

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru

Pwyllgor Diwylliant, y Gymraeg a Chwaraeon

The National Assembly for Wales

The Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee

Dydd Iau, 11 Mai 2006
Thursday, 11 May 2006

Cynnwys
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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: Rosemary Butler (Cadeirydd), Eleanor Burnham, Laura Anne Jones, Val Lloyd, Alun Pugh (y Gweinidog dros Ddiwylliant, y Gymraeg a Chwaraeon), Owen John Thomas.

Swyddogion yn bresennol: Jon Beynon, yr Uned Polisi Chwaraeon; Neil Cox, Gwasanaeth Ymchwil yr Aelodau; Gwilym Evans, Pennaeth Dros Dro yr Is-adran, y Gyfarwyddiaeth dros Ddiwylliant, y Gymraeg a Chwaraeon; Margaret Evans, Cyfarwyddwr, y Gyfarwyddiaeth dros Ddiwylliant, y Gymraeg a Chwaraeon; Gwyn Griffiths, Cynghorydd Cyfreithiol i'r Pwyllgor.

Eraill yn bresennol: Chris Blight, Clwb Pêl-droed Sir Casnewydd; Gareth Davies, Comisiynydd Chwaraeon, S4C; Rhian Gibson, Cyfarwyddwr Cyfathrebu a Datblygu, S4C; Keith Jones, Pennaeth Rhaglenni, BBC; Nigel Walker, Pennaeth Chwaraeon, BBC.

Gwasanaeth y Pwyllgor: Julia Annand, Clerc; Vaughan Watkin, Dirprwy Glerc.

Assembly Members in attendance: Rosemary Butler (Chair), Eleanor Burnham, Laura Anne Jones, Val Lloyd, Alun Pugh (the Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport), Owen John Thomas.

Officials in attendance: Jon Beynon, Sports Policy Unit; Neil Cox, Members' Research Service; Gwilym Evans, Acting Head of Division, Directorate for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport; Margaret Evans, Director, Directorate for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport; Gwyn Griffiths, Legal Adviser to the Committee.

Others in attendance: Chris Blight, Newport County Football Club; Gareth Davies, Commissioner for Sport, S4C; Rhian Gibson, Director of Communications and Development, S4C; Keith Jones, Head of Programmes, BBC; Nigel Walker, Head of Sport, BBC.

Committee Service: Julia Annand, Clerk; Vaughan Watkin, Deputy Clerk.

Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 9.06 a.m.

The meeting began at 9.06 a.m.

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

[1] **Rosemary Butler:** Good morning, everyone. I have received apologies from Lisa Francis, who will be a little late. We do not have any substitutions. If anyone has any declarations of interest, I am sure that you know what to do. Denise is also not here.

[2] **Ms Annand:** Denise Idris Jones has urgent constituency business.

[3] **Rosemary Butler:** Okay. Therefore, there are also apologies from Denise.

9.06 a.m.

Cofnodion y Cyfarfod Blaenorol The Minutes of the Previous Meeting

[4] **Rosemary Butler:** Does anyone have any comments on the minutes of the last meeting? No? Do you want to go through the action points? I see that you do not. They are ongoing, so if there is anything that you have missed, we can pick it up later on.

*Cadarnhawyd cofnodion y cyfarfod blaenorol.
The minutes of the previous meeting were ratified.*

9.07 a.m.

Adolygiad o Bêl-droed yng Nghymru The Review of Football in Wales

[5] **Rosemary Butler:** This is the continuation of our review of football. We have had some very interesting presentations so far. We are trying to look at football across Wales, and how it is delivering for younger people in particular. This morning, we are looking at how the broadcasters are dealing with football generally. I think that it has been agreed that we will have the presentations first, followed by questions.

[6] I welcome some very unfamiliar faces. [*Laughter.*] We have Keith Jones and Nigel Walker from the BBC, and Gareth Davies and Rhian Gibson from S4C. Who is going to make the first presentation? Keith?

[7] **Mr Jones:** Bore da. Diolch am y gwahoddiad i ddod yma heddiw, am y cyfle i sôn am yr hyn y mae'r BBC yn ei wneud ym maes chwaraeon, ac am y cyfle i roi'r dystiolaeth ysgrifenedig a gawsoch wythnos yn ôl.

Mr Jones: Good morning. Thank you for the invitation to come here today, for the opportunity to tell you about what the BBC is doing in terms of sport, and for the opportunity to provide written evidence, which you received a week ago.

[8] Yr ydych wedi cyfeirio'n barod at y ffaith efallai nad oes yn rhaid i mi gyflwyno Nigel Walker, sef pennaeth chwaraeon BBC Cymru. Bydd Nigel, mewn eiliad, yn sôn am y cyfrifoldebau sydd ganddo fel pennaeth yr adran.

You have already referred to the fact that perhaps I do not need to introduce Nigel Walker, the head of sport at BBC Wales. Nigel, in a second, will talk about his responsibilities as head of the department.

[9] Hoffwn fanteisio ar y cyfle hwn i danlinellu i aelodau'r pwyllgor ymrwymiad y BBC i'r amrywiol chwaraeon yng Nghymru. Ar draws ein holl wasanaethau, yn Saesneg ac yn Gymraeg, gwelwn mai ein dyletswydd fel darlledwr cyhoeddus yw rhoi'r gwasanaeth gorau posibl, nid yn unig i'r rhai sy'n cefnogi'r campau yn selog, ond i'r rhai sy'n cael eu swyno gan ddrama ac emosiwn digwyddiad chwaraeon mawr—mae'r ddrama a'r emosiwn yn aml iawn yn gysylltiedig â digwyddiadau rhyngwladol, wrth gwrs. Pan fydd timau cenedlaethol yn chwarae, mae'r achlysuron hynny yn adegau pryd y gall y genedl gyfan ddod ynghyd i ddilyn hynt a helynt y chwarae ar y cae, ac oddi arno yn aml, fel y gwelwyd yn ddiweddar.

I wish to take advantage of this opportunity to underline to committee members the BBC's commitment to different sports in Wales. Across all our services, in English and Welsh, we see that our responsibility as a public broadcaster is to provide the best possible service, not only to committed sports fans, but to those who are mesmerised by the drama and emotion of a major sporting event—that drama and emotion is often linked to international sporting events, of course. When national teams play, those occasions are an opportunity for the whole nation to come together to follow the trials and tribulations of events on the field, and often off the field, as we have seen recently.

[10] Fel y gwyr pawb, wrth gwrs, ar hyn o bryd mae bwlch yn yr hyn y gallwn ei gynnig ar y teledu, oherwydd nid yw'r hawliau gennym i ddangos y tîm pêl-droed cenedlaethol yn chwarae ar deledu daearol yn gyntaf. Dyma'r gemau cartref nad oes gennym yr hawliau ar eu cyfer. Yr oedd torri'r cysylltiad hwnnw, ddwy flynedd yn ôl, yn siom fawr i ni.

As everyone knows, of course, at present, there is a gap in what we are able to provide on television, because we do not have the rights to show the national football team games on terrestrial television first. Those are the home games for which we do not have the rights. The breaking of that link, two years ago, was a huge disappointment to us.

9.10 a.m.

[11] Nid oes angen dweud y byddwn yn gweithio'n galed i geisio adfer y sefyllfa honno ac i adennill y cysylltiad rhwng gêm genedlaethol a darlledwr cenedlaethol. Credwn yn gryf fod teledu torfol sydd ar yr awyr yn ddi-dâl nid yn unig yn galluogi cefnogwyr i ddilyn y gemau, ond y mae hefyd yn codi ymwybyddiaeth o'r gêm a diddordeb yn y gêm ymysg plant a phobl ifanc, yn ogystal ag oedolion.

I do not think that I need to say that we will work hard to try to restore that situation and to regain the link between national games and a national broadcaster. We strongly believe that mass broadcasting, which is available free to air, not only enables supporters to follow matches, but also raises awareness of the game and interest among children and young people, as well as adults.

[12] Fel y gwelwch o'r dystiolaeth yr ydym wedi ei hanfon atoch, mae pêl-droed yn dal yn amlwg yn ein cynnyrch chwaraeon. Aethom ati i brynu'r hawl gan BSkyB i ddangos gemau Cymru yn hwyrach yn y Gymraeg ar S4C ac yr ydym hefyd yn manteisio ar bob cyfle i brynu hawliau i ddangos gemau pêl-droed Cymru oddi cartref, ac i'w darparu ar ein gwasanaethau ar BBC Cymru a hefyd ar S4C ar yr un pryd. I sôn ychydig am y rhaglenni hynny, yr wyf am roi cyfle i Nigel sôn am yr hyn yr ydym yn ei wneud ar radio, ar deledu ac ar-lein.

As you will see from the evidence that we have sent to you, football is still a prominent part of our sports output. We acquired the rights from BSkyB to show Wales matches later, in Welsh, on S4C and we also take advantage of every opportunity afforded to us to purchase rights to show Wales's away matches and to broadcast them on BBC Wales and S4C at the same time. To say a little about those programmes, I am going to give Nigel an opportunity to talk about what we do on radio, television and online.

[13] **Mr Walker:** As far as our strategy is concerned, it is very much a tri-media approach—radio, television and online services—and we have a bilingual approach. We are very much into 360 degree commissioning. In other words, we never look at television, radio or online services in isolation; we look at the three things together wherever possible to get maximum impact across our range of output.

[14] I will talk about radio first and give you a typical Saturday afternoon on Radio Cymru, which would be our Saturday afternoon sports programme, *Camp Lawn*. We send reporters and pundits to a range of games, starting with the English premiership, because there is considerable Welsh interest in that, be it in Mark Hughes and Chris Coleman, the managers of Blackburn Rovers FC and Fulham FC respectively, or in players such as Mark Pembridge at Fulham, Simon Davies at Everton FC or Bellamy and Savage at Blackburn, and so on. We know that there is huge interest in Wales in Liverpool FC, Everton FC and Manchester United, so we send reporters to those games. Beneath that, we have full-match commentaries of Cardiff City, Swansea City and Wrexham; we send full commentary teams there. We also send reporters to a mixture of Welsh premier games, to follow the likes of Port Talbot Town FC, Rhyl FC, Bangor City FC, and so on. We occasionally send reporters to the so-called three exiles, Merthyr Tydfil FC, Newport County AFC and Colwyn Bay FC. I have to be careful with my terminology so that I do not receive letters as a result. That would be a typical Saturday afternoon's football on Radio Cymru.

[15] Radio Wales is different, simply because we are able to broadcast on medium wave and FM. On medium wave, we give a similar rolling service as that given on Radio Cymru, but we are able to split FM three ways, so we give dedicated commentaries to Wrexham, Cardiff and Swansea matches. That has proved popular with our audience. It is not an exact science, but generally speaking, the south west will receive Swansea City commentaries, Cardiff and its surrounding areas and a little further north will receive Cardiff City commentaries, and the majority of north Wales will receive the Wrexham commentary. That would be our typical Saturday afternoon on Radio Wales and Radio Cymru. Of course, we also broadcast international football matches. We have a four-year contract with the Football Association of Wales to broadcast all of Wales's home international matches and we secure the rights for the away matches as they become available.

