do not like it politically and want to shy away from this, demonstrates that there will be 100,000 empty places in our schools by 2013. That is demographic evidence from the census. So, local authorities need to keep under constant review—and this is also recommended by the audit office—how they ensure that there are the right schools for the right number of pupils in the right places. It is important that we increase the basic skills agenda. As I was able to reiterate yesterday, the Wales union learning fund has been extremely successful in terms of the basic skills agenda.

If you remember, around two or three years ago, there was a specific partnership between the CBI and the Trades Union Congress over basic skills that recognised the value of trade union learning, particularly in terms of that agenda.

[61] **Peter Black:** I want to add a few points before we conclude with this item. On the efficiency savings, when local authorities have tried to tackle the dilemma of surplus places, which many of them face, they have not only met with local resistance, but with resistance from members of your own Cabinet, who have tried to sabotage and stop the proposals that they are putting in place. That is a problem. However, if you are going to hold back the money in the Welsh Assembly Government—£35 million is being held back from next year's budget—and not pass it on to local authorities, you leave them with very little room for manoeuvre. In terms of service delivery, achieving efficiencies is sometimes a long-term goal and must be done over a number of years. If they find themselves with short-term cuts, which your Government is imposing on them, they are often left with very little choice. I suggest that the best way of ensuring that these efficiency savings are not passed on to schools, if that is what you want, is to let local authorities have that £35 million and ask them to identify those £35 million-worth of savings and then reinvest them in front-line services, as is happening in England, because that seems to be the most effective way of doing that.

[62] Secondly, on higher education, you made a point about comparisons with England and you felt that we should concentrate on Wales, but we must recognise that the Welsh higher education system is intricately linked with England. Half the students in Welsh universities come from England, and a large number of Welsh students go to English universities, so it is very difficult to separate the two. Given that situation, it is inevitable that comparisons will be made between the amounts of money being made available to be spent by higher education institutions.

[63] It is also worth pointing out that, when we came to an agreement on student support, the First Minister gave a commitment to trying to meet the funding gap. It is all very well to say that you do not believe that we should be looking at that, but the First Minister has given that commitment, and we are looking for that to be shown in this budget.

[64] On further education, I welcome the extra money for lecturers' pay, but there are issues for further education colleges concerning the national planning and funding system, which is causing them difficulties. Many colleges are still struggling to maintain their current level of course provision as a result of the funding that is coming to them from that system. Many of them are puzzled as to why that is the case. Everyone understood that the intention of the national planning and funding system was to move money from sixth forms to colleges, and that does not seem to be happening at all.

[65] **Jane Davidson:** We must be clear that the information that Sue Essex and I have given to local authorities has stated that the purpose of the efficiency savings is reinvestment in front-line services. That is why we are not happy about the notion that there has simply been a budget cut to a third party. That has been the unequivocal view from the Assembly Government.

[66] On Welsh higher education, it is absolutely true that it is intricately linked to education in England. That is why we should be focusing on the tremendous successes of Welsh higher education. I hope that we are going into this next research assessment exercise with the greatest confidence yet, because of the commitment of the higher education institutions and the high standard of delivery. It is always important to look at issues around funding, but the point that I was making is that funding must always be for a purpose.

[67] We have accepted our obligations in terms of the resolution of the Assembly, but I continue to suggest that, with regard to what we put in to tackle that, we should be looking at

what the pressures are on higher education now. The paper from HEFCW can only be historical, because its very purpose was to collect all the information together. So, if you simply add elements on the basis of historical information, you are not effectively tackling the current pressures. So, our view, as the Government, on how to tackle the funding gap issues is that we should test out—and I have had several meetings with higher education institutions over the past couple of days—what the pressures are now and look therefore at how to cost those effectively and put them into the mix.

[68] This is the time of year when everyone lobbies. In education, I find that we could always spend the budget twice over and that we would still be lobbied for more. That is good, because the ambitions for education in Wales are at an all-time high. I am very happy to play my part as the Minister for higher education when it comes to lobbying.

[69] I will ask Andrew to say something about the national planning and funding system, but I would say that it is wrong to characterise it as a mechanism designed to take money out of sixth forms and put it into colleges. Its purpose was to get a level playing field, and because there were different levels of funding for sixth forms and colleges across Wales at any rate, it has been an exercise that allowed us to stabilise the institutions by having a five-year plan for delivery. It is not about the present level of course provision; the whole point about the college sector, in particular, and others is that they must be responsive to economic needs. That is what the Leach review is likely to tell us when it is published before Christmas. It is a matter of how—and we have tested this before in looking at work-based learning—colleges and other providers are able to respond more effectively to those economic imperatives, and to the work of the sector skills councils and others. Perhaps Andrew can deal with any other issues to do with the NPFS.

9.50 a.m.

[70] **Mr Clark:** The main point to make is that we are still in a transitional phase. We do not have a settled system as yet. We applied it for the very first time to the further education institutions for the current academic year. When we made those allocations, there were unintended consequences. At the request of Fforwm, we undertook a review of the system in the spring, and we have made some changes. They appear to be minor, but actually they affect quite significant amounts of funding. We have three areas that we need to research further. However, we have already undertaken the first one, which is research into where the costs of key skills lie and recognition that where we have the integrated method of delivery of key skills, perhaps we ought to be increasing the funding to compensate for that, which is not in the system at present.

[71] The second area is open distance learning where the allocation methodology was accepted as being rather too generous and, therefore, was giving too much money to that area, inevitably depriving other areas. So, there is that aspect.

[72] The third area is the core of the Welsh baccalaureate. We have the pilot activity under our belts now, so we do have data on where the costs lie for that core activity. In the forthcoming months, we need to look at whether the funding allocation method for that core is reasonable. As yet, I do not know.

[73] The overall message is that it is not a status quo as yet. We have also commissioned a working group with foreign representatives from the further education colleges—from the finance side and from the data management side—and representatives of local education authorities, so that we can tease through these issues as and when they arise.

[74] **Peter Black:** Thank you, that is very helpful. Owen wanted to come in very quickly.

[75] **Owen John Thomas:** Dywedodd Jeff bod dogfen Addysg Uwch Cymru wedi dod y bore yma, ond nid felly y bu; daeth y ddogfen brynhawn ddoe i bawb. Mae'n ddogfen hylaw iawn.

**Owen John Thomas:** Jeff said that the Higher Education Wales document arrived this morning, but that is not the case; everyone received the document yesterday afternoon. It is a very handy document.

[76] **Jeff Cuthbert:** Not mine.

[77] **Irene James:** Nor mine.

[78] **Owen John Thomas:** Mae'n rhyfedd iawn eich bod chi wedi cael y ddogfen yn hwyrach na phawb arall. Beth bynnag, dyma'r ddogfen ac mae'n hylaw iawn. Y peth pwysicaf yw'r ffaith bod Cymru a Lloegr yn cystadlu am fyfyrwyr. Mae'n amlwg o'r ddogfen hon fod colegau Lloegr yn cael mwy o arian na cholegau Cymru. Felly, mae'n haws iddynt ddenu darlithwyr gwell a myfyrwyr gwell. Gall hyn olygu dim ond bod safonau yng Nghymru wedyn yn cwmpo os nad ydym yn rhoi mwy o arian i sicrhau nad yw hynny'n digwydd. Nid oes rhaid i chi fod yn '*rocket scientist*', Weinidog, i sylweddoli hynny. Nid yw'n fater o chwerthin am y peth; mae hwn yn ddifrifol iawn. Rhaid ichi gydnabod y ffeithiau hyn, a dechrau rhoi mwy o arian ar gyfer addysg uwch yng Nghymru.

**Owen John Thomas:** I find it very strange that you have received the document later than everyone else. However, this is the document, and it is very easy to use. The most important thing is the fact that Wales and England are competing for students. It is evident from this document that colleges in England get more money than colleges in Wales. So, it is easier for them to attract better lecturers and better students. That can only mean that standards in Wales will then decline unless we secure more money to ensure that that does not happen. You do not have to be a rocket scientist, Minister, to realise this. It is not a laughing matter; it is very serious. You must acknowledge these facts and start to give more money to higher education in Wales.

[79] Ar bwynt arall, bu i fy nghyd-Aelod yma godi gyda chi yn gynharach sut y byddwch yn defnyddio'r arian i ddatblygu'r fagloriaeth Gymreig. Nid ydych wedi ateb hynny. Byddwch yn ei datblygu, sy'n iawn, ond pa fformiwla sydd gennych i ddosbarthu'r arian yn union, ac at ba ddibenion y bydd yr arian yn mynd?

On another point, my colleague here raised with you earlier the matter of how you will use the money to develop the Welsh baccalaureate. You have not responded to that question. You will develop it, which is fine, but what precise formula do you have to distribute the money, and for what purposes will you distribute that money?

[80] **Peter Black:** Minister, could you be brief, as we need to move on to the next item?

[81] **Jane Davidson:** Mater o safon yw'r mater a godwyd gennych ynghylch prifysgolion. Mae'n rhaid i bawb hyrwyddo safon addysg uwch yng Nghymru. Mae adroddiad Cyngor Cyllido Addysg Uwch Cymru yn nodi'n glir y pethau nad sydd yn gymhleth. Pan gaiff y system ei chymharu â rhanbarthau eraill Lloegr, ni cheir yr un darlun o gwbl. Dyna'r rheswm. Rhaid inni gael data a chynnal sgwrs gyda chynrychiolwyr addysg uwch, fel yr wyf yn ei wneud. Credaf ei fod yn bwysig iawn sicrhau bod digon o arian yn y system hefyd, ond nid wyf yn credu ei fod yn iawn i

**Jane Davidson:** The issue that you have raised about universities is an issue of quality. We all need to promote the quality of higher education in Wales. The HEFCW report states clearly those things that are not complicated. When the system is compared with that in other regions in England, the picture is not the same. That is the reason. We will have to get data and hold talks with representatives of higher education, as I do. It is very important to ensure that there is sufficient funding in the system, but I do not think that it is right to consider old data or to give money for nothing, sometimes. It is very

ystyried hen ddata a rhoi arian i ddim byd, weithiau. Mae'n bwysig iawn defnyddio data i gynnal sgwrs gydag addysg uwch a sicrhau bod yr arian ychwanegol yn cael ei ddefnyddio i brynu mwy yn y system. Dyna'r sgwrs yr wyf yn ei chael gydag addysg uwch.

important to use data and discuss with higher education to ensure that additional money is used to buy more in the system. That is the dialogue that I am having with higher education.

[82] Ynglŷn â'r fagloriaeth Gymreig, pwrpas yr arian ychwanegol yw creu mwy o gyfleoedd i ysgolion a cholegau ddod i mewn i'r system. Mae'r arian yn y gyllideb a byddwn yn hapus i ddod ag adroddiad arall ger eich bron wedi i ni drafod y cynllun. Yn y cynllun a gyflwynais i'r pwyllgor y tro diwethaf, yr oedd yr amserlen yn glir. Gallaf hysbysu'r pwyllgor pan fyddwn yn gwybod faint o ysgolion neu golegau fydd yn mynd i'r cyfnod nesaf.

On the Welsh baccalaureate, the additional money is to create more opportunities for schools and colleges to come into the system. The money is in the budget and I would be happy to present you with another report when we have discussed the scheme. In the plan that I presented to the committee last time, the timetable was clear. I can let the committee know when we know how many schools and colleges will be going into the next phase.

[83] **Peter Black:** We have run out of time, Owen. We need to bring this to an end.

[84] **Owen John Thomas:** Hoffwn wneud bwynt bach yn unig.

**Owen John Thomas:** I would like to make a small point.

[85] **Peter Black:** In that case, see if you can do it in one sentence, and I mean one sentence.