[16] As far as television is concerned, it is about added value and it centres on our interactive service—the red button service. For a typical international—an international that we are not producing live for S4C—our interactive stream will include the Radio Cymru commentary for those who want to access it through the red button, or our *Ar y Marc* stream. For those of you who are not familiar with *Ar y Marc*, it is a football programme that goes out during the season on Radio Cymru. In fact, in terms of audience figures, it is our best performing programme on Saturday. Basically, during an international, experienced broadcasters give a fan's view of the game. Therefore, it is not an actual commentary, it is football enthusiasts talking about the game and it has proved to be incredibly popular.

[17] Our third platform is online. We have message boards throughout the year where fans get to pick the team, to make comment and to enter into debate. We have those in English and Welsh, and, of course, we stream our commentary wherever the rights are available, and we do so online also. That is a brief snapshot of what we do in terms of football on BBC Wales.

[18] **Mr Davies:** Diolch am y gwahoddiad i ddod yma ac, efallai, i egluro'n ehangach ddiddordeb a chyfraniad S4C i chwaraeon—pêl-droed yn benodol. Mae S4C wedi bod ynghlwm wrth bêl-droed ers rhai blynyddoedd yn awr, a'r dystiolaeth yw mai *Sgorio* a *Pobol y Cwm* yw'r ddwy raglen mwyaf adnabyddus ymhlith gwylwyr S4C. Mae *Sgorio* wedi bod yn mynd ers dros 20 mlynedd, a'r rhaglen honno yw'r adlewyrchiad gorau o bêl-droed Ewrop, o'r Almaen, yr Eidal a Sbaen.

Mr Davies: Thank you for the invitation to come here and, perhaps, to explain further S4C's interest in, and contribution to, sports—football in particular. S4C has been linked with football for some years now, and the evidence is that *Sgorio* and *Pobol y Cwm* are the two most well-known programmes among S4C's viewers. *Sgorio* has been going for over 20 years and is, of course, the best reflection of European football, from Germany, Italy and Spain.

[19] Mae strategaeth raglenni S4C yn glir iawn o ran chwaraeon. Mae'n adrodd yn blwmp ac yn blaen ein bod ni eisiau sicrhau hawliau chwaraeon *exclusive*, ac mae hynny'n allweddol i ni er mwyn cynnal y gynulleidfa fwyaf bosibl. Gobeithiwn ddenu gwylwyr i'r sianel nad ydynt fel arfer yn edrych ar S4C. Mae chwaraeon wedi chwarae rhan allweddol, ac maent yn parhau i chwarae rhan allweddol, yn hynny o beth. Mae'r strategaeth hefyd yn cyfeirio at ehangu'n darpariaeth i ddilynwyr pêl-droed ar y lefel ryngwladol a'r lefel ddomestig. Credaf ein bod, i raddau, wedi llwyddo i gyflawni hynny drwy gydweithio â Chymdeithas Bêl-droed Cymru, y BBC, Sky a'r sector annibynnol. Felly, mae sawl partner yn ein galluogi i ddod â phêl-droed i sgrîn S4C.

S4C's programming strategy is very clear with regard to sports. It states categorically that we want to ensure exclusive sports rights, and that is crucial for us to be able to support the largest audience possible. We hope to attract viewers to the channel who would not normally watch S4C. Sports have played a significant role, and they continue to play a significant role, in that regard. The strategy also refers to widening our provision to followers of football at the international level and at the domestic level. I think that we have succeeded, to a degree, in achieving that through co-operating with the Football Association of Wales, the BBC, Sky and the independent sector. So, several partners enable us to bring football to S4C's screen.

[20] Rhaid cofio am y sefyllfa y bu i Keith gyfeirio ati o ran ceisio sicrhau hawliau darlledu, a'r byd pêl-droed, fel y gwyddoch, yw'r mwyaf cystadleuol. I roi tystiolaeth o hynny, dim ond yr wythnos diwethaf, cyhoeddodd Sky a Setanta, cwmni cymharol fach o Iwerddon, gytundeb newydd ag uwch-gynghrair Lloegr, yn dechrau o'r flwyddyn nesaf, gwerth £1.7 biliwn dros dair blynedd. Gyda 138 o gemau, mae hynny'n golygu £4 miliwn am bob gêm fyw ar y teledu. Mae hynny yn rhoi blas ichi o ba mor ddifrifol a chostus y gall pêl-droed fod ar y teledu.

One must bear in mind the situation to which Keith referred with regard to trying to secure broadcasting rights, and the world of football, as you know, is the most competitive. There is evidence of this in that, just last week, Sky and Setanta, a relatively small company from Ireland, announced a new contract with the English premier league, starting next year, worth £1.7 billion over three years. With 138 games, that works out at £4 million for every live game televised. That gives you a taste of how serious and costly the televising of football can be.

[21] Dros gyfnod, yr ydym wedi darlledu holl gemau rhyngwladol Cymru ar ôl i Sky wneud hynny—yn nes ymlaen yr un dydd neu yn y nos. Hefyd, yr ydym wedi bod yn darlledu holl gemau tîm Cymru dan 21, sy'n bwysig o edrych ymlaen at ddatblygu chwaraeon y genhedlaeth newydd. Ar yr ochr ddomestig, mae gemau cynghrair Cymru yn cael eu darlledu bob nos Sadwrn ar S4C; dros y ddwy flynedd diwethaf, dyna'r sylw mwyaf mae'r gynghrair honno wedi ei gael. Yr wyf yn credu y byddai pawb yn cytuno bod safon y gynghrair, y cyfleusterau a'r adnoddau sydd ar gael yn y clybiau hefyd yn cynyddu ac yn gwella. Credaf i S4C chwarae rôl fach wrth gyflawni hynny.

Over a period of time, we have been broadcasting all the Wales international games after Sky has done that—later the same day or in the evening. Also, we have been broadcasting all the Wales under-21 games, which is important in terms of looking towards developing sport for the next generation. On the domestic front, the Welsh league games are broadcast every Saturday night on S4C; over the last two years, that has been the most attention that the league has had. I am certain that the standard of the league, the facilities and the amenities available to the clubs have also increased and improved. I believe that S4C has played a small role in achieving that.

[22] Mae ein rhaglen nos Sadwrn yn dod o glybiau ar hyd a lled Cymru. Mae'n neis i ni fel sianel fynd i leoedd yn y gogledd, y gorllewin, y dwyrain a'r de. Mae hynny wedi helpu, mewn ffordd, i ddod â ni yn nes at ein cynulleidfa.

Our Saturday evening programme comes from clubs all over Wales. It is nice for us as a channel to go to places in north, west, east and south Wales. That has helped, in a way, to bring us a little closer to our audience.

[23] Yn gyflym, o ran y mathau o bêl-droed y gallwch ei weld ar S4C, yr ydym yn siarad am holl gemau rhyngwladol Cymru gartref, gemau'r tîm dan 21, Cwpan Cymru, wrth gwrs, a oedd yn fyw ar S4C ddydd Sul diwethaf, y cyfan o'r gynghrair yn ystod y tymor, a *Sgorio*, sy'n dod â'r pêl-droed gorau o Ewrop. Hefyd, yn ogystal ag edrych am hawliau i ddarlledu gemau—gyda phob camp—yr ydym yn edrych i gael hawliau i'n galluogi i gynnwys y gorau o'r gemau mewn rhaglenni eraill. Yn aml, os ydych yn prynu hawliau, dim ond y gêm a gewch chi; yr ydym yn ceisio sicrhau ein bod yn cael hawliau er mwyn cynhyrchu rhaglenni fel *Sgorio Bach* yn *Planed Plant* a *Peldroedio*, sef cyfres sydd wedi bod yn rhedeg ar S4C lle mae sgiliau'r sêr yn cael eu cyflwyno i blant er mwyn iddynt geisio eu hefelychu a datblygu eu sgiliau eu hunain.

Briefly, with regard to the types of football that you can watch on S4C, we are talking about all Wales international home matches, the under-21 team's matches, the Welsh Cup, of course, which was broadcast live on S4C last Sunday, the whole of the league during the season, and *Sgorio*, which showcases the best of European football. Also, in addition to securing the rights to broadcast matches—with all sports—we are looking to secure the rights to enable us to include the best of the games in other programmes. Often, if you buy the rights, you get only the game, but we are trying to ensure that we get the rights to produce programmes such as *Sgorio Bach* for *Planed Plant* and *Peldroedio*, which is a series on S4C where the skills of stars are introduced to children so that they can try to imitate them and improve their own skills.

9.20 a.m.

[24] Mae'r pwynt am blant yn hollbwysig. Mae'n iawn i ddod â'r gemau mawr sy'n cynhyrfu'r genedl i'r sgrîn er mwyn cael y plant i ddod, ond gobeithiaf y byddwn yn perswadio plant i fynd allan i geisio efelychu'r sêr ac i gymryd rhan mewn chwaraeon. Byddai hynny wedyn nid yn unig yn dod o hyd i'r Ryan Giggs nesaf, ond byddai'n symud ymlaen eich agenda chi o safbwynt hybu iechyd. Byddai'r ffaith y byddent allan ar y stryd neu yn y parc yn cicio neu'n taflu pêl yn amlwg yn gwella'u hiechyd a'u sgiliau cymdeithasol gan eu gwneud yn bobl sy'n deall gwahaniaethau ac yn gallu trafod ennill a cholli a fyddai, mewn ffordd, yn eu gwneud yn bobl fwy cyflawn ar gyfer y dyfodol. Mae hynny hefyd yn bwysig ym myd chwaraeon ac yr wyf yn teimlo'n eithaf cryf am hynny.

The point about children is crucial. It is right to bring the big games that excite the nation to the screen to get children to come, but I hope that we will persuade children to go out and try to imitate the stars and to take part in sports. That would then not only find us the next Ryan Giggs, but it would advance your agenda in terms of health promotion. The fact that they would be out on the street or in the park kicking or throwing a ball would obviously improve their health and their social skills, turning them into people who understand differences and who can handle winning and losing, which would, in a sense, make them more rounded people for the future. That is also important in the world of sports and I feel quite strongly about that.

[25] Yn amlwg, pêl-droed yw'r pwnc heddiw, ond mae S4C hefyd yn amlwg iawn o ran y campau eraill, o safbwynt rygbi a raliô. Yr ydym yn cefnogi cyfres y byd, gyda phwyslais arbennig ar y rali sy'n digwydd yng Nghymru ar ddiwedd bob blwyddyn. Mae ambell i raglen *one-off* hefyd; er enghraifft gwnaethom raglen ar David Davies a enillodd fedal aur yng Ngemau'r Gymanwlad yn fuan ar ôl ei lwyddiant. Yr ydym yn chwarae rhan allweddol yn dod â digwyddiadau allweddol i'r genedl i gyd. Yr wyf hefyd yn credu bod yr elfen arall yr ydym wedi ei thrafod yr un mor bwysig, o safbwynt targedu pobl ifanc i ddod i edrych ar y sianel ac ar chwaraeon. Gobeithiwn y byddant yn cymryd rhan mewn chwaraeon.

Obviously, football is today's subject, but S4C is also prominent in terms of other sports, especially in terms of rugby and rallying. We support the world series, with a special emphasis on the rally that is held in Wales at the end of every year. We also make occasional one-off programmes; for example, we produced a programme on David Davies who won a gold medal in the Commonwealth Games soon after his success. We play a key role in terms of broadcasting key events to the whole nation. I also believe that the other aspect that we have discussed is as important, in terms of targeting young people to come to watch the channel for sports. We hope that they will take part in sports.

[26] **Rosemary Butler:** Thank you for that. Welcome, Mr Blight.

[27] **Mr Blight:** I apologise—there was a lot of traffic, I am afraid.

[28] **Rosemary Butler:** Do not worry; we were late starting because we had a difficulty here. I think that we will question the broadcasters first and then we will come to you.

[29] **Val Lloyd:** I have four questions and they may be specific or across the piece. I am very interested in what you said and I do hear some of the football sports reports although I am not particularly a football fan. I have another sport that is my favourite—

[30] **Rosemary Butler:** We should have wished Swansea well before we started.

[31] **Val Lloyd:** I was going to come to that at the end.

[32] **Rosemary Butler:** I am sorry.

[33] **Val Lloyd:** I was going to ask everyone to join me in wishing them well in their match tonight.

[34] I listen, particularly on a Saturday, and I could empathise with much of what you were saying. How do you, as broadcasters, utilise what opportunities there might be to promote women's football in Wales?

[35] How do you support inclusiveness? Do you have any targeted projects or programmes for that? How might new technology, such as broadband and nonlinear broadcasting, be used to increase the coverage of games by smaller clubs and minority teams? I know that you did dwell on that a little.

[36] I have a particular question regarding S4C. Is there any English-language provision for English speakers to follow football matches that are broadcast on S4C? I am aware that there is some English-language provision for digital viewers—I think that you can switch to a radio commentary, if I remember some listening that I have done—but not everyone has switched over. It is not quite 2009 yet, so can you tell me what is being done to address that?

[37] **Mr Jones:** Of your three questions, I will take the third and go backwards. One advantage of having an international rugby player on my right-hand side is that he can take a pass; I will pass some on to him.

[38] **Owen John Thomas:** I hope that it will not be a hospital pass.

[39] **Mr Jones:** Hopefully not. In terms of new technology, I am fortunate to also have responsibility for new media in the work that we do in BBC Wales. In terms of piloting new ideas, we had an experiment up in Hull, in a local television pilot area, where there is a great interest in ice hockey. We tried, in that area, to pilot the coverage of ice-hockey matches, without going to the expense of using the usual outside broadcast facilities. The lesson from that was that local appeal always attracts people. When we transfer that to our own areas, we are also looking at the potential of local content, in terms of news, sport and so on, and one of the platforms on which we could deliver that is broadband. We are looking at that very carefully, and there are other pilots going on within the BBC using other digital platforms to pilot that kind of operation.

[40] On the other two issues—and perhaps I will pull Nigel in at this point—in terms of inclusiveness, as you heard, the approach that we described across platform is designed to try to pull in as many people as possible and to engage people in discussion and debate. For the first time, by using message boards and so on, we are getting views from people right across Wales, and they are contributing to the output. Those are some of the most important elements of our output. Also, it is about getting out and meeting people. Gareth referred earlier to football programmes, which are actually produced at local clubs. That is about being in touch with people and attempting to be as inclusive as possible.

[41] **Mr Walker:** To pick up on the point on inclusivity, Raise Your Game is an online service that is run by our education department, in association with the sport department, which is aimed at inclusivity. It is primarily aimed at younger people, so you get tips from Colin Jackson—you can access them if you have broadband—where Colin Jackson talks about what it takes to achieve success. John Derrick, the Glamorgan County Cricket Club coach, talks about coaching, and David Davies talks about his success at the Commonwealth Games, his diet and so on. So, that is aimed at everyone. We have coaches and sport stars, be they male or female, experienced or inexperienced. Nicole Cook is also involved. So, all types of people are contributing, which helps the inclusivity angle.

[42] In terms of women's football, we carry a report of women's football on bulletins on Radio Wales, Radio Cymru, *Wales Today* and *Newyddion*. We have just commissioned some audience research, which reported back this week. Several group sessions were held up and down Wales—I think that there were six in all—and I attended the two sessions that took place in Cardiff. One group consisted of women aged over 45. There were 12 ladies who chewed the fat about sport for an hour. There was also a male group of 25 to 44-year-olds. In the women's group, there was a Cardiff City Ladies Football Club fan who wanted more reports on the team—I did not contribute to the debate as I was in another room listening. The review reported back this week, and, during the next few weeks, people will be looking at how we can represent women's football even better than we do at the moment. So, it is an ongoing issue. We have reports online and on the radio on women's football, but we need to do more, and that is what the groups said. We had a debate about it this week, and we have to report back in two or three weeks on how we are going to address that particular issue.

[43] **Ms Gibson:** On women's football, this is one of the fastest-growing sports among women. At the moment, as Nigel and Keith mentioned, it is covered on *Newyddion*. If Bangor City Girls Football Club, for example, is playing well, or if an Arsenal Football Club player comes from Wales, there will be features on those stories. The same happens on our *Wedi 7* nightly magazine programme from Llanelli, on which certain teams are featured. At the moment, that is how we reflect it, but, again, as a growing sport, it is included in different programmes as well. For example, *Peldroedio*, the programme for young footballers on S4C, also reflects the fact that girls play football as well.

[44] **Mr Davies:** On the last question on English-language coverage, it is all down to the rights that we can secure. All our football rights are Welsh-language only. For example, when the Welsh team plays at home, Sky has all the English-language rights and will not release them, so there is the opportunity to access Welsh-language rights.

9.30 a.m.

[45] It happens across the range, not only with football. However, it is probably more stringently policed in football, because of the different territories and the different languages. We also come across this issue in rugby. Some of what we produce could be done in either language, but we generally manage to secure Welsh-language rights and we are, therefore, restricted in what we can broadcast in football.

[46] **Val Lloyd:** I may have misunderstood or misinterpreted what was said, but I thought that you had a scheme where people could, if they have digital television, get a commentary. Am I mistaken?

[47] **Mr Davies:** The only English that you would see would be subtitling. However, that subtitling would be for studio discussions only and not for the action, because we are not allowed to do that.

[48] **Owen John Thomas:** Credaf ein bod yn cymryd yn ganiataol yr hyn yr ydych yn ei wneud. Wrth glywed am gynnwys y rhestr, mae hi'n wyrth bod gwasanaeth mor eang mewn gwlad mor fach gyda dwy iaith. Mae'r hyn sydd gennyf i'w ddweud yn ymwneud â diddordeb personol. Yr wyf yn aml yn gwrando ar y radio ar brynhawn dydd Sadwrn ac, o bryd i'w gilydd, hoffwn glywed sut mae Caerdydd yn gwneud—os yw'r tîm yn ennill neu fel arall. Fodd bynnag, am ryw reswm, mae pwy bynnag sy'n gwneud y rhaglen yn penderfynu mynd draw at, er enghraifft, Everton neu Blackburn i weld sut mae'r timau hynny yn gwneud—er nad yw'n gymaint o broblem â Blackburn oherwydd bod cysylltiad Cymreig yn y fan honno. Yr wyf yn gofyn i mi fy hun, 'Pam yn y byd maent am wybod sut mae Chelsea yn gwneud; yr wyf am wybod sut mae Caerdydd yn gwneud'. Yr wyf yn siwr bod nifer o bobl yn cynhyrfu ac yn colli amynedd oherwydd hyn. Gwerthfawrogaf ei bod yn faes eang, ac yr wyf yn siwr bod cynulleidfa sylweddol gan y rhaglen. Sut ydych yn penderfynu sut i rannu'r amser rhwng y clybiau a chynghreiriau gwahanol? Yr wyf yn siwr bod llawer o waith i'w wneud ymlaen llaw i baratoi'r amserlen ac yn y blaen.

Owen John Thomas: I think that we take what you do for granted. Having heard the list today, it is a miracle that there is such a wide-ranging service in such a small country that has two languages. What I have to say relates to a personal interest. I often listen to the radio on Saturday afternoons and, every so often, I would like to hear how Cardiff is doing—if the team is winning or otherwise. However, for some reason, those producing the programme will decide to go over to, for example, Everton or Blackburn to see how those teams are doing—though it is not as much of a problem with Blackburn as that team has a Welsh connection. I ask myself, 'Why on earth do people want to know how Chelsea is doing; I want to hear how Cardiff is doing'. I am sure that this annoys many people and tests their patience. I appreciate that it is a broad field, and I am sure that the programme has a substantial audience. How do you decide how to divide the time between the various clubs and leagues? I am sure that a lot of work is done beforehand in preparing the timetable and so on.

[49] Gan edrych i'r dyfodol, sut ydych yn rhagweld y rhaglenni yn datblygu ar Radio Wales, Radio Cymru, S4C, BBC 2 Cymru ac yn y blaen?

Looking to the future, how do you see the programmes developing on Radio Wales, Radio Cymru, S4C, BBC2 Wales and so on?

[50] **Mr Jones:** Efallai y dylai Nigel gymryd y cwestiwn cyntaf.

Mr Jones: Perhaps Nigel should take the first question.

[51] **Mr Walker:** Yes, I will deal with the first question. The simple answer to that is that it is based on audience research. Based on this, our understanding is that there are more Liverpool supporters in Wales than there are Cardiff City supporters. Liverpool, Everton and Manchester United are incredibly popular in Wales. We also take into account the Welsh interest in clubs such as Fulham, Blackburn and West Ham, which I have spoken about, to reach the balance. On Radio Cymru, which is one service, the split is down to the producer, but it is based on editorial steer from me with regard to what we should be doing. We major on Welsh teams, but, if we want a larger listening audience, we are required to cater for those who are interested in Liverpool, Everton, Manchester United and so on.

[52] As I explained in my introduction, it is much simpler on Radio Wales. We have the same rolling service on medium wave, so you will get a range of commentary and reports on football clubs and football players across the UK. However, on FM, it is far more specific. Because of the three-way split that we can achieve on FM, you will hear dedicated, uninterrupted commentary of Swansea games if you live in the south-west, of Cardiff games if you live in Cardiff and the surrounding areas, and of Wrexham games in north Wales. It is much easier in the English language. Unfortunately, technology does not currently allow us to do the same thing on Radio Cymru. However, our service is as comprehensive and as targeted as it should be as far as we are concerned, and that is based on audience research.

[53] **Mr Jones:** To respond to your second question—which links into the thrust of your first question—in future, it will be about what the viewer, listener or online user wants at the time. It will not be the editorial decision by the producer or the director of the programme that will drive what people will want, rather than what they are given. Therefore, it is about universality on demand. There are developments in the way in which people can access any content results, and so on, on mobile phones, PDAs and laptops. These have been referred to in new media terms as ‘Martini media’—‘any time, any place’. That is true for sport, which requires that live-ness, as it were. That is the challenge that we face in terms of our programme makers.

[54] **Owen John Thomas:** A oes posibilrwydd yn y dyfodol y bydd Radio Cymru yn cael yr un rhyddid, gan ei bod yn amlwg bod elfen dechnegol yn penderfynu hyn, ac mae Radio Wales yn meddu ar hynny bellach, sef y gallu i gael tri gwahanol beth yn rhedeg ar yr un pryd?

Owen John Thomas: Is there a possibility that in future Radio Cymru will have the same freedom, because it is ultimately a technical issue, particularly given that Radio Wales now has that capacity to have three simultaneous broadcasts?