[86] **Owen John Thomas:** Gan fod pob rhanbarth yn Lloegr namyn un yn cael mwy o arian na Chymru, os ydych yn gwneud cymhariaeth genedlaethol, mae'n amlwg y bydd gan Loegr fwy o arian y pen na phrifysgolion a cholegau Cymru. Felly, credaf eich bod yn ceisio ein cadw yn y tywyllwch, ac yn taflu tywod i'n llygaid. Mae'r peth yn amlwg i unrhyw un sydd am ei weld.

**Owen John Thomas:** Given that every region in England bar one receives more money than Wales, it is obvious that, if you do a national comparison, England will have more funding per head than universities and colleges in Wales. So, I think that you are trying to keep us in the dark, and pulling the wool over our eyes. That fact is obvious to anyone who wants to see it.

[87] **Peter Black:** That was more a series of phrases than a sentence.

[88] **Jane Davidson:** I repeat the information that is on the front of the report. Comparisons of spending on higher education per head of population suggest that Wales is spending pro rata £8 million more than England. You have to use the terminology extremely carefully. You are talking about the spending in English regions, which, as you can see, varies hugely from one region to another. The mix of institutions in those regions also varies. The region with the closest match to Wales is Yorkshire and Humberside. That, in a sense, demonstrates that, rather than looking at issues around old comparisons, we should always look at the pressures. We should keep those data in mind; I am not saying that we should not. However, I would not be a member of a party that always looks backwards and makes comparisons with another country on what we do; I am a member of a party that looks forwards. I am confident that there will be more money in higher education in this budget planning round, but it will be for a purpose. What the greatest pressures are will be agreed with higher education as well as the purpose and how it should be delivered.

[89] **Peter Black:** Thank you, Minister. We will have to draw this item to a close.



[90] **Jeff Cuthbert:** Point of order. I would like to confirm that I received the briefing paper from Higher Education Wales at 8.30 a.m. this morning, together with a note apologising for the late delivery, which was down to problems with the information technology. I do not know whether anything arrived yesterday afternoon. I was concentrating on Plenary; I do not know what Owen John was doing.

[91] **Irene James:** I endorse those comments.

[92] **Peter Black:** This is why I did not want to go into this. I am not here to talk about process; I want to talk about the substance of the budget. We need to move on to the next item.

9.59 a.m.

### **Fframwaith Datblygu Proffesiynol Professional Development Framework**

[93] **Peter Black:** I welcome the General Teaching Council for Wales. I apologise for keeping you waiting; we usually finish early, but the last item overran. I apologise profusely for that. We just have to wait for people to take their seats. Bear with us a moment.

10.00 a.m.

[94] I apologise for the delay, but the laptop seems to have died. Apparently, there is no signal between the laptop and the screen. We all have paper copies of the presentation, so we will proceed using them instead.

[95] I welcome again the General Teaching Council for Wales: Mal Davies, the chair, Gary Brace, the chief executive, and Hayden Llewellyn, the deputy chief executive with responsibility for teachers' qualifications, registration and professional standards—I think that that is more of a sentence than a job description. I apologise again for the fact that we have started late. If you would like to do your presentation first, we will then go into questions.

[96] **Mr Davies:** Thank you very much, Chair, and thank you for finding the time to have this discussion on the second strand of our advice on the professional development framework for teachers in Wales.

[97] You will remember that the Minister asked us to take a lead, with our partners, on developing this framework and we are grateful to our partners for their significant input in its development. The initiative for developing the framework came as a result of our paper, which we tabled with you, 'Continuing Professional Development—An Entitlement for All'. We see the framework as a tremendous opportunity to enhance the professional practice and status of teachers in Wales. That is not just the opinion of the council in Wales; it is the result of working in a multi-agency fashion with our partners, including teachers and headteachers, representatives of higher education, the local education authorities, the teacher unions, Estyn, and officials from the National Assembly. In addition to working in that multi-agency fashion, we have consulted widely and invited responses from all representative organisations across Wales. We also held four seminar conferences across Wales, and drew in a cross-section of teachers to consider the proposals. We have enjoyed enormous support of between 80 per cent and 90 per cent for the proposals as they are represented in the papers before you. I now ask Gary Brace to go through some of the main points of detail in the paper.

[98] **Mr Brace:** You will have copies of the executive summary document, and you may have downloaded the full advice, so I will not take long to go over the key features, as I know

that committee members will want to ask questions. The first slide is to remind Members that we are taking an incremental approach to the advice and the implementation. You can see the four strands of advice on the handout, and we completed the first strand of advice last summer. This presentation is focused on the second strand. Strands 3 and 4 look at teachers' recording and self-reflection of CPD, and the quality assurance of provision. We have just commenced work on that and we will bring forward the advice next September. Therefore, it is an incremental approach.

[99] The next slide summarises, in, hopefully, top-level form, the key features of the advice. It is important to know that new teachers and headteachers are already well catered for in Wales. There are already three statutory milestones: qualified teacher status, which establishes the baseline; the induction standard after one year of teaching; and, for headteachers, the national professional qualification for headship. However, the majority of teachers are not in that category—they are not at the beginning of their careers, and neither do they aspire to headships. We believe that there is a big gap in the middle, and we advised last year that that should be filled by another milestone, called 'chartered teacher'. We advise here that a national continuing professional development programme should be linked to that milestone.

[100] We go on to say that there should be professional recognition for all of those milestones—there is, already, for two of them, but we believe that more can be done. We also believe that there should be a more coherent link between the professional side of qualifications and academic accreditation, and I will say more about that in a moment. In our advice, we also set out specific proposals for the new chartered teacher milestone, including details of the programme, the piloting, and the roll-out and costs.

[101] Therefore, in summary, this diagram shows a career structure for teachers—you start at qualified teacher status, you work through induction, and there are the optional routes of 'chartered teacher' and the milestone of headship and senior leader. It will be a coherent and progressive structure for teachers, and it would do what is not there for the majority of teachers at present, namely give an idea of what is the appropriate next step in terms of professional development.

[102] Therefore, the new chartered teacher milestone would be optional. Chartered practitioners are recognised in other professions, so we argue in this advice that it must be pitched at a demanding standard that reflects the expectations of highly skilled classroom practitioners and middle leaders, or those who aspire to be middle leaders. The benefits are huge. It would not only complete that picture of a national CPD structure and standards, it would do other things. It would give enhanced status to the classroom practitioner, within and outside the profession. All too often, as we know, professional recognition comes for the person who leaves the classroom and enters senior management, which not all teachers want to do. The idea of being a chartered practitioner in the classroom would give an important message. At the same time, we could recognise the crucial role of middle leadership in this chartered teacher status.

[103] It is important that the profession itself says what it regards to be high standards of professional practice. Importantly, unlike pay standards, it would not be restricted by quotas. It would also give a focus for CPD providers in devising programmes that have professional and academic credibility. Therefore, in summary, the chartered teacher milestone would have a common core, which would be relevant to classroom practice and middle leadership, but it would give teachers optional routes and standards, which would allow them to go in a mixture of alternative directions.

[104] Linked to those four professional milestones, which are on the left of the screen, we would argue that there should be a coherent approach to professional recognition. The

qualified teacher status is well understood, as is the national professional qualification for headship, but more needs to be done for those teachers in the middle. We have already opened discussions on the chartered teacher milestone with the Privy Council, with a view to gaining chartered teacher status in order to award it to teachers. We believe that something can be done about induction too, to give that greater professional status, although primary legislation would need to be amended to bring that about.

[105] However, further than this, we believe that that professional side can be linked to the academic side. In the advice, we have discussed this with the HE sector and have advised that there should be a range of HE accreditation opportunities within the credit and qualification framework for Wales, linked to the achievement of ‘chartered teacher’ and induction; it is already well established in the other two milestones. However, we recognise that there may be a further debate to be had on the precise linkages between professional and academic recognition.

10.10 a.m.

[106] Our next step is to consult with the profession on the draft standards for the chartered teacher milestone. Later this month, the person specification for the position of chartered teacher will come out for consultation, which will also form the basis for providers who wish to devise and pitch chartered teacher programmes. Beyond that, we wish to pilot the chartered teacher programme from next autumn. There are two routes to it: a taught route and an accredited route. We are looking to do that and to evaluate it between March 2008 and June 2009. In the meantime, we would hope to have Privy Council approval for the new chartered teacher milestone and we would then begin to roll that out from September 2009, subject to evaluation and amendment.

[107] Lastly, I will draw your attention to a key point from our advice last year. This is not just about introducing a new milestone; it is a framework that is career-long and progressive. However, if you look at the milestones as they exist, there is a lack of coherence and progression and that remains to be addressed. Our advice last year was to recommend that the work should commence no later than January 2008, so that you and teachers would be able to see a coherent and progressive way through. The ultimate aim, we hope, would be to have a set of professional milestones that were owned by the Assembly and the profession.

[108] **Mr Davies:** Thank you, Gary. We would be pleased to answer any questions.

[109] **Peter Black:** Thank you. Janet and Irene have questions to ask.

[110] **Janet Ryder:** Thank you for the presentation. This is an exciting step and it offers many opportunities. You talked about practising teachers. There are so many routes into training and so many different funding streams for training. If those can be brought together into one access point, with a clear application form and an easy step progression into that training, it would offer a lot of possibilities. I welcome the emphasis on it being the individual teacher’s choice, and it is presumably totally up to each individual what kind of training course he or she will follow; it has to be an individual choice.

[111] I would like confirmation on what we heard from the Minister earlier regarding the fact that this £2 million is purely and simply for running and developing the pilot scheme. Will that £2 million provide the training courses, and cover the supply cover for schools and the administration costs? How will that £2 million be used? If you are saying that the ability to apply for this will not be in any way restricted, do you have any concerns that that £2 million may eventually—as you presumably want a high number of teachers to apply for this—prove to be a block, or do you see that there would have to be incremental increases in that £2 million as it progresses?

[112] You mentioned the career pathway, which includes qualified teacher status, the induction year, the chartered teacher milestone, and the qualifications to go on into senior management and headteacherships, if teachers choose that path. Qualified teacher status and the induction year are compulsory, and if you want to be a headteacher you have to have those qualifications. At what stage, if any, do you envisage the chartered teacher status becoming compulsory as a stepping stone to progression? Do you ever envisage it being linked to the pay scale?

[113] On the pay scale, I understand that, in England, advanced teacher and excellent teacher status are noted in the terms and conditions agreements. I understand that we do not have advanced teachers or excellent teachers in Wales at the moment, but they are there and we pay our teachers according to that pay scale. Do you expect chartered teacher status in the Welsh pay frame to take the place of those two scales in England?

[114] **Mr Davies:** That is quite a question; thank you. I will kick off first, and then Gary and Hayden will fill in. It is confusing for teachers in staff rooms; when it comes down to their making individual decisions about the CPD that they want, they are subject to a load of advertising from many different providers, and we can help to kitemark and provide quality assurance for the standard that those teachers would have, and to guide more coherently the training that they are applying for. That confusion, and any wastefulness in that confusion, can be removed.

[115] We do not see the chartered teacher status as being a compulsory step for teachers. We see this as growing from the professional practice; when teachers feel ready, then that would be the opportunity for them to put themselves forward for assessment.

[116] **Janet Ryder:** So, do you envisage this playing a part in the governing bodies' decision on who to appoint to a higher scale or whatever?

[117] **Mr Davies:** That may be the case, and it is the same in terms of the relationship with pay, in that we would be happy for information taken from chartered teachers' and teachers' CPD to inform decisions about pay or promotion, but it is not obligatory. It is there for teachers to make those decisions themselves. Gary, do you want to come in?

[118] **Mr Brace:** I do not want to add to that. You are right to comment that teachers' pay terms and conditions apply to England and Wales, but there are no advanced skills teachers in Wales; that is a fact. So, you have a system in which that opportunity clearly is not being taken up, and who knows what will happen with the excellent teacher status. I will pass over to Hayden to answer your first question on the £2 million funding, and the model on which that is based.