[55] **Mr Jones:** Dof yn ôl at fater yr ydym wedi ei drafod yn y pwyllgor hwn yn y gorffennol, sef bod y gallu yn bodoli gyda DAB ar radio digidol i hollti'r gwasanaeth ar adegau. Hynny yw, gellir defnyddio rhan o'r gwasanaeth ar gyfer gwasanaethau gwahanol ar adegau. Serch hynny, fel y gwyr aelodau'r pwyllgor, nid yw'r gwasanaeth ar gael ar draws Cymru ar hyn o bryd, felly gobeithiwn ddatrys y broblem honno cyn chwilio am atebion eraill.

Mr Jones: I return to an issue which we have previously discussed in committee, namely that the capacity exists with DAB on digital radio to split the service at times. That is, part of the service can be used for different services at times. However, members of the committee will know that that service is not currently available across Wales, so we hope to solve that problem before looking at other solutions.

[56] **Mr Davies:** O safbwynt datblygu rhaglenni yn y dyfodol, y peth pwysig yr ydym yn gorfod ei wneud yn S4C yw sicrhau ein bod yn cadw'r hawliau. Os nad ydym yn meddu ar yr hawliau, nid yw'n bosibl gwneud rhaglenni, felly mae hynny'n hollbwysig o'n safbwynt ni. Mae'n mynd yn galetach, a chyfeiriais at y ffaith bod y gost yn cynyddu yn Lloegr ar hyn o bryd, ond yr ydym hefyd yn gweld safonau yng Nghymru yn codi wrth i'r gynghrair wella'n aruthrol yn ystod y pum mlynedd diwethaf, a phwy a wyr beth fydd yn digwydd yn y dyfodol? Felly, mae'n rhaid dal at i weithio mewn partneriaeth â deiliaid yr hawliau, megis y BBC a darlledwyr eraill.

Mr Davies: In terms of the development of future programming, the important thing for S4C to do is to ensure that we retain the rights. If we do not have the rights, we cannot make the programme, so that is crucial from our point of view. It is becoming more difficult, and I referred to the current increase in costs in England, but we have also seen standards in Wales raise, in that the league of Wales has improved tremendously in the past five years, and who knows what will happen in the future? So we must continue to work in partnership with the owners of the rights, such as the BBC and other broadcasters.

[57] **Ms Gibson:** Ochr yn ochr â'r hyn a ddywedodd Gareth a Keith, mae datblygu yn rhyngweithiol yn bwysig iawn o ran yr hyn y gallwn ei gynnig ar y we, ffonau symudol ac yn y blaen, i greu cymunedau o gefnogwyr a phlant, fel y gallant siarad am chwaraeon, boed yn bêl-droed neu gamp arall. Byddwn yn parhau i ddatblygu rhaglenni ar gyfer plant gan fod hynny'n beth pwysig iawn yn ein strategaeth eisoes. Ar wefannau *Peldroedio* a *Sgorio Bach*, mae cyfle i blant gael gwybodaeth am sgiliau a chlywed yr hyn a ddywed yr arbenigwyr. Felly, mae llawer mwy o ddatblygu yn digwydd yn y ffordd honno.

Ms Gibson: Alongside what Gareth and Keith said, interactive development is very important in terms of what we can offer online, on mobile phones and so on, to create communities of supporters and children, so that they can discuss sport, whether it is football or another sport. We will continue to develop programmes for children because that is already an important part of our strategy. On the *Peldroedio* and *Sgorio Bach* websites, there is an opportunity for children to access information on the skills to see what the experts are saying. So, there is much more development being undertaken in that area.

[58] **Laura Anne Jones:** Thank you for your presentations. It is apparent from your tri-media approach that you are moving with the times. I find it very useful, because I always listen to the radio when I access the internet, so thank you for that. I cannot watch as much football as I used to, which is a shame.

[59] The questions that I wanted to ask have already been picked up. Following on from the women's football question, what about coverage of youth games and so on? I also wanted to ask about your coverage of Welsh football matches, even though we know that you must go by demand. I am a Manchester United supporter, and perhaps I should not say that, but I know what it is like—there is a big interest in English football. How are you using your position as BBC and S4C in trying to stir up the interest, profile and demand for Welsh football matches? How are you using your position to promote it, because the coverage might be there but we must increase interest for people to watch it? What are you doing on a ground level? I see that you go to some matches, and so on, but can you expand on any future ideas on how to promote the game?

9.40 a.m.

[60] **Mr Davies:** Working backwards, in terms of marketing Welsh football, as a broadcast partner, it is important that we have that responsibility, if you like, in terms of making our product stronger. It is a tough one in many ways, because of the historical aspect. Take last weekend, for example, when, on Saturday evening, we had the Welsh rugby cup final between Pontypridd and Neath—which happened to be one of the best games of the season—and, on Sunday, we had the Welsh football cup final, played in Wrexham. The audience for the rugby match, for example, was five times that for the football match. Much of that is down to history—there is a stronger competitive edge, if you like, in terms of Welsh domestic rugby as opposed to Welsh domestic football. However, having seen what has happened in the last three, four or five years on the Welsh football scene, I would like to think that things are improving. Standards are improving, as are surfaces and the way that broadcasters are approached, facilities are better, and the sides have become more and more professional.

[61] Therefore, it is possibly a matter of time also, along with the fact that the clubs approach the product in a more professional manner. I mentioned in my presentation earlier that being out at clubs works—it is great if we go to Bangor, Aberystwyth, or wherever, and the cameras are there; it is a live show, and they are on television. I would like to think that that in itself will start to help sell the product—if it is on television live, then it is worth watching. This will take some time, but it is moving in the right direction.

[62] **Laura Anne Jones:** I agree with everything that you have just said. The point of this review is to try to get as many people as we can on board, and to try to get the game in Wales up to a similar standard to that in the English clubs. That is what we all hope to do. You will obviously be on board, but do you have any future ideas on how you might help out in that regard?

[63] **Mr Davies:** The downside, on one hand, is that you are always battling against what people see on television coming from Stamford Bridge, Anfield, or wherever. That is always a difficulty, whereas perhaps in other sports, the level is comparable. So, that is always a difficult one. I was in Nigel's seat when the league of Wales started, many years ago; in those days, it was treated as one man and a dog. It has moved on from there considerably in terms of interest, which is the point that you are making, but, more importantly, what will lead to the interest is the standard of play and facilities, and that backdrop. Therefore, it is a product that, without doubt, is improving, and we want to continue to be associated with that.

[64] **Mr Walker:** I will deal with the youth coverage, but I will first pick up on a point that Gareth made. It is about partnership, and Gareth has referred to partnership a few times. I remember two years ago when we lost the rights, once the black cloud had lifted partially, Gareth and I had a quick chat, and we went to Sky together to try to purchase rights, whether they be secondary rights in English, or Welsh-language rights. Sky was not interested in selling us English-language rights, but, together, S4C and BBC Wales were able to purchase the Welsh-language rights. Under those Welsh-language rights, BBC Wales has made a commitment, alongside S4C, to showing at least three under-21 games live each year. We cannot show them in the English language, because Sky would not allow us to, but we are able to produce those games for S4C. Therefore, that is bringing in the youth and the players of tomorrow.

[65] Without wishing to name drop, John Toshack popped into the BBC—John and I, me and John [*Laughter.*]—to talk to a few of our pundits, and we had a chat. He talked about the under 21s. The score of last night’s under-21s game in Estonia—it is a two-legged affair—was 2-0 to Wales. He feels that the future of Welsh football is very bright. Together, we should help him to showcase those games at the under-21 level.

[66] Picking up on Gareth’s point about the Welsh premier league, it may have been one man and a dog all those years ago, but it is steadily improving. BBC Wales has made a commitment over the last seven or eight years to the FAW Premier Cup, which is the only competition in Wales that brings together all the clubs in Wales, wherever they play. Therefore, it does not matter whether it is Cardiff, Swansea or Wrexham, whether it is our Welsh premier clubs, or whether it is the so-called three exiles, which I have mentioned before; they all get a chance to take part in this competition, and we have made a commitment that we will show at least four of those games live. Obviously, we are not doing that because we believe that it will attract the same audience as that attracted by a game between Manchester United and Liverpool, with respect, but because we believe that that is important for Welsh football.

[67] Finally, BBC2W, our digital service, carries sports news every night of the week, for approximately five minutes on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, but for 15 minutes on Monday and Friday, and, quite often, we will carry reports and features about young people taking part in all sports—football is obviously included in that—and also women playing in sport.

[68] **Mr Jones:** It is not just about the top end of the game; you will see from what you have heard and read in the evidence that the range all through the sport that we cover is important. There is also an issue of empathy with the sport across Wales, and engaging with people in different clubs and at different levels. That is the approach that we are taking.

[69] **Eleanor Burnham:** Rhaid imi gyfaddef fod gennyf ddiddordeb mewn pêl-droed, ond nid wyf yn cael llawer o amser i’w wyllo. Fodd bynnag, yr wyf yn hoffi gwranddo ar Radio Cymru ar fore dydd Sadwrn. Yr oeddwn yn dweud hyn wrth Dafydd Huws y diwrnod o’r blaen, ac yr oedd wedi synnu, oherwydd maent yn cael ychydig o hwyl ar y rhaglen, sy’n wych. Yr wyf hefyd yn gwyllo *Sgorio* pan allaf. Mae’n andros o bwysig denu pobl ifanc a dyna’r pwynt yr ydym ni’n edrych arno’n benodol.

Eleanor Burnham: I must admit that I have an interest in football, but I do not have much time to watch it. However, I enjoy listening to Radio Cymru on Saturday mornings. I was telling Dafydd Huws this the other day, and he was surprised, because they have quite a bit of fun on the programme, which is great. I also watch *Sgorio* when I can. It is extremely important to attract young people, and that is the point that we are specifically focusing upon.

[70] Fodd bynnag, nid wyf yn deall yr ariannu a hawliau darlledu yn union, heblaw am ddeall bod Sky mor bwerus; a allwch ehangu ychydig ar hynny? Byddwn yn tybio, ac efallai y gallwch gadarnhau hyn, mai'r her fawr yw'r drefn bresennol gyda hawliau darlledu a bod yn deg amdanynt. Yr ydym mewn marchnad fyd-eang, ond yr wyf yn poeni am hyn—os yw Sky yn gallu cael cymaint o fantais, sut drefn a sut ddyfodol ydych chi'ch dau yn eu rhagweld? Wrth gwrs, yr ydych yn bwerus yn y BBC, ond cydweithio yw'r ateb. Byddwn yn hoffi clywed ychydig mwy am hyn, ac am sut mae sicrhau cadernid ariannol yn y dyfodol, a sut hefyd yr ydych yn gweld yr hyn y gallwch chi ei wneud i helpu ariannu'r ieuenctid sy'n cael blewyn bach o arian gan Gymdeithas Bêl-droed Cymru. Mae problem fawr; yr ydym wedi clywed gan dystion eraill fod yr ariannu'n annheg o'i gymharu â'r ariannu dros y ffin yn Lloegr.

[71] **Mr Davies:** O safbwynt yr hawliau, fe'ch cyfeiriaf at yr hyn a ddywedais yn fy nghyflwyniad am yr arian a dalwyd yr wythnos diwethaf i Uwch-gynghrair yr FA i ddarlledu gemau'n fyw dros y tair blynedd nesaf. Mae'r ffigurau'n frawychus, mewn gwirionedd—dros £4 miliwn am bob gêm. Mae'n amlwg na fydd S4C yn mynd ar ôl y rheini. Felly, ar y lefel uchaf, mae pêl-droed yn mynd yn galetach, ac yn mynd bant oddi wrth bawb. Yr unig gemau rhyngwladol sydd ar gael ar y funud yw gemau oddi cartref. Felly, dywedwn mai marchnad ydyw mewn ffordd, gyda holl ddarlledwyr Prydain yn ystyried a ydynt eisiau gêm Cymru yn Azerbaijan neu ble bynnag. Ocsiwn yw hi, mewn ffordd. Mae'r BBC a ninnau'n trafod o hyd pa gemau sy'n dod, beth fyddwn ni'n ei wneud, ac a fyddwn yn gweithio gyda'n gilydd arnynt. Mae honno'n drafodaeth iach o'r safbwynt ein bod ni'n agored gyda'n gilydd.

However, I do not understand the funding and broadcast rights completely, though I understand how powerful Sky is. Could you therefore expand a little on this? I would suspect, and maybe you can confirm this, that the greatest challenge is the current system for broadcasting rights and ensuring fairness. We are part of a global market, and I am concerned that if Sky can have such an advantage, what kind of system and future do the two of you foresee? You are in a stronger position at the BBC, of course, but collaboration is the key. I would like to hear a little more about that, and on how to secure financial security in the future, and also what your view is on what you can do to help to fund the youth teams who are on a shoestring budget from the Football Association of Wales. There is a grave problem; we have heard from other witnesses that the funding situation in this country is less advantageous than that over the border in England.

Mr Davies: Regarding rights, I refer you to what I said in my presentation about the money that was paid last week to the FA Premier League to broadcast games live over the next three years. Those figures are truly startling—more than £4 million for each match—so it is clear that S4C will not be chasing those. Therefore, at the highest level, football is becoming more and more difficult, and is, in a way, getting out of people's reach. The only international matches that are available at the moment are the away games. Therefore, I would say that it is a market in a way, with all of the British broadcasters considering whether they want to broadcast the Wales away game in Azerbaijan or wherever. In a way, it is an auction. The BBC and we are continually discussing the upcoming games, what we will do about them and whether we will work together on them. That is a healthy discussion, in that we are always open with each other.

[72] Mae ariannu ym myd pêl-droed wedi bod yn broblem yng Nghymru erioed. Yn amlwg, dyna pam mae'r chwaraewyr gorau wedi mynd dros y ffin, a chadw i fynd, at glybiau cyfoethog Lloegr. Ni welaf unrhyw ffordd o stopio hynny. Cwestiwn i'r gymdeithas bêl-droed ydyw, o ran sut y mae'n ariannu datblygu'r gêm ymhlith ieuenctid.

The funding of football has always been a problem in Wales. Clearly, that is why the best players have gone over the border, and continue to do so, to the rich English clubs. I do not see any way of stopping that from happening. How it will fund the development of the youth game is a question for the football association.

[73] **Eleanor Burnham:** Yr oeddwn yn gofyn a oes arian ar gael gennych chi fel darlledwyr i helpu ieuenctid. Nid wyf yn gwybod; dim ond gofyn yr wyf.

Eleanor Burnham: I was asking whether you, as broadcasters, have money available to help young people. I do not know; I am only asking.

[74] **Mr Davies:** Dylai'r arian y mae pob corff llywodraethu yn ei gael gan ddarlledwyr mewn unrhyw faes gyfrannu'n allweddol at ddatblygu. Mae hynny'n digwydd mewn campau eraill, ond nid wyf yn sicr beth sy'n digwydd ym myd pêl-droed yng Nghymru ar y funud, o safbwynt yr arian sy'n dod gan Sky a'r BBC.

Mr Davies: The funding that every governing body receives from broadcasters in any field should make a significant contribution towards development. That happens in other sports, but I am not sure whether it happens in Welsh football at present, in terms of the money that comes from Sky and the BBC.

9.50 a.m.

[75] **Mr Jones:** Mae hynny'n gwbl wir, a bydd yr arian y sicrhodd yr uwch-gynghrair yn Lloegr yr wythnos diwethaf yn golygu bod pob clwb yn cael £28 miliwn y flwyddyn o'r swm hwnnw. Golyga hynny eu bod yn gallu talu arian mawr i'w chwaraewyr, ond pan ddaw i gymdeithasau sy'n berchen ar hawliau, mae'r arian yn dod o'r arian y maent yn ei gael gan y darlledwyr am yr hawliau. Ni allwn ni ariannu pobl yn uniongyrchol o arian cyhoeddus. Yr hyn y gallwn ni ei wneud—ac y mae'n ddyletswydd arnom i'w wneud—yw talu yr hyn a ystyriwn i fod yn bris teg. Yr ydym wastad yn gorfod anelu at hynny, gan wasanaethu nid yn unig y bobl sydd â diddordeb mewn pêl-droed ond hefyd y nifer o bobl eraill yn ein cynulleidfa sy'n talu'r drwydded. Mae'n ddyletswydd arnom felly i farnu ymlaen llaw yr hyn a ystyriwn i fod yn bris teg. Fodd bynnag, yr wyf yn credu bod rhywbeth y tu hwnt i arian hefyd: gall darlledwyr gynnig rhywbeth ychwanegol. Yn aml, yn ogystal â'r arian, yr ydym yn chwilio am y gwerth ychwanegol y gallwn ddod ag ef i'r gêm, ac mae hynny'n bwysig iawn, yn arbennig yma yng

Mr Jones: That is completely true, and the funding that the premier league in England secured last week will mean that each club receives £28 million a year from that sum. That means that they can pay big money to their players, but when it comes to the associations that own the rights, that money comes from the funding that they get from the broadcasters for the rights. We cannot fund people directly using public money. What we can do—and it is our duty to do—is pay what we consider to be a fair price. We must always aim for that, by providing a service not only to those people who are interested in football, but also to the many other people in our audience who pay their licence fee. Therefore, we have a duty to determine in advance what we consider to be a fair price. However, I think that there is something that is beyond money, too: broadcasters can bring something extra to the game. Often, apart from the financial side, we are searching for the added value that we can bring to the game, and that is very important, especially here in Wales.

Nghymru.

[76] Yn olaf, nid oes gennyf gwyn o gwbl fod darlledwyr eraill, megis Sky neu bwy bynnag, yn prynu'r hawliau, oherwydd, fel y dywedodd Gareth, marchnad yw hi, ac yr ydym yn ddigon parod i gymryd rhan yn y broses o gystadlu am hawliau. Nid oes cwyn o'n safbwynt ni am y ffaith bod y gemau hyn ar Sky, ond yr ydym yn awyddus i ddangos y gallwn ddod â rhywbeth yn ogystal ag arian at y bwrdd.

Finally, I have no grievance at all that other broadcasters, such as Sky or whoever, purchase the rights, because, as Gareth said, it is a market, and we are more than willing to participate in the process of competing for the broadcasting rights. There is no complaint on our part about the fact that these games are on Sky, but we are keen to show that we can bring something extra, in addition to money, to the table.

[77] **The Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport (Alun Pugh):** I just want to put my local constituency hat on for a moment, and say that the perfect result for me would be Colwyn Bay, 1—Manchester United, 0. That is beautiful from both ends of the spectrum. It will never happen in premiership football—that really is fantasy football—but it is just about conceivable that those two sides could come together through a European draw. We know that there are all sorts of complex situations behind that.

[78] You mentioned the FAW Premier Cup, and I think that you said that it is the only competition in which every side of stature in Wales gets a chance to play, though there is not a European route through that competition. I appreciate that these things are not in your gift, but what would be your assessment of fans' interest in a tournament if, as well as having every side in Wales play in it, the prize of a European place was at stake for the winners?

[79] **Mr Walker:** In terms of the BBC, it would raise interest in the competition, so it will not surprise you to learn that we have been talking about that very same issue. It is not straightforward, and it certainly is not within our gift or the gift of the FAW Premier Cup board either—it is very much a UEFA matter. I will be taking advice, and we have had many discussions, as I am sure you are aware, and it is something that we will continue to work on. Clearly, the opportunity for the winners of the FAW Premier Cup to play in the InterToto Cup or the UEFA Cup would be fantastic, but that one place would need to come from somewhere else in Wales, and therein lies the problem.

[80] **Rosemary Butler:** Does anybody else want to come back on the Minister's question? Val, you wanted to come back on another one.

[81] **Val Lloyd:** This is a slightly different issue, as we are coming to the end of this item. I am sure that everybody is aware—and I have my constituency hat on, too—that tonight, at the Liberty Stadium in Swansea, Swansea City FC is playing in the league 1 play-off. I want it on record, if I may, and I want to ask members of the committee, as well as the broadcasters and others present, to join me in offering the team best wishes for success.

[82] **Mr Walker:** I would just like to make a plug. You can hear that game on Radio Wales and Radio Cymru tonight.

[83] **Val Lloyd:** I will probably be able to hear it from my house, actually.

[84] **Mr Walker:** We have had a reporter stationed at the Liberty Stadium since 5.30 a.m., so I am sure that he would appreciate it if as many people listened as possible, because he has been plugging the game all morning.

[85] **Rosemary Butler:** You have made sure that everybody knows that he is there.

[86] **Owen John Thomas:** Yn gynharach, yr oeddem yn trafod y broblem na all pobl nad ydynt yn siarad Cymraeg wrando ar y sylwebaeth wrth wyluo gemau ar S4C. Cofiaf, flynyddoedd yn ôl, y byddai rhai pobl yn rhoi Radio Cymru ymlaen ac yn rhoi'r radio ar ben y set deledu a throi sain y teledu i lawr—oherwydd nad oedd y gêm ar gael yn y Gymraeg ar y teledu bryd hynny—fel y gallasent wrando ar y gêm ar Radio Cymru a'i gwyluo ar y teledu. Os gwnewch rywbeth tebyg drwy wrando ar Radio Wales a throi'r sain Cymraeg i lawr—sy'n beth ofnadwy i'w wneud, cofiwch—gallwch wyluo'r gêm a chlywed y sylwebaeth yn Saesneg. Nid yw'n *rocket science*.

Owen John Thomas: We were discussing earlier the problem of people who cannot speak Welsh being unable to listen to the commentary when watching games on S4C. I remember, years ago, that some people would turn Radio Cymru on and place the radio on top of the television set and turn down the sound on the television—because the game was not available in Welsh on television in those days—so that they could listen to the game on Radio Cymru while watching it on the television. If you do something similar by listening to Radio Wales but turning the Welsh sound down—which is a terrible thing to do, of course—you could watch the match and listen to the English commentary. It is not rocket science.

[87] Cododd Val bwynt ynglyn â'r ffaith bod mwy o fenywod yn cael eu denu at chwaraeon. Yr wyf wedi sylwi yn ddiweddar—fel y gwnaeth nifer ohonoch—bod cryn dipyn o fenywod yn cyflwyno rhaglenni chwaraeon. Yn aml, pan drof y radio ymlaen, bydd Eleri Siôn yn siarad am rygbi, ac mae'n swnio'n well na nifer o ddyinion wrth drafod y peth erbyn hyn. Mae datblygiadau felly.