[119] **Mr Llewellyn:** In breaking the £2 million down, it is important to acknowledge the fact that we are proposing two routes for chartered teachers: a programme or taught route, and an accreditation route. We estimate that the bulk of the £2 million would really be taken up by the taught or programme route, and those costs would be used for providers to provide the programme. In terms of the administration side, the council would absorb small costs itself in that regard.

[120] The accreditation route would require a smaller amount of the £2 million—we estimate it to be around £225,000. The bulk of that cost would be attributed to assessors, who would consider a teacher's portfolio of professional development evidence.

[121] **Janet Ryder:** You are not going to cover the supply costs, are you? Unfortunately, there is an increasing number of teachers who want to go on courses and, having applied to

their headteacher, the headteacher has said, quite simply, 'I'm sorry; I can't afford the supply costs within the school budget, so you can't do that course'. How much of that is going to restrict teachers' ability to apply?

[122] **Mr Brace:** In chapter 10 of the advice—we provided an electronic copy to Members—we have deliberately not assigned costs for supply cover. We know that chartered teacher status already exists in Scotland, and that mirrors the model there. This is, ultimately, a professional qualification that will largely consist of work-based practice, although there will be taught elements. The reason why we have not put supply cover costs or teacher expenses into that is that we do not regard that as being the significant way of developing the programme with teachers. Should the Assembly wish to tailor that, of course, and put funding in for supply cover, then that would be on top of the figure that we—

[123] **Janet Ryder:** It is open for the Assembly to assess the programme a few years down the line to see what effect that is having.

[124] **Mr Brace:** That is very much the case. We see it as a two-year pilot. We want to learn from this and then, in the light of that, we may need to amend the figures. Our modelling, which is also set out in chapter 10, is based on having 1,000 teachers involved by 2010. It is an incremental build-up, as you will see from the chapter.

[125] **Peter Black:** Would teachers be able to apply for existing bursaries to pursue this qualification? You have bursaries already to help teachers with CPD; would they be able to use those to progress this?

10.20 a.m.

[126] **Mr Brace:** During the pilot phase, I think that that is the approach that we will take, subject to the council approving it. However, the £2 million budget that we have asked for is the budget for the main scheme beyond it.

[127] **Janet Ryder:** You alluded to Scotland, and Scotland is linked to the pay frame. So, to take you back to the original question, you have laid very good grounds for why we should have our own terms and conditions in Wales as the profession develops separately. Do you see that coming in when we eventually get our own pay and conditions structure?

[128] **Mr Davies:** I do not want to talk about pay and conditions, because that is not in our remit.

[129] **Janet Ryder:** That is fair enough.

[130] **Mr Davies:** There is a great danger in linking a professional qualification with a pay standard, because it will be quota-driven. Sadly, your committee, and any other committee that allocates money for teachers pay, will have a finite budget, which means that you could only afford to have so many chartered teachers in any year. That is not what it is about. When teachers demonstrate that level of professional practice, they should be entitled to the status, independent of what they are being paid.

[131] **Irene James:** You have asked many of the questions that I wanted to ask.

[132] **Peter Black:** I only asked one question.

[133] **Irene James:** That was part of the question that I was going to ask. Another issue is that many teachers say that they are quite happy to stay teaching in the classroom. Is this a way of telling teachers that, in order to develop professionally, they must go beyond that?

That is the implication in the document—in order to develop, you must look further than that. Some teachers want to stay within the classroom. What feedback have you had from teachers on this process?

[134] **Mr Davies:** Our support is between 80 and 90 per cent. If a teacher is fully qualified after three years and joins the profession for the next 37 years, no-one says anything about their professional practice. The chartered teacher scheme allows us and the teachers, if they wish, to have their professional performance measured. It allows us to say that teachers have been, or are, working at this standard of chartered teacher standard. As it stands, they work for 37 years and no-one says anything to them other than that they can have a promotion if they take on extra responsibility. It does not say that teachers must do this to go forward; it is actually saying that a teacher's professional practice is at this standard at the moment.

[135] **Mr Brace:** May I add something there? From the consultation, it appears that there are two obvious groups that would be interested in chartered teacher status. It is the highly experienced, highly skilled teacher that is already there and wishes to achieve professional recognition—teachers who want to be chartered teachers in recognition of what they are already doing. There is also another group, which is the aspirational group. The chartered-teacher milestone and standards will set out expectations in a helpful way, because it is optional, as to what the next professional step is for them. So, there will be a group that wants to progress and a group that is already there. Those are two obvious candidates for chartered teaching status.

[136] **Jeff Cuthbert:** I am extremely supportive of this programme. It is the right thing to do, and, as is any profession, continuing professional development should be encouraged. It should not necessarily be for financial reward, although it will be a plus point should anyone wish to apply for a better-paid position, but that should be the same in all professions.

[137] On the second slide that you produced, you had 'career progression' as strand one, and the second box was 'related professional standards'. In your main report on page 44, in terms of the accreditation route, you talk about accreditation of prior learning and accreditation of prior experiential learning as evidence forms that candidates could use. In terms of related professional standards, to what extent have you been able to consider the mapping of evidence gained in other professions from people who may have come into teaching a bit later in life, but perhaps with relevant experience, perhaps in training or personnel? How well can those types of qualifications or experiences be used for this purpose, if at all?

[138] The other point is how well you think that this qualification or charter will marry into the new initiatives, like the 14 to 19 learning pathways, that will involve collaboration with the further education sector and the work-based-learning sector. Do you feel that it is robust and that it will accommodate experiences gained in that way?

[139] **Mr Davies:** I will kick off by saying that we are in the early stages of looking at prior learning. We have recognised that, for someone who is joining the teaching profession later than in their early 20s, a period of five years before they can move to put themselves forward to be a chartered teacher may not be appropriate. It will need work; we will have to look at those qualifications and how to bring them across before we make hard and fast rules as to how they can be accredited in their new profession.

[140] **Mr Brace:** The key point is that, for the chartered teacher, as with all the others, potentially, there is a set of standards and criteria to meet. In any APL or drawing across from experience in another profession or area, the key question for us is whether it meets the standards. Asking that would be the job of the assessor. So, as Mal said, it is early days and it is one of the things that we will want to pilot during the accreditation period. Hayden, is there

any evidence from Scotland in terms of doing that?

[141] **Mr Llewellyn:** It is the case in Scotland that, if a teacher can demonstrate that they meet the standards through drawing on evidence from a previous occupation or experience outside of teaching, that is absolutely fine. We would look to mirror that in Wales.

[142] **Jeff Cuthbert:** That is all that I was looking for on that point, but there was the other point about the 14 to 19 learning pathways and the robustness with the new initiatives.

[143] **Christine Chapman:** I wanted to ask about the content of the programme. Jeff has already mentioned 14 to 19 learning pathways, and I particularly wanted to talk about that and whether this programme would support teachers to look at the enhanced roles of other professionals coming in to education. Under the learning pathways, we are talking about an enhanced role in education for youth workers and learning coaches. I wondered whether the programme for chartered teachers would discuss those elements. A really good teacher is not just a teacher who is there teaching the subject; a professional teacher facilitates experiences for young people, to encourage them to be outward looking and to have a range of experiences. That may not be a role that they will fulfil themselves; it is about encouraging other people to come in to the classroom.

[144] **Mr Davies:** The framework for the professional development of teachers is for teachers, but the skills that will be developed via 14 to 19 learning pathways, in response of Jeff's and your questions, will be much wider. The professional competence will involve teachers leading teams of other facilitators of learning and creating learning experiences in different ways—not the traditional role of teachers in front of classrooms. That will be embraced within the standard.

[145] **Mr Brace:** The chartered teacher standards consultation, which we are launching in a few weeks' time, sets out the standards under three headings: knowledge and understanding, skills in practice and professional commitment. You will see, when the document comes out, fair reference to mentoring and leading others; those others are not just teachers.

[146] **Owen John Thomas:** Yr wyf yn cymryd y bydd y cyrsiau hyn ar gael i athrawon mewn addysg gynradd ac uwchradd. Os yw pobl yn gallu dewis y math o gwrs y maent am ei wneud, yn arbennig ar y lefel uwchradd, byddwch yn cael pobl yn dewis amrediad eang o bynciau. Mae hefyd yn bwysig ei bod yn bosibl gwneud hyn drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg yn ogystal â thrwy gyfrwng y Saesneg. Felly, bydd tipyn o waith paratoi ar yr holl gyrsiau a fydd ar gael, ond mae rhai pethau, fel egwyddorion a dulliau dysgu ac yn y blaen, sy'n gyffredin i bopeth. Fodd bynnag, lle mae pobl am ddewis cwrs arbennig, mae tipyn o waith paratoi i'w wneud.

**Owen John Thomas:** I assume that these courses will be available to teachers in primary and secondary education. If people are able to choose the type of course that they would like to do, especially at the secondary level, you will have people choosing a vast range of topics. It is also important for it to be possible to do this through the medium of Welsh, as well as through the medium of English. Therefore, there will be significant preparatory work to do on all the courses that will be available, but some things, such as the teaching principles and methods, will be the same for all courses. However, where people want to choose a specific course, there is quite a lot of preparatory work to be done.

10.30 a.m.

[147] **Mr Davies:** That is so, and it is proposed that the pilot scheme will be bilingual in parts of its preparation, so we think that that is important, and also that the professional practice is being taught as well as the subject. It is about leading in learning and it is those experiences and professional practices that teachers engage in that we want to recognise and

hold up as being important to teachers.

[148] **Mr Brace:** I refer you to page 38 of the advice, where, in diagrammatic form, the chartered teacher programme is set out. You will see the core modules but also modules relevant to classroom practice and then separate modules relevant to middle leadership. That is very important, particularly for the primary teacher. We all know that most primary practitioners will be classroom-based but they will also carry some sort of middle-leader responsibility, for example, being curriculum leader for a subject. So, it was important that, in devising the programme, there were specific routes that secondary teachers might want to take, namely one or the other, but also that there could be a mix-and-match approach of both that would be relevant to primary teachers. I have no doubt that, as this rolls out, assuming that it is successful, more and more optional modules will be developed, which will then be accredited and can go forward.

[149] **Owen John Thomas:** Pe bai athro cemeg, er enghraifft, am ddatblygu ei sgiliau a'i wybodaeth yn y pwnc hwnnw, a fyddai'n bosibl cael cwrs, fel rhan o hyn, iddo wneud hynny?  
**Owen John Thomas:** If, for example, a chemistry teacher wanted to develop his skills and knowledge in that subject, would it be possible to have a course, as part of this, to allow for that?

[150] **Mr Davies:** Rather than looking specifically at a course in teaching chemistry, we would be looking at a course on the skills involved in teaching science successfully.

[151] **Jane Davidson:** I am delighted that you are here at committee today with the next stage of this work, which we, as the Assembly Government, strongly supported in principle. It is worth restating a few of those principles. The programme will be unique to Wales, so the issues around how it relates to big agendas, such as the foundation phase and the 14 to 19 learning pathways, can be built into the chartered teacher programme. It is fundamental that it is voluntary, and I am delighted that, in all our discussions, we have kept to that notion. It is similar to the way in which many teachers go through masters degree programmes now, but masters degree programmes are very individual; the proposal here is that the chartered teacher scheme operates to a set of professional, accredited quality standards that people recognise across the piece, but that they can also contribute towards masters programmes if they want to utilise that route. However, it gives them the recognition in the classroom, which is Irene's point. We have taken that as a given, but it is important that we restate it. People will not necessarily want to go on to headship as a chartered teacher. It is this holy grail of finding a mechanism that rewards teachers whose classroom practice is exemplary and who want to stay in the classroom but who want an endorsement of their efforts. It will not directly contribute towards pay, because it is very important that it is a voluntary professional qualification. However, just as if you have a masters degree, for example, any governing body would look at that in the context of any decisions that it took.