Val raised a point about the fact that more women are being drawn to sports. I have noticed recently—as have many of you—that there are quite a few women presenting sports programmes. Often, when I turn on the radio, Eleri Siôn will be on talking about rugby, and she sounds better than many men discussing the subject by now. There have, therefore, been developments.

[88] **Mr Jones:** Mae'n wir i ddweud bod hynny'n digwydd gyda'n gwasanaethau Cymraeg ni oherwydd, fel y soniodd Nigel yn gynharach, mae tîm rhaglen *Ar y Marc*—sy'n sylwebwyr ychydig yn wahanol—yn sylwebu ar y gemau sy'n ymddangos ar BBC2. Mae hynny'n digwydd oherwydd bod y dechnoleg ar gael: technoleg y botwm coch. Mae gwasanaeth Radio Wales hefyd ar gael, ac felly mae'n fater o wneud yn siwr bod technoleg y botwm coch ar deledu digidol ar gael.

Mr Jones: It is true to say that that happens with our Welsh-language services because, as Nigel mentioned earlier, the team from *Ar y Marc*—who are a little different from other commentators—comment on the games that appear on BBC2. That happens because the technology is available to us: the red-button technology. A service is also available on Radio Wales, and so it is a matter of making sure that the red-button technology on digital television is available.

[89] **Rosemary Butler:** I am sorry to interrupt, but other people want to come in, and I cannot have a conversation back and forth. Do you want to ask one more point to finish?

[90] **Owen John Thomas:** Ydw. Os yw'r gêm ymlaen ar Radio Wales yn Saesneg, mae'n bosibl rhoi'r radio ymlaen a throi'r sain Gymraeg ar y teledu i lawr. Yn y modd hwn, gallwch ddeall y sylwebaeth os nad ydych yn deall y Gymraeg. A yw hynny'n torri unrhyw reolau ynglyn â chytundebau rhwng Sky, y BBC ac S4C? A oes hawl gyda chi i roi y peth ar y radio?

Owen John Thomas: Yes. If the game is available on Radio Wales in English, it is possible to turn on the radio and turn the Welsh sound down on the television. In this way, you can understand the commentary if you do not understand Welsh. Does that break any rules relating to contracts between Sky, the BBC and S4C? Are you permitted to broadcast it on the radio?

[91] **Mr Davies:** Mae hawliau radio gan y BBC, felly nid ydynt yn torri unrhyw ganllawiau neu gytundebau. Yr ydym yn darlledu yn y Gymraeg yn unig, felly yr ydym hefyd yn cadw at y rheolau.

Mr Davies: The BBC has radio rights, and it is not, therefore, contravening any guidelines or breaching any contracts. We broadcast in Welsh only, so we are also keeping to the rules.

[92] **Rosemary Butler:** I think, Owen John, that you ought to consider compiling and publishing a little leaflet on how you can get around all of these issues.

[93] **Owen John Thomas:** I will write a letter to the *Western Mail*, the *South Wales Echo* and the *South Wales Argus*.

[94] **Eleanor Burnham:** Ynglyn â'r hawliau darlledu, bu ichi ddweud mai marchnad ydyw, ond, yn y pen draw, mae'n rhaid inni fod yn wylriadwrus neu bydd pethau'n mynd dros ben llestri a bydd yn amhosibl cystadlu neu gael digon o arian i brynu gan Sky. Mae pobl yn cwyno mai ychydig iawn y gallwn ei wneud yn erbyn pwer mor fawr. Beth all Llywodraeth San Steffan ei wneud i gadw golwg wylriadwrus ar ddatblygiadau yn y maes hwn?

Eleanor Burnham: On the broadcasting rights, you said that it is a market, but, at the end of the day, we have to keep a watchful eye or things will get out of hand, and it will be impossible to compete with, or to have enough money to buy from, Sky. People complain that there is little that we can do against such a superpower. What can the Government at Westminster do to keep a watchful eye on developments in this field?

[95] **Mr Davies:** Gwn fod y Gwyddelod yn cadw llygad barcud ar hawliau chwaraeon. Er enghraifft, mae Cwpan Ryder yn Iwerddon eleni, a bu trafodaethau yn mynd rhagddynt dros y misoedd diwethaf oherwydd Sky sydd â'r hawliau. Bu i Sky sicrhau ein hawliau ni ryw wyth mlynedd yn ôl, ond mae'r darlledwyr a'r Llywodraeth yn Iwerddon wedi trafod y peth o ddifrif. Bu trafferthion rai blynyddoedd yn ôl ym myd pêl-droed a rygbi yn Iwerddon.

Mr Davies: I know that the Irish have eagle eyes when it comes to sporting rights. For example, the Ryder Cup is being held in Ireland this year, and discussions have been ongoing over the past few months because Sky has the rights. Sky secured our rights some eight years ago, but the broadcasters and the Government in Ireland have discussed the matter at length. There were also some difficulties in Ireland some years ago with regard to football and rugby.

10.00 a.m.

<p>[96] Pe bai modd rhoi unrhyw bwysau ar wleidyddion i sicrhau bod digwyddiadau sy'n bwysig i'r genedl ar gael i ni, fel darlledwyr Cymraeg, credaf y byddai pawb yn gwerthfawrogi hynny.</p>	<p>If any pressure can be brought to bear on politicians to ensure that events that are of national importance are available to us, as Welsh-language broadcasters, I think that everyone would appreciate that.</p>
<p>[97] Mr Jones: Byddwn i yn ategu hynny. Mae Deddf sy'n ymwneud â hyn o ran digwyddiadau arwyddocaol i Brydain ac S4C, ond does dim byd cyfatebol ar gyfer pethau sy'n berthnasol ac yn bwysig i Gymru, hynny yw, o ran darlledu'r digwyddiadau hynny ar deledu sydd ar yr awyr am ddim. Credaf fod lle i drafod hyn ynglyn â phethau sy'n berthnasol i Gymru ac i gynulleidfaoedd yng Nghymru o bob oedran, beth bynnag eu gallu i dalu.</p>	<p>Mr Jones: I would concur with that. There is an Act that is relevant to this in terms of events of British significance and S4C, but there is nothing similar for events that are significant and important to Wales, that is, in terms of broadcasting those events on free-to-air television. I think that there is room to discuss this in terms of things that are relevant to Wales and to audiences in Wales, of all ages, whatever their ability to pay.</p>
<p>[98] Rosemary Butler: Thank you very much for that interesting discussion. One of the main aims of this review is to try to encourage more young people to play football. Obviously, they need inspiration and quality broadcasting is part of that. If you go into local clubs, and they can see you broadcasting, that is fantastic. It would be interesting, and we might write to you later about what more you could do to encourage more young people, particularly people with disabilities, to feel that they are part of this wonderful national movement that is football. It is interesting how the national psyche is affected when there is a game like there is in Swansea, and you have an important part to play in that. Thank you for coming. You may like to stay to listen to one of the three exiles that you talked about earlier and see how you can make sure that they get their fair share of the coverage as well.</p>	
<p>[99] I would now like to welcome Mr Chris Blight from Newport. We invited representatives from Merthyr as well, but they chose not to come.</p>	
<p>[100] Ms Annand: We invited Cardiff City as well.</p>	
<p>[101] Rosemary Butler: Yes, but it is not one of the exiles.</p>	
<p>[102] We would like you to give a brief presentation and explain why you do not play in the league of Wales, and explain any aspirations that you have for Welsh football in the future, particularly Newport County. Is it Newport County? I should know.</p>	
<p>[103] Mr Blight: It is Newport County AFC Ltd.</p>	
<p>[104] Rosemary Butler: Of course, it is the AFC; I knew that there was something different.</p>	

[105] **Mr Blight:** Good morning to you all. I welcome the opportunity to come here today. Basically, I am a Newport businessman and I come from a background of working in Lloyds Bank, the civil service, including the British Overseas Trade Board in London and the Foreign Office, and then I came into estate agency through meeting Alan Darlow, whom a lot of you around the table have probably heard of. He brought me into the world of estate agency back in 1980. We went through numerous buy-outs and so on and were eventually bought out by the Halifax Building Society. That is a little of my history and background. I have been self-employed for the last 25 years and I think that it was five years ago that I accepted a glove across the face when I was invited by a chap of the name of Paddy Mullen to the Holiday Inn in Newport to offer some advice to what was then the board of Newport County Football Club.

[106] I will give you a little bit of the history of the club. It was once a league club that had a huge following, with crowds of between 12,000 and 25,000 at the old Somerton Park in Newport, but everything went into demise in the late 1980s. There were businessmen on the board who seemed to be fiddling around with the club. We lost the freehold ground in Newport—at that time, I had nothing to do with the club whatsoever. As a result of bankruptcy, the club tumbled some 10 leagues and became one of the exiles, which has obviously already been mentioned.

[107] Since that time, a wonderful band of people in Newport have taken it upon themselves to try to encourage a much higher standard of football back into Newport and it was at that meeting five years ago that I joined in. It was a little bit of a baptism of fire and, three years later, it resulted in my accepting the offer of the chair of the club. At the first meeting, when I learned that the club was some £200,000 in debt with absolutely no asset base whatsoever, I realised the size of the hill that we had to climb. Over the last few years, I have completely eradicated the deadwood from around the table and I have brought in some muscle. A football club is a financial institution, and the likes of Matt Southall of Acorn are on the board. I think, Laura, that you have been over there and tasted the enthusiasm that runs around the club. I think that we are starting to make some inroads. Under the auspices of Peter Nicholas, we were able to get into Conference South League. This year, we have only just managed to stay in the league: we had a rather disappointing start to the season, which led me to sack John Cornforth, the previous manager, and appoint Peter Beadle, and, in the last 10 games of this season, we had probably one of the best forms in the league, and we hope to continue that next year.

[108] So, it is really a financial uphill climb for Newport County. We are averaging a fan base of about 1,000: three years ago, we managed to get to the final of the FAW Premier Cup at Wrexham, which was a real ticket on our lapel for that competition. I thoroughly enjoyed it, and there was a financial benefit to it as well. When you speak of a possible UEFA introduction from that competition, it would certainly be the objective of many teams to be considered for that, because it is outside that premise at the moment.

[109] I am very proud that Newport County has probably one of the finest academies of its level in the country. Under Glyn Jones, who runs the academy as part of Hartridge High School, we have seen this year, once again, Newport County win the under-18s Colleges Cup, and the under-16s Schools Cup. Unfortunately, we were dumped the other night by Cardiff City's youth in the semi-final played at the university fields in Treforest. Last year, however, I was sat alongside Sam Hamman down in Cardiff when we beat them in the final of the Youth Cup, which brought the silverware to Newport. Unfortunately, all the silverware, at the moment, seems to be through the youth, but we are really expanding on that. I went to a parents' evening the other night in Hartridge High School to present the club to parents who are anticipating sending their children—who are sports children, as there is football, golf and cricket—to that academy. The standard of applicants was extremely high, and, in fact, quite a few people who could not quite make it at Cardiff or Swansea were at that event. Once again, we are looking good for 60 or 70 new applicants to come in next year.

[110] We are the poor relation, with Merthyr, in Welsh football, especially south Wales football. We obviously want to break into league football: that is my objective. We have the conference in front of us first to get into and then out of, and then back into the league. It is a huge task, but I have never been one to back down from anything, and I am certainly enjoying it, although it is a 52-weeks-a-year job, and for 40 weekends a year, through the football season, it means that I am either down at Newport County or away at the clubs that we are visiting. To run my own business as well is quite a tall order.

[111] I get absolutely no financial assistance from anyone, anywhere, apart from the people who encourage it around the board at Newport County. The only benefits that obviously come in are from the Football Association of Wales Premier Cup, which we are very grateful for, as that helps us on the way. I think that we had something like £10,000 to £15,000 from it this year. When you are paying out between £5,000 and £6,000 a week in wages alone, and only getting something like £3,000 to £4,000 net off a home game, which is every other week, you can see the imbalance there. However, we have put on a brave face, and our wish is to promote the town. I am a bit like a stick of Blackpool rock—I have Newport running right through me, and I do not intend to give up on this until we have the success of getting back in the football league. I can see it possibly being a five or 10-year objective.

10.10 a.m.

[112] **Rosemary Butler:** Could you explain why you choose not to play in the Welsh league? That is the interesting question.

[113] **Mr Blight:** Historically, Newport County Football Club had always been part of the league system. If you look at the league today, the only place that you can go in Welsh football is to the top of the Welsh league and into UEFA. To play in the English pyramid system is a far greater objective and you must consider the size of Newport town. I compare our population to that of Wigan, which now has a premiership side. I know that it has the chairman of JJB Sports behind it, but it goes to prove what a town can do and I am sure that Newport is going to bring it back. The fan base of Newport at the time, together with the board of directors that was there at the time, did not want to go into the smaller realms of the Welsh league. If I had chaired that board at that time, and there had been an opportunity to become an exile, to go to Gloucester and play there, and eventually come back and be promoted to go back into the football league, I think that I would have made the same decision.

[114] **Rosemary Butler:** It was a very interesting time when the club lost its ground and the team would travel to Moreton-in-Marsh every other Saturday and there would be coach loads of people going from Newport. It was quite amazing. I think that the partnership with the city council and the fact that you have quite a good ground to play on is helping you.

[115] **Mr Blight:** Hopefully, they will replace it this year. Laura has seen the ground—it was a bit like playing in a sand pit this year.

[116] **Rosemary Butler:** I was responsible for the rebuilding of that stadium and I know every pile that has gone into it and every argument that took place about it. Thank you for your statement. I know that loads of people want to ask questions.

[117] **Owen John Thomas:** How would you compare the standard and support of Newport with that for the teams in the Welsh premier division?

[118] **Mr Blight:** You must look at the attendance figures. When we had a young Manchester United lad playing in our academy—we support an academy—and Manchester United came down, we had a crowd of 4,300. A couple of scouts are involved with Newport County football club from Manchester United. What was wonderful was that 50 per cent to 60 per cent of the people who came were youths. They came to see their idols and if Manchester United or Fulham or any of the other teams wanted to come back down to Newport again, we would get a similar sort of attendance level. Our average gate is about 1,000 people. I have been to see Newport County play Carmarthen and only 200 turned up. I think that due to what the public of Newport and the fan base expect, wherever they go they will support football, but I do not think that we would see such support at the Welsh clubs as the standard is not quite as high, possibly.

[119] **Owen John Thomas:** I remember when Newport had two soccer teams, Lovells Athletic FC in the southern league and Newport County in the third division south. Those days have gone. Are you confident that you can turn things around?

[120] **Mr Blight:** They have to come back. That is the only reason that I am part of this board.

[121] **Owen John Thomas:** What about Lovells Athletic?

[122] **Mr Blight:** I will pass on that one at the moment.

[123] **Eleanor Burnham:** Before we looked at this review, I had no idea about the complexity of who is who and doing what, where, how and wherefore. It has quite baffled me. Now that we have a devolved Wales and so on—I am asking with tongue in cheek to an extent—would it not be better for everyone in Wales to play in the Welsh set-up? I realise that the big issue is that we have a global market, that is, we have Manchester United and Liverpool and so on, and then we have what is happening in Wales. It just seems baffling that people cannot get together and try to do their best under the banner of Wales. But who am I to be asking these rather tricky questions? You cannot, for instance, play in the European competitions. Is that not a big disadvantage because if you were playing in the Welsh structure you could? Do you have access to other funds that other Welsh teams cannot access? Why do you continue to play in exile?

[124] **Mr Blight:** The club's desire in 1988, as it is now, was to play in a much larger pyramid. I would like to see the winners of the Welsh league system being drawn into the English system. The Total Network Solutions Football Club team, which is heads above any other team that is playing on a Saturday afternoon and wins year after year, only has the opportunity of going into the UEFA Cup. I would have thought that would be a bit demoralising. You can get knocked out of the UEFA Cup. You have to go through a whole season just to be able to present yourself for one game, and if you get knocked out of that, the opportunities are gone. There is no next level; there is no second level in Welsh football.

[125] **Eleanor Burnham:** It is such a complex issue, I am quite baffled. You are obviously doing extremely well to have your fan base, but, surely, playing in the European Cup would increase the fan base, or am I asking a stupid question?

[126] **Mr Blight:** The objective is to play football on 40 consecutive Saturdays throughout the season, whereas the UEFA experience will be one game, or possibly two, because you are going to get knocked out of that competition at a fairly early stage, given the standard of football that is being played.

[127] **Eleanor Burnham:** What is the answer in Wales? How do we raise the game generally and increase the fan base? This is baffling me. In the old days, you would support your local team, but, nowadays, people in north Wales, for example, are more interested in Everton, Liverpool and Manchester United than in Wrexham. We are talking about the future and the youth. How do you secure their interest in a local club? You have a youth academy, as does Wrexham. What is the secret to raising the standard of the game in Wales? Is it just about funding, or is it a more complex issue?

[128] **Mr Blight:** I think that you will find that a lot of Welsh players leave the province because of the wages. We are on the border with England, and probably half my team is currently travelling over the bridge. As a result, we are drawing players in from English clubs, because we cannot get players of the required standard to come to us from clubs such as Merthyr Tydfil FC and Cwmbran Town AFC. The standard is not there to lift us into the system, so we have to look elsewhere.

[129] **Laura Anne Jones:** I have been lucky enough to watch a couple of games at Newport.

[130] **Mr Blight:** Not enough. [*Laughter.*]

[131] **Laura Anne Jones:** There are other parts of my constituency that I have to visit.

[132] There was clearly a high standard of play there, and you were all doing your best with the facilities that you have. It was impressive. I know that you do a lot with the youth side in Newport, and work with schools in the area to encourage youth football. What are you doing in terms of football for disabled people?

[133] You touched upon the issue of trying to retain talent in Wales and keeping Welsh footballers in Welsh football and in Newport and so on. What can be done to try to do that, apart from getting more sponsorship for the club and trying to increase the wages slightly so that people might choose Wales over Wigan, for example?

[134] **Mr Blight:** Our academy is now a target for a lot of youngsters, because for those who fail at Cardiff City FC, Swansea City FC or Wrexham AFC, we are the next level. So, they automatically come to us. We have soccer schools and we entice children to attend them so that we can pick out those who could advance further in the academy. We can encourage them to get there.

10.20 a.m.

[135] There are some great success stories. Tyrone Topper, who came to us recently, has been up to Fulham Football Club to be looked at. Swansea City has also been looking at various youth players over the last 12 months. We do not seem to sit in favour with Cardiff City, but that is historic. There is a lot of work going into promoting the youth team in Newport. This year, eight of the youth players from the academy played in the first team, whether through first-team selection or on the bench. We have to fund the whole of the academy, which is predominantly sponsored by Matt Southall of Acorn Recruitment—that is where his funding comes from.

[136] **Laura Anne Jones:** Is it hard to get sponsorship? As those guys are sitting next to you, do you think that broadcasting the games helps?

[137] **Mr Blight:** Everyone in Newport is thrilled to bits when they see us on television. We get very little mention in the *Western Mail*; the *South Wales Argus* is our main media coverage. It is great when we are in the FAW Cup, as the games are shown. However, it does not help when the television audience sees just several hundred at a ground on a windy and wet night down at Carmarthen Town FC. That kicks it into a bit of a cocked hat.

[138] **Val Lloyd:** I have read that one of the problems with football at all levels is hooliganism—and I use that in a generic sense. Do you have problems related to hooliganism at your club, and, if so, how do you deal with it? Laura touched on several questions that I was going to ask, and those questions were dealt with. However, with regard to your finances, you said earlier how pleased you were to get the broadcasting revenue, but how do you improve your club's finances? Do you have any ongoing schemes with supporters? I do not want any confidential information, just a general picture. Do you have any initiatives to engage with your supporters, particularly the communities that they come from?

[139] **Mr Blight:** Unfortunately, Newport County has suffered in the past from hooliganism. We had one instance this year in Bognor Regis, where around 100 fans chose to use the day to celebrate the unfortunate death of one of the fans years ago. It was not really nasty hooliganism; there was just a little brutishness on the day. We are well supported: there are usually a couple of hundred who go away on the buses, and there are no problems at all. However, on that particular day, it was rather sad to see that. It was quickly stamped out by the Bognor police, and we have tried to ensure that that situation will never happen again. However, I would blame Bognor, as it was warned that there might be an additional 100 fans who might want to have a drink before the game. It was the alcohol consumption that caused the problems on the day. It will not happen again, as we will not tolerate it. Sorry, what was your second question?

[140] **Val Lloyd:** It was about how you improve your club's finances.

[141] **Mr Blight:** Ninety per cent of our revenue comes from Newport businessmen encouraging other Newport businessmen to invest in the club. They get very little back from it. I secured a five-figure sum at the beginning of this week from someone who has taken an interest in what we are doing in Newport. That person wanted to offer us a sum of £10,000, which we can use as we wish. Between 70 per cent and 80 per cent of our income goes on the players' wages. We suffer because of the amount that we need to pay the players in order to keep them. I think that that is true across the board in football and rugby. So, in response to your question, this is done through sponsorship and direct introduction by the directors around the table. Only 20 per cent of Newport County's income comes through the gate.

[142] **Val Lloyd:** I also asked whether you have any initiatives to engage with your supporters and their communities, which would possibly increase the participation in many ways.

[143] **Mr Blight:** Yes. At my instigation last year, I felt that it was appropriate that the fan base should promote director attendance. We had always had one supporter-director, but we now have three, and I am sure that many of you around the table know Colin Everett, who is involved with the Assembly. Colin has made great inroads recently, acting as a glue between what was always a little bit of a closed shop with the directors, because they were always Newport financial businessman. With the supporter base coming in, we have a very vibrant clubhouse, which is very keen to make profits to put into the football club to raise the standard of the game that we play at Newport.

[144] **Rosemary Butler:** Are there any other questions? No? Thank you for that—it was very interesting. The academy at Hartridge has gone from strength to strength, and that is the way to encourage young children, who want to go there, not just to play football but to study. If you have anything to add that we have not asked you, please do so.