[152] I ask you to relate this to three areas. The first is to say a little more about how you plan to do the pilot scheme. I am very happy in principle for you to take forward the pilot scheme from September next year, so that people can see a real relationship between your consultation document and delivery, but committee will want to be confident that you have the capacity to do that. It should also be bilingual; it is not about elements being bilingual, as we must ensure that the pilot scheme enables teachers who teach through the medium of English or Welsh, or who teach bilingually, to take and participate in the pilot scheme. That would be fundamental for us. The other point is how this relates to the whole pedagogy initiative, because of the importance of raising the game in the whole teaching and learning agenda in Wales.

[153] **Mr Davies:** I think that this contributes enormously to the pedagogy initiative in that it brings out into the open the discussion about what is outstanding practice in the classrooms



of Wales. Teachers then engage in that dialogue on what good teaching is, how it can be recognised and how it can be rewarded as such, and I think that that is very important.

[154] **Mr Brace:** On the detail of the pilot, when we finish our consultation on the standards, we will then wish to appoint providers to pilot that taught route to the chartered teacher programme. We will do that on a formal basis, namely by competitive tendering. Next week, we will hold an information meeting to which potential chartered teacher providers can come along. We have to do some further work on the tender document with our council members, but we hope to issue that tender document late in January, and we hope to have appointed the providers by April. That tender document, without letting too much out of the bag, will require partnership working. We will look for local education authorities to work in partnership with higher education institutions. We are also looking for distance learning provision and Welsh-medium provision; we want a good geographic spread. Hayden may want to say a little more on the piloting of that.

[155] On the accreditation route, the council itself will pilot that with a small number of teachers, so we will appoint a number of assessors. All of this is costed in chapter 10 of the document. Having identified the teachers, we will put an assessor and an adviser in touch with the candidate and pilot it that way. There will then be a formal evaluation of that the following year. So, that is it in embryonic terms. Hayden, do you want to comment?

[156] **Mr Llewellyn:** The only thing that I would add is that, based on the experiences of the chartered teacher programme in Scotland, we have been advised to try to pilot as broadly as possible. On that basis, we are looking to pilot some core modules, optional modules, and modules relevant to the primary and secondary sectors. We are certainly interested in the bilingual element. Through a well balanced pilot spread across Wales, we think that we can learn the maximum number of things that we need before the programme goes live.

[157] **Owen John Thomas:** Hoffwn **Owen John Thomas:** I would like to wneud sylw. comment.

[158] **Peter Black:** I am afraid that we have run out of time, Owen.

[159] **Owen John Thomas:** Dim ond sylw **Owen John Thomas:** It is only a short byr, Gadeirydd. comment, Chair.

[160] **Peter Black:** Okay, but very quickly.

[161] **Owen John Thomas:** Yr wyf am ailfynegi'r pwynt a oedd yn beco'r Gweinidog, sef yr elfen ddwyieithog. Mae angen i'r cwrs hwn fod ar gael i athrawon drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg yn yr un modd ag y mae ar gael iddynt drwy gyfrwng y Saesneg. Nid agwedd yn unig ydyw, ond rhywbeth sylfaenol. Dywedasoeh fod elfen ddwyieithog i'r cwrs, sy'n awgrymu mai dim ond rhyw gornel fach o'r cwrs sy'n Gymraeg. **Owen John Thomas:** I wish to reiterate the point that the Minister was concerned about: the bilingual aspect. This course needs to be available to teachers through the medium of Welsh in the same way as it is available through the medium of English. It is not just an attitude; it is fundamental. You said that there was a bilingual element to the course, which suggests that only some small corner of the course is in Welsh.

[162] **Mr Brace:** That is not the case; I assure you that we are looking to pilot a Welsh-medium version of the chartered teacher programme.

[163] **Owen John Thomas:** Diolch. **Owen John Thomas:** Thank you.

[164] **Peter Black:** On the consultation, you said that you would consult all your Members.

Will you also extend the consultation to local education authorities and other interested parties?

[165] **Mr Brace:** Do you mean in relation to the chartered teacher standards?

[166] **Peter Black:** In relation to the consultation that you will launch later this month.

[167] **Mr Brace:** We were going to focus mainly on the experienced group of teachers who may fall into this category. That was our intention, but it can be widened to other groups.

[168] **Peter Black:** It would be useful to widen that, as I am sure that local education authorities in particular will want to comment on this, as will employers. Other bodies may also want to comment.

[169] **Janet Ryder:** That takes it away from the choice of the individual.

[170] **Peter Black:** I am talking about ensuring that they can respond, as they may well have concerns.

[171] Thank you for coming along to the session. We will now break for tea and coffee. Please return by 10.55 a.m. and not a minute later.

*Gohiriwyd y cyfarfod rhwng 10.39 a.m. a 11.02 a.m.  
The meeting adjourned between 10.39 a.m. and 11.02 a.m.*

### **Adolygiad Polisi Anghenion Addysgol Arbennig—Rhan 3: Casglu Tystiolaeth Policy Review of Special Educational Needs—Part 3: Evidence Gathering**

[172] **Peter Black:** Good morning again, and welcome back to the committee. I welcome our presenters. In our first tranche, we have Jim Crowe, the director of Learning Disability Wales, Stephen Beyer, the deputy director of the Welsh Centre for Learning Disabilities, Cath Lewis, the Children First development officer for disabled children for Children in Wales, and Kate Wood from Ysgol Hen Felin. You are going to give us a brief presentation and then we will take questions. I remind you that everything that you say is being taken down; we have a verbatim record, and you will get an opportunity to see it before it is published.

[173] **Mr Crowe:** Thank you for giving us this opportunity to present some evidence to the committee. I believe that you all have the evidence before you, so I will not labour my presentation. I am hoping that the majority of the time will be given over to discussion, questions and answers with my colleagues, who have a lot of expertise in the relevant areas. I will just take us through the document sparingly.

[174] On page 1, as you will see, we point out that young people with learning disabilities in Wales do benefit in some instances from the creativity of some very committed professionals in the many agencies that they link with. It is very important to say that at the outset. Some professionals have a very creative and innovative vision and approach. Very often, those instances rely on the capacity and intuition of the individual professional, rather than the approach of the agency by which he or she is employed.

[175] In this report and evidence to you, we have not tried to document the material that you have probably seen on numerous occasions from other organisations; the fact that you have decided to undertake this review is evidence enough that there is a substantial issue around transition for young people. Today, we are here to talk about young people with learning disabilities.

[176] Learning Disability Wales's mission is set out for you. We represent more than 120 voluntary organisations concerned with people with learning disabilities from birth through to old age. We believe that we have a fairly unique perspective, through the organisations and the networks that we work with. This paper has been drawn together with the benefit and input of my colleagues at the table today and the organisations that they represent. I hope that that again emphasises the unique insights that we can bring to bear on the matter.

[177] We need to say that our concern is fundamentally not so much about policies and procedures. Colleagues, including you in the Assembly and the UK Government, have put in place many policies and procedures that are well meaning and are intended to help young people with learning disabilities to develop. Our concern is much more about ambition and attitudes. As we state in paragraph 3.1 on page 3,

'The opportunities available to many young people with learning disabilities as they approach the transition period of 14+ are levelled down by the low expectations of important people around them. This phenomenon is deeply corrosive and undermining. Low expectations lead to the young person with a learning disability being treated differently, a second class approach'.

[178] We then go on to talk a bit about that, and we provide some quotations directly from the evidence of young people with learning disabilities given to the Children's Commissioner for Wales a couple of years ago. Those points are still relevant and valid. At paragraph 3.3, we say that,

'Unemployment amongst young people with learning disabilities has become the acceptable norm'.

[179] That is notwithstanding the policies and procedures in place. In paragraph 4, we are talking about planning and preparation. We label it, perhaps slightly contentiously, 'Fail to prepare, Prepare to Fail'. There are policies in place, and we detail some of those, but we would emphasise that transition planning must be seen as part of a planning process that should start in the early years. It should happen in a vacuum at age 14 plus or 16 plus.

[180] With the transition plan that has been established for several years as a right for each person with a learning disability, we say in paragraph 4.4 that it,

'remains everybody's concern but nobody's responsibility'.

[181] As you all know, the national service framework for children, young people and maternity services is a very important document. It sets out very clearly what must happen in future for young people with disabilities. They should benefit from having a transition worker or a key worker. However, the timescale for achieving that is 10 years, so another generation of young people will grow up experiencing the sorts of difficulties that you have heard evidence about from other organisations and from us.

[182] In some cases, even if we have a transition worker in place, perhaps there is some scope for advocacy assistance being given to the young person with a learning disability. Their interests might not always coincide with those of the professional, their carer or parent.

11.10 a.m.

[183] On page 4, in paragraph 5, under the heading 'Lack of Focus', we recognise that there is a great deal of discussion and activity around transition planning, particularly with regard to trying to ensure that pupils who receive social services have a seamless transition from age 14

to age 16. However, we are very disappointed that there is a lack of focus on vocational training and employment. The aspirations of young people with learning disabilities are often no different from those of other young people of the same age. Perhaps they would like to try out some jobs or work experience, and would like to have the opportunity to earn some money for their pockets, to spend as they wish.

[184] In paragraphs 6.2 and 6.3, we refer to some useful initiatives taking place in collaboration with schools and voluntary sector organisations. We then go on to talk a little bit about that period between the ages of 16 and 19. We contend that it is often a period of marking time for the young person. It might be well intentioned, but it is, essentially, about marking time.

[185] In paragraph 7.3, we move on to say that,

‘Outside of college provision, there are few vocational options available to 16 year old leavers before they reach their 18th birthday. DELL’s provision for this age group has been problematic’.

[186] That goes for ELWa’s provision too. We talk there about modern apprenticeships and Skillbuild and some of the problems with those schemes. They offer potential, but they need tweaking and changing.

[187] In paragraph 7.4, we talk about those young people who are in the grey area, where it is undecided as to whether they have a learning disability. Ironically, they are the people for whom it is most feasible to move them on to vocational training and employment, but they do not often get the funding and the opportunities to do that, so they are stuck.

[188] In paragraph 8, we talk some more about the limited options that are available post 18. We feel that we do some things very well in Wales, but, in paragraph 8.4, we refer to the precedent being set in England, where the Learning and Skills Council is looking to provide a strong linkage for young people as they move through the end of school and college. That council in England will fund only those providers that deliver work preparation programmes for learners with learning disabilities; it will not fund things that do not focus on learning in the workplace and on the supported employment model. That is an important precedent to think about in the Welsh context.

[189] In paragraph 8, we also refer to some of the adult issues around benefits and incapacity benefit. We then pull it together at paragraph 9. What we would most like to discuss with you and for you to focus on are the actions that we propose that you consider in your deliberations as a committee. As you can see, we try to track a couple of things that we think are important. We would like early implementation of the national service framework requirement around key workers for transition. We would like the central focus of transition planning to be on the employability of the individual, unless person-centred planning indicates otherwise. We would like the schools curriculum to be altered for 14 plus and 16 plus so that there is far more emphasis on vocational training and work sampling opportunities. We would also like to see funding made available to make that possible. Where there have been initiatives through the creativity and imagination of staff in special schools and in colleges, it has not been easy to get funding for them, which is a great pity. We would like the training of those key professionals whose ambitions for, and expectations of, people with learning disabilities appear to be resolutely low to be looked at. We would like to see some funding mechanisms that allow greater collaboration and partnership between schools and supported employment agencies. We would also like to see more work-based learning taking place.

[190] On reflecting on our paper this morning, as a group, we also thought that you might

want to pay regard to the new disability equality duty, to consider monitoring how it is implemented and how the disability equality schemes are produced for organisations such as Careers Wales, and perhaps for further education institutions as well.

[191] I have been conscious of your time and have rushed through the presentation a little. I am trying to ensure that the maximum time is allowed for questions and discussions.

[192] **Peter Black:** Thank you. As we have limited time, we will group the questions, if that is okay. I am going to call Irene and William first.

[193] **Irene James:** Thank you for what you have presented to us today. Elements of the review have stated that there needs to be an inclusive network around the young person involved. How do you work within the multi-agency network differently from how you work with non-special needs young people? How can the support be improved specifically with the parents involved of SN youngsters? How well are SN youngsters followed from the classroom to the workplace, and how well are they worked with during that period?

[194] **William Graham:** I endorse what Irene has said about the report; it was worthwhile. I will just remark, on behalf of the committee, that we are very keen on transition. We are not going to lose our focus on this; we have mentioned it so often now that we are determined, and your paper was extremely helpful.

[195] I do not know whether you listened to the radio this morning, but I heard John Harris, the Welsh Paralympian, saying that it is not so much the person who feels the disability, but society that disables them. He was talking about mobility, but the same is true of this. I was also struck by his remarks on job centres, which you also identified. Could I ask for some of your experiences on job centres, not only in terms of individuals trying to find employment, but also in making employers aware of how they can be of benefit to them, in providing extra help for people who have a disability?

[196] **Mr Crowe:** To go back to Irene, I am not sure whether we quite grasped the questions that you were posing. I am sorry about that, but I do not want to waste your time by giving roundabout answers.

[197] **Irene James:** Do you want me to ask them again?

[198] **Mr Crowe:** Yes, if you would not mind.

[199] **Irene James:** Elements of the review have stated that there needs to be a network around the person. How do you work within the multi-agency network differently from how you would support adults with non-specific learning difficulties?

[200] **Mr Crowe:** For your questions, Irene, I am going to see whether Catherine or Kate would be willing to respond.

[201] **Ms Lewis:** Yes. I think that it is really important to work in a multidisciplinary way. I refer you back to the national service framework produced by the National Assembly. It states that, to work successfully, you need to have people working together. At the moment, that really is not happening. You get social services, health, education and Careers Wales all working separately, and there is no joined-up approach. I think that that needs to move on. We need to get things moving.

[202] **Ms Wood:** We have found in school that we do not get continuity from these multi-agencies, as there is not one specific person. We will get one careers officer at one meeting and then, when we have another review, we get someone completely different. That does not

help as these people all have different ideas. That does not help the young person, because they also need continuity.

[203] **Mr Beyer:** May I pick up the point on parents? One thing that consistently comes out of the research on giving parents a central role in a process is information; in many ways, parents are starved of information. They do not have information over a consistent period so that they can absorb it and come back with questions; there is just a series of one-hit opportunities to engage with people. For example, if employment is not raised at one meeting or on that occasion, it does not come up and does not become part of their aspiration. So, information about what is available for people afterwards, and what support they can have, is underlined in the code of practice, but it is still poorly delivered to parents.

11.20 a.m.

[204] To pick up the point on employment as well, following people through to the workplace is really not done at all. Very few young people, either at age 16 or 19, who leave special school with a learning disability go into work; by far the more consistent route is to go to college. There are structural problems in enabling people to follow that route into employment if they wish. We have carried out research recently that suggests that, with good advice, a majority—almost 60 per cent of families—would want the next step to be employment. However, even with good support, that turns into an outturn of about 20 per cent actually going into work. That is still double the number of people with learning disabilities in the country who have work, which is about 11 per cent. So, that is terribly difficult.

[205] People often hope that college will provide the qualifications that will lead to employment, but the experience is that employment does not materialise at the end of college either. Primarily, as we have put in the paper, the problem is a lack of appropriate support. We want to challenge the idea that, for many people, the dominant model is to leave school, go on to further education, and get further qualifications—and we would all want that for our young people. However, it does not suit the majority of people with learning disabilities, who learn practically. They need practical learning, on the job, with support, which is not available in our funding framework reference at present, and it is not available for people at school, leaving school, or, generally, leaving college.

[206] **Ms Lewis:** To come in on what Steve said, there is also an issue of low expectations on behalf of the professionals who work with disabled young people, and employers. Children in Wales has facilitated a group called Transitions in Action, which has submitted evidence to the committee. One of the comments that we made was that professionals who are part of the transitions process have low expectations, and young people need access to role models who have been through the transition process. However, there also needs to be a sort of ‘Reaching Higher’ type of strategy for young disabled people, to enable them to reach their full potential. The problem is that the professionals around them do not feel as though they have the ability to reach their full potential, and nor do employers. There needs to be a lot of work on employers’ attitudes towards disabled people, to help disabled people to realise that they have as many skills as anyone else.

[207] **Mr Beyer:** To say a word on Mr Graham’s point, job centres and disability employment advisers are a major route—they are a key partner for Careers Wales in the employment route. Again, from a research perspective, DEAs find themselves underprepared for working with people with autism and learning disabilities. From our experience, if they draw heavily on other organisations, which can provide more intensive support, the DEAs tend to be more successful in placing people. Our worry is that the schemes available to DEAs—such as Workstep, and Access to Work—do not generally provide enough support to enable that group to go into employment. It therefore drops off the job centre’s radar, by and large, and become a kind of wandering tribe, going around trying to find opportunities and

never really making the grade.

[208] **Irene James:** This comes back to my point that not everyone seems to be working together, and we need to have joined-up thinking on this issue. How do we move forwards on that?

[209] **Ms Lewis:** One of the main things is to put into practice the standards that are contained in the national service framework for disabled people. There are six key actions in the section on transitions, one of which is that one joint organisation transition plan should be produced for each disabled young person, forming the basis of the unified assessment. So, all the recommendations are contained in the NSF, but, as Steve mentioned, it is a 10-year strategy, and we do not want year 9 to arrive and organisations to find that this has not been put into effect. It needs to be put into effect now.

[210] **Irene James:** So, you are saying that the framework is there, but that we are not using it as we should be, are you?

[211] **Ms Lewis:** In terms of policies, procedures and legislation, all the legislation is out there in terms of transitions, but it has not been put into practice at ground level. That is the problem.

[212] **Irene James:** So, dare I ask, what is the approach to that?

[213] **Ms Lewis:** It is a joint approach, with everyone working together for the best will of the young people. I mentioned earlier that Children in Wales and the National Autistic Society have formed a group called Transitions in Action, which is a group of voluntary organisations and statutory organisations that are looking at this issue. We have had some meetings with Mair Watkins, who I think is sitting behind me, to discuss how we can work together to move the issue forward. One plan is to have a conference on transitions, which will be led by young disabled people. It is important to listen to the voice of young disabled people who have gone through the transitions process. They are able to say where it is and is not working, and we can learn from them and work together.

[214] **Irene James:** That is important because they do have a voice, which is what we tend to forget; that voice needs to be heard.

[215] **Ms Lewis:** That is right.

[216] **Peter Black:** Okay, thank you for that. I call on Jeff and then Janet.

[217] **Jeff Cuthbert:** Thank you, Chair. I am grateful for your evidence and contribution. I echo the point made by William, and there is almost unanimity that the issue of transition is crucially clear. A lot of talent is being wasted as a result of the inability of society to provide reasonable and valid job opportunities for young people with disabilities. I was disappointed to read the second paragraph of point 8.5 about the apparent attitude of Jobcentre Plus officials in looking for easier categories of individuals. If the anecdotal evidence that you referred to is in a tangible form, then we would be grateful to receive it, because although Jobcentre Plus is not a devolved agency, we would want to make representations to the UK Government and the regional directors of Jobcentre Plus to try to change that attitude, if it is prevalent among its staff. However, the big issue, as, I think, Catherine Lewis highlighted, is that you cannot duck the real issue here, which is changing the attitudes of employers so that they are proactive in encouraging young people with learning disabilities to come forward and to view themselves as potential employees.

[218] You refer in paragraph 7.3 to the problems, as you see it, with the modern

apprenticeship schemes, in that they are not being targeted and are perhaps beyond the reach of young people with a learning disability. Is that also true of foundation modern apprenticeships? What about the issue of the key skills at levels 1 and 2, which form part of modern apprenticeships and are recognised as qualifications within their own right for a range of occupational areas? Have you made representations to the sector skills councils, for example, in terms of where you feel the modern apprenticeship scheme is rather inappropriate, to see whether modifications can be made?

[219] **Peter Black:** I will bring Janet in before you answer.

[220] **Janet Ryder:** On the planning process and individual plans, you make it clear that the individual education plans, despite being an important planning tool, are often not shared with professionals who will work with young people in the future, and that transition planning cannot be successful when it just commences at the age of 14. We have heard a lot of evidence that shows that, whatever kind of plans are developed at school, they are not passed on, even to the next stage of an educational career. You said that the transition plan should improve the employability of the individual. That is right, but how much do we need to do to change that? You talked about the plans being there in the structure, but what do we need to do to change the system in order to ensure that the individual plan is developed right through a person's career, and that it goes with that person, so that, even if they move on to a new educational setting, or a new setting of any kind, they do not have to start going through assessments all over again, because they have already been carried out. There might need to be a slight reassessment just to check their viability and to see what needs to change, but the whole process does not need to start again. How do we make that happen and how crucial is the development of the role of the key transitional worker—the individual who will work on a one-to-one basis with that person and stay with them? How crucial is the development of that role to ensuring that we eventually have those transition plans right?

11.30 a.m.

[221] **Mr Crowe:** Perhaps Kate and Steve will have the first go at those questions.

[222] **Ms Wood:** I will pick up on Mr Cuthbert's point about trying to re-educate employers. I know that, in Melbourne, Australia, there are concerns that people with disabilities do not apply for the available jobs, and they want to address this. They are currently putting in place a training package for employers on how to interview people with disabilities. That is important because, of course, a normal, standard interview might not be the right procedure for a person with disabilities. That is something that we are working on in school; rather than a paper curriculum vitae, for example, some of our guys are recording their curriculum vitae on CD-ROM, and that is working really well, because you can see that they can list their likes and dislikes, and you can physically see the person. People with disabilities cannot get their presentation across just on a hard, black-and-white copy. I feel that that is something that the committee can look at with regard to employers.

[223] **Mr Beyer:** Coming back specifically to your points, the foundation level in the modern apprenticeship is valuable, and it has suited a small number of people with learning difficulties who are still very able. Our view is that is still pitched at a level that does not suit a majority of people, even at those kinds of levels. So, the skills levels 1, 2 and 3 are helpful to some people, but our opinion is that employers still do not generally recognise them as valuable qualifications at those kinds of levels. Jim will have to come back to answer whether the sector skills councils have picked up on that.

[224] **Mr Crowe:** No, they have not.

[225] **Mr Beyer:** I do not want to go into too much detail, but there are some elements of



petty insistence with regard to vocational qualifications that can be imposed that cause people problems. Some of these qualifications cover quite a wide range of skills, and in some cases, people in the organisations insist that a person takes units, and provides evidence in units, all in the same area of expertise. That is arbitrary, as far as I can see. Obviously, people have areas of excellence that can be brought together and demonstrated, and there is no need to insist that someone does that all in one area or unit of competence.

[226] Also, I want to draw your attention to the role of public sector employers. That role has been highlighted through the equality duty in proactively going out to encourage people with all disabilities to come forward. Echoing your point, we need, where we can, to influence our local authorities and our health authorities to be much more creative in looking at ability and qualification, to invite more people in who can do jobs but do not necessarily have the paper qualifications.

[227] **Ms Wood:** May I just step in here, Steve? I have also found that people with disabilities who are in employment tend to be at the lower end of available positions. So, employers do not have high aspirations of what people with disabilities can do either. There have been instances in which someone with disabilities has been working with a team of people; the team has been promoted and moved along and the person with disabilities is still sitting in the same place. Even when they are in employment, these people tend to get overlooked for promotion. So, the picture that needs to be looked at is huge.

[228] **Mr Crowe:** Janet's questions come back very much to the NSF framework and the requirement for a key transitions worker who could, hopefully, pull together the planning process and ensure a more seamless transition, with more co-operation and collaboration between professionals from different agencies. Certainly within the social care field, several of the joint reviews continue to indicate problems just in getting a transition from children's social care support to adult social care support. So, you can imagine that there will also be problems between professionals working for the LEA or for schools and professionals working in social care or children's social care. Kate, do you want to say a bit more about how that works, or does not work, in practice?

[229] **Ms Wood:** I will just pick up on this issue of a transition worker. The transition worker would also act as an advocate for a child, because people do not listen to children who have disabilities. In one instance, one of our students at school wanted to be a footballer. He suffers from cerebral palsy and he is in a wheelchair and his limbs are everywhere. He was told that it was ridiculous, but that was his aspiration. We did some person-centred planning with him, and it equated to the fact that he wanted to be a footballer because he wanted the money that footballers have. What he really wanted was a television in his bedroom, but his first go at it was that he wanted to be a footballer, and he was knocked down in flames. Another of our young people wanted to be a farrier, and their careers adviser said that that was wonderful and that they could perhaps be an assistant. So, the transition worker could also be an advocate and a voice for the student.

[230] **Janet Ryder:** One of the recommendations associated with that is of greater budget-sharing between social services and health and education to fund this worker. Does the funding have to come out of that multi-step source? How can we establish the role of one person who would have the ability to cut across all the disciplines of health, social work and education and take on the individual champion point of view, and, in some cases, even advocate for that person's aspirations with their parents?

[231] **Ms Lewis:** That is the key, in that one person is able to work across all disciplines. At the moment, there are quite a lot of transitions workers but they are usually based in social services. That is a problem, because they are either based in children's services or adult services. We need a transitions worker able to work across the 14 to 25 age range with

legislation on children and adults, but also work with education professionals.

[232] **Ms Wood:** If the money came out of everyone's budget, so that everyone has ambition for the transition worker, it is within everyone's interests. If the transition worker was paid out of one budget, such as the social services budget, it would be very difficult to switch over to health or education; those two providers will not think that it is their responsibility, because the money is coming out of social services. So, it must come out of a mixed budget.

[233] **Peter Black:** Okay, we must move on. Jeff, did you have a quick supplementary question?

[234] **Jeff Cuthbert:** Following on from that, you are right about employers. It is exemplified by the attitude of the CBI and the Federation of Small Business, which replied by saying that they did not think that it was for them to submit evidence to us on this issue. We must cross that barrier. In terms of the points on qualifications, it is crucially important that you make representations to the sector skills councils, because no-one involved in the design of vocational qualifications is deliberately trying to place barriers. The standards to be achieved would have to be met by whoever it is and in whatever way, but if flexibility is an issue, and if not enough thought is being given to that, it is very important that that message goes back to the sector skills councils.

[235] **Mr Crowe:** Thank you for that suggestion. We have not gone to the sector skills councils yet, but, given your comments, we will reflect on that with the organisations that participated in the briefing for the Welsh MPs and Lords in June. We will also look at whether we can gather some evidence about the way in which incapacity benefit is being angled, and the way in which people with disabilities are being given attention or not. The points that we made about employers are important, and in looking at your minutes, that has been an issue for you. I would not like us to lose sight of the primary task, which, for us, is within the fields that we can directly influence to bring changes into place. In a way, it is less easy for us to influence employers—we should not neglect that, but there are issues that we need to address closer to home first, so that we can go with more confidence to employers and say that these young people have had the proper preparation and support, and are now job ready.

11.40 a.m.

[236] **Christine Chapman:** This is a very good paper. I thought it was very realistic and it shows how much more we need to do. It is a real tragedy that there is such a huge waste of potential with young people, so I welcome this discussion. Many of the issues that we have discussed would be reflected in the 14 to 19 learning pathways which is our 14-19 agenda; as you know, I am very involved in this. This is the framework for all these things. I know that it is for all young people, but I think that it is particularly for young people with learning disabilities. I am not suggesting for one minute that everything is fine and that we have it sorted, because that is one of the reasons that we are working so hard on the learning pathways. You have talked about low expectations—that is picked up in the learning pathways agenda for all young people. You have talked about young people having someone who is more than a mentor, to steer them through the transitions. In the learning pathways, we have the idea of a learning coach, which is a new role, but there are some really good examples of that around Wales.

[237] On the employment side, I have had recent discussions with our vocational skills champion on his discussions with employers about the issue of young people with disabilities, so, that is something that I want go back to discuss with him. We have all suggested that there is still a lack of collaboration, and, again, this is at the forefront of the 14-19 agenda. So, my

question is, as an organisation, how much engagement are you having with the 14-19 networks? They are evolving, but the first stage is to make sure that you feel that you are engaged with them. After today's meeting, I am keen to meet with you all, hopefully in the next few weeks, to discuss how you can help us to influence the 14 to 19 learning pathways. We have an action plan and we want to drive this forward. I thank you for the paper; it was really interesting.

[238] **Owen John Thomas:** Byddaf yn siarad Cymraeg. A yw popeth yn gweithio'n iawn? **Owen John Thomas:** I will speak in Welsh. Is everything working properly?

[239] **Peter Black:** The translation should be on channel 1.

[240] **Owen John Thomas:** Hoffwn gael syniad gwell o faint yr her sy'n ein hwynebu. Dywedodd rhywun mai dim ond 11 y cant o blant neu ddisgyblion anabl sy'n cael gwaith. Golyga hynny fod 89 y cant yn methu. Pa gyfran o'r 89 y cant fydd byth yn gallu gweithio, am fod eu cyflwr mor wael? **Owen John Thomas:** I would like a better idea of the scale of the challenge that we face. Someone said that only 11 per cent of disabled children or pupils find employment. That means that 89 per cent fail to do so. What percentage of that 89 per cent will never be able to work, because their condition is so bad?

[241] **Mr Crowe:** It is best for Steve to answer that question.

[242] **Peter Black:** Before you do, I have another question. In paragraph 8.1, you state that, 'supported employment is not formally recognised as an option, and funding for these agencies is ad hoc and piecemeal'.

[243] You do not take that through to your actions or recommendations and I was wondering why.

[244] **Mr Crowe:** Before we pass over to Steve, I should pick up on Christine's comments and question. We all believe that the learning pathways initiative is positive and that it emphasises that those routes should be available to all children and young people. So, we certainly welcomed it when it was launched. I suspect that Kate and Cath might have a closer involvement with its more recent development. For me, the question would be whether the funding is in place to allow it to happen in special school settings or in mainstream settings for children with special needs or with statements.

[245] Moving on to Owen John's point, Steve may want to comment on that.

[246] **Mr Beyer:** It is an interesting point. The first thing to say is that we are poorly served by statistics on people with learning disabilities. We are mainly reliant on surveys rather than national statistics to help us to understand this. In terms of how many of the 89 per cent might not be able to work, the way that I would like to put it is that the vast majority of people could work in some way if the level of support were there. However, clearly, it is not economic and it is not always in people's best interests to work, certainly in terms of their welfare benefit profile. In places where there has been more legislation over a longer time and more money has been put into support, such as Australia and the US, we are looking at around 30 per cent of people with learning disabilities currently being in work, which is about three times the level that we currently have. So, there is a percentage of people for whom it will not be economic or sensible for them to work. I suspect that that figure is much more than 30 per cent, but it is certainly not 100 per cent.

[247] In terms of our own agenda, we have a substantial way to go before we reach what seems to be the natural western world potential, with a good wind. It is also worth saying that the level of employment among disabled people is generally around 50 per cent as opposed to something like 87 per cent for the non-disabled population. It is about how much you want to invest, in a sense.

[248] **Mr Crowe:** I do not know whether Cath or Kate want to pick up on anything that Christine said.

[249] **Ms Wood:** I would like to pick up on something that Christine said about the 14-19 action plan. Our headteacher has recently been advised that there are plans to cut the budget for post-16, which will make this even worse.

[250] **Christine Chapman:** May I come back on that?

[251] **Peter Black:** We will finish all the answers to the questions first. The other one was on supported employment.

[252] **Mr Crowe:** We obviously did not make it explicit enough, but I had hoped that it would have come out in the second to the last bullet point, about funding mechanisms.

[253] **Peter Black:** I just wanted to be clear on that because it seemed to be quite an important point in the text.

[254] **Mr Crowe:** We do feel that supported employment ought to be on the menu of options offered to—

[255] **Peter Black:** It is a consistent theme that is coming out in the evidence. Stephen, did you want to say something?

[256] **Mr Beyer:** I just wanted to highlight terminology, because, quite often, you see some of the mainstream Government schemes, such as Workstep, referred to as supported employment. What we are talking about here is a job-coach-driven and individualised employment model rather than some of those that are much shallower in their level of involvement.

[257] **Peter Black:** Okay. Christine, do you want to come back?

[258] **Christine Chapman:** Yes. I do not know what the comments were but, for the 14-19 commitment, the money is going up substantially next year to £32 million, so it is a big commitment and the money is there. However, it is about better collaboration. That is why I mentioned particularly the 14-19 networks. They have a two-day conference, which I think is being held today and tomorrow, where they are looking at their allocations and how they distribute them and how they put their plans together. We are really keen that they make the best and most innovative use of this money and that all young people will be able to access it and benefit from it.

[259] The only thing that I would say is that I am very keen that you, as an organisation, engage with the 14 to 19 learning pathways and I would be keen to set up a meeting as soon as possible so that we can look at some of these specific details.

[260] **Peter Black:** I think that you can deal with that outside the meeting. We are trying to take evidence on the review rather than look at post-16 pathways.

[261] Thank you for coming along and giving evidence. You are welcome to stay in the

room and listen to the rest of the session, but I will have to ask you to sit at the back because another four people are coming to take your seats after Laura Morgan has finished her presentation.

11.50 a.m.

### **Adolygiad Polisi Anghenion Addysgol Arbennig—Rhan 3: Casglu Tystiolaeth Policy Review of Special Educational Needs—Part 3: Evidence Gathering**

[262] **Peter Black:** We will move quickly on. Joel is going to get the computer steamed up and working, I hope. The next session is with Autism Cymru. I welcome Laura Morgan, who is the communications and policy officer for Autism Cymru. It looks like the machine is talking to the screen, which is always a bonus.

[263] Welcome to the Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee. Could you first make your presentation and then we will open it up for questions?

[264] **Ms Morgan:** Before I talk specifically about transition, I would like to give you a brief overview of Autism Cymru—who we are, where we are coming from and what our aims are. Autism Cymru is Wales's national charity for autism. We have offices across Wales, in Aberystwyth, Cardiff and Wrexham. We are a professional-led charity and we work to improve the lives of those with autism and their families.

[265] Our main activities are to seek to influence, and to help develop, a strategic vision for autism in Wales. We work in partnership with a range of organisations in and outside Wales, including the Welsh Assembly Government, local authorities, health boards, universities and, more recently, two police forces—North Wales Police and Dyfed-Powys Police. We have recently introduced an autism attention card to raise awareness of autism among the emergency services.

[266] We seek to raise awareness of autism in general and one way in which we do so is through our website, [www.awares.org](http://www.awares.org), which is the all-Wales autism resource. We have an extensive Wales-wide education and training programme and, notably, are currently delivering our whole-school autism training and research project, which is now being rolled out to over half the local education authorities in Wales. We also run three school fora for teachers to exchange and discuss best practice in relation to autism.

[267] Finally, on research, we recently formed a partnership with Autism Speaks to promote and support research into autism. This year, we joined forces with Autism Northern Ireland to form a strategic partnership to highlight and exchange best practice in both devolved nations and we carry out joint research and other projects. This partnership will become a truly Celtic nations partnership when we will be joined by the Scottish Autistic Society at a launch in the Assembly in January.

[268] That was the sales pitch, so I will now turn to transition. As committee members will know, all schools in Wales must produce a transition plan for all pupils from age 14 onwards. The plan should be person-centred and address all the child's educational, health and social needs. For pupils with an autistic spectrum disorder, particular issues need specific attention and I will discuss those shortly. I will start this part of my presentation with the words of Nita Jackson, a young lady with autism, who had this to say about change:

'I was sensitive to change; I was terrified of it because change leapt into the unknown and I couldn't get my head around the concept of exactly what the unknown was?.'

[269] Bearing her words in mind, I will move on to Autism Cymru's three main concerns on transition planning. It is important that transition planning starts in year 9, so that pupils are well-prepared and have a thorough understanding of what transition from school to work is all about. Pupils with autism are comfortable with familiar surroundings and routines and, crucially, lack the ability to imagine what life will be like in the future. It is also important to provide information in a format that meets individual needs. For example, many students may find it hard to imagine working in an office environment, so the use of videos, photographs and first-hand accounts may help to reduce some of the uncertainty.

[270] It is essential to involve all relevant individuals, because they will need to present a clear and consistent picture of what transition means for the individual. That means teachers, career advisers, social workers, parents and other relevant people, and they need to paint as clear a picture as possible to ensure that pupils with autism fully understand what may happen in the future, ideally building on strengths and minimising weaknesses. That means communicating clearly to pupils what choices are available to them, including timescales, roles and responsibilities—their own and those of other people. It is worth pointing out that Llanidloes High School in Powys has developed an excellent future-studies programme, not just for pupils with autism, but for all their pupils, which sets out in many ways what can be described as a supportive partnership approach.

[271] Moving on to employment opportunities and the main barriers for employees and students with autism, they will have difficulties with the social and communication skills necessary for the workplace. For example, jargon and technical terms will be unfamiliar and it is difficult and stressful for employees or students with autism to ask for help in understanding the language used. In addition to this, they may not understand office banter and a lack of understanding of autism among colleagues may mean that they are subject to bullying.

[272] People with autism need routine and structure and although many workplaces can offer this, such as telephone call centres or structured shop floors, many will not, and the imposition of an unexpected deadline may mean that usual routines are interrupted.

[273] However, I cannot stress more strongly that the other side of this is that many people with autism pay considerable attention to detail and can be extremely conscientious employees. This ranges, for example, from engineers and ICT specialists on the one hand to shopfloor workers and factory workers, who may have to pack boxes and do routine jobs in a particular way, on the other.

[274] The main barriers for employers, as we see it, are that many employers are often unaware of a hidden disability such as autism, and there is insufficient awareness training within the fields of employment.

[275] I have already referred to jargon and technical language, which needs to be reduced as much as possible or explained at the outset using unambiguous language and checking, as you go along, with the employee that he or she has understood what is being said. Once again, the use of photographs, videos and other communication media is useful, as is a buddy system where another employee can be assigned as a mentor for a particular period.

[276] Finally, many employers cite health and safety issues as a so-called reason for failing to employ people with a disability such as autism. Although the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 requires reasonable adjustment to be made for disabled employees, this obviously cannot apply where a person with autism is not employed in the first place.

[277] Moving on to the languages of Wales, it is acknowledged that there is a shortage of professionals in Wales who are able to communicate through the medium of Welsh. This can

make it difficult for people whose first language is Welsh to communicate effectively with others when discussing their transition needs.

[278] Information on the options available should be available in more than one format. For example, as I have already mentioned, the use of photographs, drawings, DVDs, audio recordings—the sky is your limit—should all be considered as these will help pupils to understand more clearly what is expected.

[279] To summarise, a good transition plan should be thoroughly and meticulously prepared and planned, involving parents, professionals and, where appropriate, the child or young person with autism. Provided that this is the case, this should lead to informed decision making and the setting of realistic goals to emphasise positives and to reduce negatives.

[280] Finally, there should be clear lines of communication, involving all concerned at all times, and involving a range of communication methods.

[281] **Peter Black:** Thank you. Are there any questions?

[282] **Janet Ryder:** To pick up on the issues that were raised with the previous presenters, you seem to be underlining some of the same needs: the need for a continuing, ongoing individual plan and the need for someone to advocate and work on behalf of that individual. How would you say that we need to develop those things? What do you think needs to change before they can become a reality? What role would that individual have? That person may not just be a transition worker but an individual mentor, who, while not constantly in the workplace with someone, would be able to feed back and help sort out some of those problems that might arise within the workplace.

[283] **Ms Morgan:** I think that it comes down, essentially, to awareness, education and training. This is at the heart of what we try to do as an organisation, just to inform people, because people with disabilities and able-bodied people all want to get along but, essentially, the crucial issue is that people just do not understand. It is good to have a mentor, a leader or a person who is responsible for disabilities within an organisation, whether it is a school, a company or whatever.

12.00 p.m.

[284] However, that person needs to take the initiative to raise awareness among all people. It might just be a matter of how the furniture is set out in a room or how a person is addressed. There are often really simple things that can be changed in an environment to help a person with autism. Rather than it being one person's responsibility, if people know about it everyone can help. Half a day's training to raise awareness is perhaps all that is needed.

[285] **Janet Ryder:** I accept that organisations themselves need to ensure that they are open and accessible to people with disabilities and that they can cope with that. It goes back to what was said by the first presenters. We need to look at how disability access plans are developed by individuals and companies. What is emerging from the evidence that we have heard is that each person needs an identified key worker. They need one person rather than myriad people—someone in social services, someone in education, someone in health. There needs to be one person, one port of call. They need to know that that person is their point of contact for clarification and help and that that person can advocate on their behalf. It is not just a transition worker, but one person who can cross all the disciplines and work with the individual.

[286] **Ms Morgan:** So, what is your question?

[287] **Janet Ryder:** Do you think that fits into what you are saying, or do you think that the individual support is adequate as it stands?

[288] **Ms Morgan:** No, it is not adequate as it stands. As my colleagues were saying earlier, the plans and requirements are set out on paper; they are set out in the NSF; they are set out in disability equality schemes; they are set out in all forms of documentation. In practice, if it is everybody's responsibility, it is nobody's responsibility. It comes down to resources really. The key is awareness raising—education and training for everyone.

[289] **Jeff Cuthbert:** Thank you for the presentation. I found the slides very helpful. To refer to the first one on employment opportunities concerning the main barriers for employees and students, the second bullet point was the need for routine and structure. I can imagine that there are many jobs in Wales that could be classed as routine that should have a good structure. I listened to a programme on this on Radio Wales on Tuesday. They had someone suffering from autism on the programme, and he described his experience of employment.

[290] You would have heard me earlier asking the previous presenters about the qualification structures, particularly competency-based qualification structures—foundation, modern apprenticeships, the key skills, NVQs, levels 1 and 2 and so on—which require the gathering and presentation of tangible evidence. Do you feel that that structure is helpful? Does it need to be modified? It is reasonable for an employer to want to be sure that the person that they are employing, regardless of disability, is capable of doing a job. One of the best ways is to look at the evidence for that. Is that structure appropriate?

[291] **Ms Morgan:** For people with autism who function normally, if you like, most of the time, those routines are fine. Most jobs run smoothly 80 per cent of the time; 20 per cent of the time they do not. For that 20 per cent, the employer needs to be aware that a person with autism will find it hard to cope; it will be stressful. If the employer can provide some sort of safe haven, or some deviation from the usual routines to protect the person with autism, then they would be fine. There needs to be the awareness that, from time to time, people with autism who can work—and the majority can—need to have some time out. The adjustments are small. They would need a quiet space and perhaps be allowed to leave a room five minutes earlier or get into a room five minutes later, once everyone has settled down. It is the transition periods, such as moving between offices and travelling from one place to another, that people with autism find stressful. However, once things are running smoothly, as they do 80 per cent or 90 per cent of the time, then it is fine. With regard to jobs in fields such as engineering, ICT, and other professional jobs and jobs further down the scale, most of the time, people with autism can do them. It is just that every now and again when things do not go quite according to plan that someone needs to be there and to be aware that that person may not cope. The rest of the time, it is not a problem. People with autism can and do work extremely well in particular professions and can be really conscientious employees. They will get there on time, they will see a job through to the end, and they will pay attention to detail.

[292] **Irene James:** I would like to thank Laura for her presentation. You mentioned a buddy system. Does this always need to be someone who is specifically trained, or can it be someone who will just befriend the person with autism?

[293] **Ms Morgan:** It could be either. It would depend on the degree of the person's autism. It is not rocket science. Whether that person is a friend or a qualified mentor, they just need to be aware that something is not going according to the usual routine and that the person is looking a bit stressed. They would just need to check that that person is okay. Perhaps they could develop a code or some signals. For example, if the person was feeling a bit stressed, he or she could rub his or her chin. Then the buddy would know that that person wanted to take some time out.



[294] **Irene James:** So, this is no different from a buddy system or friend in any other situation?

[295] **Ms Morgan:** There would, perhaps, need to be more attention to detail, but it is not very different. It is not hard.

[296] **Christine Chapman:** I would like to ask about your experience of work experience and how effective that is in preparing young people with autism for the workplace.

[297] **Ms Morgan:** We have not researched this specifically and the evidence that we have is anecdotal. However, there is little work experience around, not only for people with autism but also for those with other disabilities. There is a presumption that a person with a disability is disabled and cannot, therefore, do a job. However, 90 per cent of the time, they may be able to do so. It is just for a small percentage of the time that a person with autism might not be able to manage.

[298] **Peter Black:** I do not think that there are any more questions. Thank you very much for coming along. You are welcome to stay and listen to the next set of evidence if you wish. I ask Scope Cymru to come to the table, please.

12.09 p.m.

### **Adolygiad Polisi Anghenion Addysgol Arbennig—Rhan 3: Casglu Tystiolaeth Policy Review of Special Educational Needs—Part 3: Evidence Gathering**

[299] **Peter Black:** Welcome to the Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee. We have with us Bob Benson, the executive director of community development, Scope; Andy Lusk, director of education and early years, Scope; Neil Harvey, the headteacher of Craig-y-Parc School; and Kay Porretta-White, the chair of governors at Craig-y-Parc School. I ask you to make a brief presentation and we will then ask questions.

12.10 p.m.

[300] **Mr Benson:** Thank you very much to the committee for inviting us to contribute to the review; we are grateful for the opportunity. Since you have already introduced my colleagues, I do not need to go through that. It may be worthwhile for me to say very briefly what Scope is. Scope is a national disability organisation that operates across England and Wales. The Wales aspect of our work is carried out by Scope Cymru, with which you are probably already familiar. Scope's vision is that disabled people achieve equality. Our mission is to drive the change to make our society the first in which disabled people achieve full equality. We achieve this mission by being led by the views and lived experiences of disabled people, especially those with multiple additional disabilities, valuing and listening to disabled families, working in alliance with disabled people and their organisations, and using all of our passion—which is really important—professionalism, energy and resources to deliver on this agenda. Neil and Kay will say a few words about the issues, problems and solutions for post-16 students with special educational needs.

[301] **Mr Harvey:** Good morning, everyone. I am going low-tech here and will pass some photographs around. I want you to see what the young people whom I am talking about look like. These are just some photographs that I grabbed from school; I do have them on a PowerPoint presentation, but I am not going to use that.

[302] Quite simply, there is a problem. We have a changing population of young people coming through schools who have very complex, exceptional needs, and they do not have a choice because there is no further education for them. As a school, we and staff across special

schools in Wales are seeing more and more youngsters who were born at earlier ages, at 23 or 24 weeks, and who were under 1,500g at birth weight, which is about 3lb, when the chances of having cerebral palsy go from 1:400 plus to 1:20. The students with whom we now work do not just have a physical impairment; they have learning difficulties, challenging medical conditions, sensory loss, and, quite often, cognitive delay. When you add on behavioural issues, you are talking about some exceptional young persons.

[303] When they leave, 65 per cent of our students are going nowhere, as there is no college provision for them. If they leave and do go somewhere, to a residential college, for example, it is in England, such as the National Star College in Cheltenham—and I can name a few others. This population of people is growing. We have a low-incident group here at the present time that is spread out. For example, pupils at Craig-y-Parc School are scattered across the M4 corridor and up to Aberdare. There is one student over here and one student over there. There is no quality post-16 or post-19 experience because the critical mass is not there. Craig-y-Parc, like many special schools, is very special and specialised. It has two physiotherapists, two speech and language therapists and so on, adaptive technology, and therapies that you have never even heard of. These students—predominantly a wheelchair population—come to a clearing house where their wheelchairs are serviced, they have seating moulds and orthotics, and the list goes on and on. However, at the age of 19, they go into a black hole. There is nothing there for them, and so 65 per cent of them go back home. They may go to a residential setting and parents are desperate for some long-term placement, but they have no choice, as there is nowhere to go.

[304] I will not go through the figures with you, but there are a number of issues around funding, geography, and residential placements. There lies the problem, because it is about how we prepare people for their lives. We are keeping them alive, and are doing a fantastic job on that. When I started teaching, the death rate was, sadly, very high; now, students are living to a good old age. What is the solution? A specialist college in Wales for children and young adults with very exceptional needs, a clearing house where medical, educational and social issues are all brought together, where we can cover some very special young people.

[305] Kay is a parent of a 13-year-old girl called Tyler, and she is just going to say a few words about her experience.

[306] **Ms Porretta-White:** Thanks very much for asking me to come along today to talk to you. You have introduced me as the chair of governors at Craig-y-Parc School, which I am, but, more importantly, I am also the parent of a child at Craig-y-Parc School. My daughter's name is Tyler, and, as Neil said, she is nearly 14 years old. She has been at Craig-y-Parc from the age of four, and her educational statement will take her through to 19. After that, what next? As a parent, I am faced with this black hole, and I do not know what we will be looking at. Currently, as Neil said, the school is a clearing house. Things such as orthotics, wheelchairs, seating, standing frames, and equipment, and all the therapeutic input that my daughter requires are all done via the school. There is continuity, and the therapists are there. When she gets to 19, where will all this go? While it is not a traditional education model, it is part and parcel of an education model for a person with a profound disability.

[307] At present, respite packages and residential breaks take place within the school setting, so Tyler is with her friends, and is in an environment with which she is familiar. My daughter's needs are complex: she has profound physical disabilities; she is totally dependent for all her needs; she has profound learning disabilities; and her understanding is not what you would expect of a child of 13. However, within the school setting, she is an able young lady in her own way.

[308] What concerns me now is that, as we go through life, we are hitting the transition stage, and we are going to be looking at the future. My daughter does not have the option of

considering further education in Wales. Currently, if my daughter needs to go into further education, she will have to play the game of roulette that is further education in England, as there is no provision in Wales. There is a lack of equal opportunities for my daughter, in that most people as they go through their lives consider whether to live at home or to move away to college during the provision of their education. As you grow up, you do your GCSEs and your A-levels, you choose to go to university or other higher education, and you choose either to stay at home or to move away. If my daughter needs further education, she will have no option in the current setting. She will have to leave home. I do not feel that that is an equal opportunity for her.

[309] **Mr Benson:** We are now happy to receive questions.

[310] **Peter Black:** On this specialist college that you are proposing, is there a similar college in England or Scotland on which it could be modelled? Secondly, you mentioned critical mass. Would you have the critical mass to sustain such a college in Wales?

[311] **Mr Lusk:** You ask the right question, Chair. In truth, at present, four of the 72 specialist colleges in England are capable of accepting students of the kind we describe, and of whom you have seen a small selection of photographs. We run one of the largest specialist colleges, Beaumont College in Lancaster. We have three applicants for every placement, and National Star College has four. There is a chronic shortage of placements, because the system has not anticipated the survival rate, and there are no alternatives. I live in Cwmbran, and I have two daughters who are fit and well. They had an enormous choice of universities to go to, whether in Wales, England, or Scotland, if they wanted. Equality of opportunity, if it really is an equal society, would suggest that something akin to that should be available to Kay's daughter, for example—though there are all sorts of logistical issues.

[312] All the colleges in England are segregated. We have done quite a lot of thinking about this, in relation to Scope Cymru and our services in Wales. Now that we do not export coal, it appears as though we export these kinds of students to England. We would like the opportunity to contribute to, or to engineer, or even to be a part of a solution in which we go straight to the twenty-first century. At Beaumont College, which is supported by the Learning and Skills Council, and operates under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, as it would here, we are in advanced negotiations to co-locate to a higher education provider so that there is a permeable curriculum. We think it likely now that we will achieve that, and that has not been done in Britain before.

[313] So, if we had a blank sheet of paper, and, we think, a pretty sympathetic FE/HE sector in Wales—I taught at university college for a few years, so I have an idea of how the sector might think about young people with this degree of disability and the idea of co-location, and I think that it would be a sympathetic audience—it would be possible to provide a twenty-first-century solution in one go, instead of attempting to do what the challenge is in England, which is somehow to co-locate expensively what it has. We do not have that disadvantage in Wales at the present time.

12.20 p.m.

[314] On critical mass, if you look at the number of Welsh learners in English specialist colleges and combine that with the high percentage of students who go nowhere, you will see that there is sufficient critical mass to run a specialist college for that group, and to make it work. It would also have the advantage of being co-located. The difficulty—or perhaps the benefit, depending on how Members view that—would be that it is likely to attract a lot of English students, because a co-located college for that group is unheard of in England.

[315] **Janet Ryder:** One issue with this review is that it is so wide. A lot of the evidence

that we have received has been to do with young people who may have a level of disability, but who can still feed into mainstream structures. It seems that you are now talking about a group of people that Baroness Warnock touched on and revised her views about, saying that we need specialist provision for them. We know that there is a problem post 19 for respite care and similar support. How can we anticipate that number in future? Can it be predicated on the basis of the number of people who are coming through the specialist schools and specialist units? Many of those units say that they are under great pressure with increasing numbers and the increasing level of complex disabilities that they have to deal with.

[316] **Mr Harvey:** It is easy. There are 33 special schools in south Wales, which have their own federation, and, of those 33, several of them are severe learning schools, or have a mixed group of children and young adults coming through. It is easy to identify students who we know are not getting further education provision of any quality or quantity because of the low incidence. So, we talk about groups of students coming through, a number of whom we can clearly define from the present population. There is no problem there at all, as you can easily predict the numbers coming out at ages 16, 17, 18 or 19 with clear criteria of selection to a college.

[317] **Janet Ryder:** In that case, to what extent would the budgets have to come from multidisciplines, such as health, social services, and education?

[318] **Mr Harvey:** Most definitely—in the present situation, everyone wants to displace.

[319] **Mr Lusk:** There is an enormous bun fight in England, as you may know. The Learning and Skills Council in England took a cut of £55 million last year. We know that it is in negotiation, because we meet with the Westminster Government pretty often at the moment, and it is in negotiation with the Department of Health to see what cost-sharing is possible. The difficulty is that the Learning and Skills Act 2000 does not countenance that. It is perfectly specific about the duties of Government in relation to that group. I could reference it for the National Council for Education and Training for Wales. Part II of that Act applies here, and sections 31 to 42 cover this. It is perfectly clear that there is a straightforward Government duty to provide for that group and, where necessary, to provide residentially. I am fairly confident of that, because we had our own bun fight with the Learning and Skills Council, and I wound up taking advice from a silk about what the duties were. So, it is clear whose responsibility it is. It is after the transition assessment that the bun fight tends to take place. In other words, the Learning and Skills Council—or, in Wales, the council responsible for that here—negotiates with social services departments and primary care trusts to see what the cost-sharing arrangement is. However, the legislation is already in place; what is remarkable is that there has been no judicial review of it. The reality is that almost no parents know about it.

[320] **Janet Ryder:** I have one final question. You talk about a college for the whole of Wales, but you then go on to talk about south Wales and the figures for south Wales. If anything like that were contemplated, I hope that it would be for the whole of Wales, or would you, like many other bodies, assume that it is easier for people in north Wales to feed into the north west of another country?

[321] **Mr Harvey:** We are suggesting that a college that is co-located would provide a certain catchment area, and that the success of that college and the funding issues, which I will not go into, around how it is supported will be duplicated. We have already identified several young people who are not receiving any post-16 or post-19 extended education. We know that there is huge demand from parents, who are running around Wales, and England, chasing very few places. Once the model has been established, the replication of that model will be very likely. It is not that there will one college for just south Wales or whatever; there are the issues of geographical spread and low incidence, resident students and those who

would travel, as well as the issue of how one is funded to get to college.

[322] **Mr Lusk:** I have responsibility for Welsh learners at Beaumont College in Lancaster. They are a long way from home, culturally and physically, and although it is in the north west, it is like chalk and cheese. We would like to see a solution for Wales.

[323] **Peter Black:** As we are talking about statutory responsibilities, I will call the Deputy Minister.

[324] **Christine Chapman:** You have talked a lot about England, but, as an organisation, have you identified any best practice internationally with regard to really good provision or any research? We looked at England, but have you looked at any other countries?

[325] **Mr Harvey:** I will be in Germany in two weeks' time, and I may be able to tell you more after my visit. Many of us have travelled around and looked at different countries. In Germany, and places where extended education to 25 is almost de facto, you get the sense that that is how people and societies have, culturally, adapted their education systems. Here and in Germany, for those children who have complex medical needs, I am looking at how much it costs—between 17 to 23 per cent is the figure being bandied about at the moment—and at how much is social and how much is residential. Around the world, however, there are pockets of real expertise and good practice, but they tend to be in very stable and affluent economies; if you go to Norway or Sweden, where there is also a greater parochial approach to looking after persons in their communities—less exclusion, shall we say—there is a much better feel for how people are kept within a community and within an education system, and their needs are met.

[326] **Mr Benson:** I would like more description in terms of what the outcome of that co-location actually means. Can you describe that further?

[327] **Mr Harvey:** One of the issues is that of how many people are segregated through their education and whether that is in day provision or residential provision. The ideas that we are working on include co-locating with a college, where students living alongside have access to all the facilities that the non-disabled person would be able to use. That requires new build, new ideas and new ways of working, but we are looking at a population. The Star centre, for example, it is halfway there, while, in Cheltenham, after the first year, the halls and the accommodation are actually in Gloucester and Cheltenham, and the students live in communities, and it is about any student in the second or third year of a university course. We are looking at breaking down loads of barriers, and making sure that people are educated on a site where they have access to all the facilities, some of which will be very specialist, such as hydro pools or access to rebound therapy or therapy rooms. So, it is quite complex, but the outcomes are that people are living and growing up. There is a huge social model in this as well; it is not just a matter of education and health needs. That is why the funding issues at the present time are very difficult to resolve, with social services saying, 'Well, you make the argument', but sometimes the assessments are not there to take a child into the correct social residential setting.

[328] **Mr Lusk:** The extent to which FE has successfully adapted in other countries tends to follow the extent to which they have tackled inclusion. In other words, if the underlying education system is as segregated as ours is—and ours is very segregated compared with Italy's, for example—then FE does not, of course, adapt, because the pressure from consumers is not there to make it adapt. We are doing it from the top down, through the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, really, rather from the bottom up through consumer pressure. Consumer pressure is now building, however, and, in a sense, Kay has reflected an example of that building pressure.

[329] **Peter Black:** I do not think that there any more questions. Thank you for a very interesting presentation. We will certainly try to take on board those ideas as part of our review.

[330] That brings this meeting to a close. Thank you, everyone.

*Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 12.30 p.m.*  
*The meeting ended at 12.30 p.m.*