[145] **Mr Blight:** I have just one final thing. I went down to Treforest the other night to see the standard of the pitches, and I mentioned that you bought us a poor relation. The standard of pitches is poor in Newport; we have a stadium but it is predominantly a running track with a football ground in the centre of it, which does not always help on occasions, though the facilities are as good as we can expect at the moment at our level. You see the likes of Swansea and Llanelli promoting 15,000 and 20,000-seater grounds, and with Newport's new ambience and the river in between, there must be the future prospect of something along those lines. If you came on a tour of Newport pitches with me at the moment, Hartridge Academy's pitch is probably the best, although it is not floodlit to play winter football from October until March. We have no facilities, and we have just purchased motorway, generated lighting so that we can tow it to a pitch to give us lighting. The standards in Newport are quite poor compared with the superb facilities at Treforest.

[146] **Rosemary Butler:** I am disappointed to hear that. You need to make an appointment to meet the leader of Newport City Council to discuss these issues with him, because there are huge numbers of football pitches across Newport that are obviously at a lower level than yours, but which are well-drained, well-used and floodlit. Perhaps you should meet the leader, Bob Wright, to discuss the issue with him. Thank you.

[147] We will break for coffee now, and you are welcome to join us.

*Gohiriwyd y cyfarfod rhwng 10.28 a.m. a 10.50 a.m.
The meeting adjourned between 10.28 a.m. and 10.50 a.m.*

Adroddiad y Gweinidog The Minister's Report

[148] **Rosemary Butler:** Thank you for coming back so promptly. Before I ask the Minister to introduce his report, we congratulate him on his marriage—I hope that you will be very happy, Minister. I am not sure whether we should congratulate Mary or commiserate, but I hope that she will be very happy too. *[Laughter.]*

[149] **Alun Pugh:** Thank you for that, Chair.

[150] I will start with CyMAL—Museums, Archives and Libraries Wales. We had a good debate yesterday. I am not sure whether all Members are aware of the wealth of the online material that is now available. We are particularly interested in developing library services, not just at the point of presence in libraries, but also through remote access to services. I would be happy, either individually, or possibly as a group, to make available for committee members a presentation on those online services, particularly in the popular area of genealogy. I know that many people have a great interest in using online tools to research their family tree. I think that it is fair to say that we have a better online presence for our library and archive services in Wales than there is in other parts of the United Kingdom. Therefore, if Members would like to take advantage of that, I would be happy to set that up.

[151] At our last meeting, I talked about Artes Mundi. The exhibition closed on 7 May. Indications are that the attendance records were better than for the first show, with more than 8,000 visitors alone during the first half of April. The recipient of the second Artes Mundi prize was announced to an international audience at the National Museum, Cardiff on 31 March. A Finnish artist, Eija-Liisa Ahtila, was selected from the shortlist of eight artists, and she won the £40,000 prize. Some 3,213 people have taken part in educational visits of some sort, 100 schools booked visits—compared with 61 schools last time—and there were 645 takers for the special guided tours that were set up. The whole thing was very popular, with around 800 families attending the family workshops.

[152] On the Arts Council of Wales, Members will be aware that the arts council held its annual conference yesterday in Aberystwyth. I had the opportunity of opening the conference. I will draw Members' attention to two matters.

[153] First, I have received literally hundreds of letters regarding *Jerry Springer—The Opera* at the Wales Millennium Centre. Members will know that the WMC is directly funded by the Assembly Government. I have received far more letters on this topic than on any other topic in the three years that I have been Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport. These are not simply names on a petition—these are individual letters, not generated by word-processors, but hand-written letters in many cases. I know that many people have grave reservations about this show, and some people will be genuinely offended by it, and we take those comments seriously. However, I restate that, as Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport, it is not my role to get involved in individual artistic decisions by individual artistic companies. However, I would ask organisations to think carefully about the impact on the feelings not just of Christian religious groups, but the many religions and faiths that we have in Wales.

[154] Secondly, I was able to announce substantial additional investment in English-language theatre. We all know that Clwyd Theatr Cymru was designated with national performing status by the arts council a few years ago, and it produces some excellent work. However, we all know that there are significant weaknesses in English-language theatre, particularly in south Wales, where most of our people live.

[155] We have some interesting evidence from the arts council's participation survey, which has been commissioned, and from the Boyden report, which many of you will have read in detail. An interesting model is emerging in Scotland for its national theatre. So, there is a lot of evidence and many developments around, hamstrung by a lack of finance to take this on.

[156] So, yesterday, I announced a funding package of an additional £0.5 million a year, specifically to support English-language theatre. I have tasked the Arts Council for Wales with looking at this evidence base that I was talking about a minute ago, and with bringing forward recommendations to me for the most effective deployment of that investment. Obviously, I want to have meetings with Dai Smith, the interim chair of the arts council, his council colleagues and staff about the detail of how we take that forward. This will lead to a significant uplift in the quality and quantity of work that is seen on Welsh stages.

[157] **Rosemary Butler:** How much was that?

[158] **Alun Pugh:** It is £0.5 million, which will be available over the next financial year.

[159] **Rosemary Butler:** Over the next financial year?

[160] **Alun Pugh:** Yes, the coming financial year; we are in the middle of one now.

[161] **Rosemary Butler:** Over one year?

[162] **Alun Pugh:** It is in next year's budget.

[163] **Rosemary Butler:** Yes.

[164] **Alun Pugh:** After that, of course, there will be an election next May. It would be my intention to continue this investment, but the people of Wales will judge whether we have a new Government with the election, and, obviously, budgetary priorities will be a matter for future Assembly Governments. However, the money is in the system for the next financial year. It would obviously be our intention to continue that investment.

[165] **Owen John Thomas:** Is it for 2007-08?

[166] **Alun Pugh:** Yes, the next financial year.

[167] **Rosemary Butler:** That is excellent news; I had thought that it might be over two to three years.

[168] **Alun Pugh:** It is in the budget for next year, all in one big dollop.

[169] **Rosemary Butler:** That is great. That is for drama in south Wales?

[170] **Alun Pugh:** It is to support English-language theatre in Wales. ACW has been tasked to come through and report its views and recommendations to me about the best way of deploying that investment. I have said that Clwyd Theatr Cymru does a great job in north Wales and, of course, tours to south Wales, but we know that there are gaps in the quality and quantity of provision on stages in Wales, and many people tell me that it is particularly acute in the south. There are a number of potential ingredients in this package. For example, we have some good production facilities at Swansea. There is certainly no lack of imagination and creativity in the Welsh theatre sector. There is no question about that. However, in terms of the detail, we will be working that up over the next couple of months. We will give further reports to the culture committee later in the year. However, I was able to say to the sector, 'Have no fear; the money is in the system for the next financial year'.

[171] Yn olaf, hoffwn ddweud rhywbeth ynglyn â'r iaith Gymraeg. Yn 2004, cyhoeddodd y Prif Weinidog fanylion uno Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg â Llywodraeth y Cynulliad. Yr ydym eisiau creu cymdeithas ddwyieithog yng Nghymru, yr ydym eisiau gweld mwy a mwy o siaradwyr Cymraeg, ac yr ydym eisiau gwella atebolrwydd democrataidd. Felly, ar hyn o bryd, yr ydym yn ymgynghori ynghylch y manylion, ond nid am yr egwyddor. Yn y ddogfen hon, yr ydym yn ymgynghori ynghylch cyngor i'r Gweinidog. Mae'n hanfodol inni gadw hynny. Mae'r ymgynghoriad am ddyfodol staff Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg a rôl y dyfarnydd, sef y swydd newydd a grëwyd. Yr ydym hefyd yn ymgynghori am drefniadau dros dro, felly byddaf yn hapus i glywed barn aelodau'r pwyllgor hwn. Bydd dadl yn y Siambr nes ymlaen yn yr haf.

Finally, I would like to say a few words on the Welsh language. In 2004, the First Minister announced the details of the merger of the Welsh Language Board and the Assembly Government. We want to create a bilingual society in Wales, we want to see more and more Welsh speakers and we want to improve democratic accountability. So, at present, we are carrying out a consultation on the details, but not on the principle. In this document, we are consulting on advice for the Minister. It is crucial that we keep that. We are consulting on the future of Welsh Language Board staff, and the role of the dyfarnydd, which is the new post that has been created. We are also consulting on the interim arrangements, so I would be pleased to hear the views of committee members. There will be a debate in the chamber later on in the summer.

11.00 a.m.

[172] **Rosemary Butler:** Are you going to come back with a report on that additional funding?

[173] **Alun Pugh:** Yes.

[174] **Eleanor Burnham:** Ar yr ymgynghoriad ar uno Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg gydag adrannau yn y Llywodraeth, beth yn union yr ydych yn ymgynghori arno? Beth fydd yn digwydd ynglyn ag ymgynghori ar y dyfarnydd? A fyddwch yn newid eich polisi os bydd yr ymgynghoriad yn awgrymu y dylech wneud hynny?

Eleanor Burnham: On the consultation on merging the Welsh Language Board with Government departments, what exactly are you consulting on? What will happen regarding consultation on the dyfarnydd? Will you change your policy if the consultation suggests that you should do so?

[175] I have a question on funding for English theatre.

[176] A fydd rhywbeth tebyg i'r theatr yn yr iaith Gymraeg ar gael? Os na fydd hynny'n digwydd tan y flwyddyn nesaf, pryd fydd hi'n bosibl gwario'r arian hwn, o ystyried y bydd etholiadau'r Cynulliad ym mis Mai? Pam nad ydym yn cael yr arian hwn i'w fuddsoddi neu wario eleni?

Will something similar to theatre through the medium of Welsh be available? If that does not happen until next year, when will it be possible to spend this money, given that there will be an Assembly election in May? Why can we not have this funding to invest or spend this year?

[177] Ymddiheuraf am y ffaith nad oeddwn yn bresennol yn y ddadl ddoe; bu i mi fynychu angladd rhywun a oedd yn agos imi.

I apologise for not being present at the debate yesterday; I was attending the funeral of a close friend.

[178] **Alun Pugh:** Yr ydym wedi cyhoeddi manylion ynglyn â'r uno yn y ddogfen hon. Mae'r ddogfen ar gael ar bapur a thros y we. Mae ar gael i bawb. Edrychaf ymlaen at ein cyfarfodydd gyda'r cyhoedd. Bydd cyfarfod ym Mangor nos Wener ac yr ydym wedi cyhoeddi ar y we fanylion ynglyn â chyfarfodydd pellach. Yr ydym yn cyfarfod yn Nghaerfyrddin, Casnewydd a Choleg Glannau Dyfrdwy, a bydd cyfarfod Fforwm Iaith yn Abertawe yn fuan. Felly, mae gennym lawer o gyfleoedd i gael sgwrs ynglyn â'r uno.

Alun Pugh: We have published details of the merger in this document. The document is available in print or online. It is available to everyone. I look forward to our meetings with the public. There will be a meeting in Bangor on Friday evening and we have published on the internet details of further meetings. We will meet in Carmarthen, Newport and Deeside College, and there will be a Fforwm Iaith meeting in Swansea soon. Therefore, we have many opportunities to discuss the merger.

[179] As far as the theatre is concerned, the reason that we cannot do it this year is because the Assembly has voted on the budget. All the budgets have been set. We have all, collectively, been through that process, and even if we could suddenly magic £0.5 million together—and of course we cannot—you could not simply say, 'Well, here is £0.5 million', and just throw it at the problem, saying 'Go and do some more theatre'. We need to have a proper process. That is why I will value the expert advice of colleagues in the Arts Council of Wales. Dai Smith will have a major input into this.

[180] You represent north Wales, Eleanor, and we in north Wales are familiar with some terrific Clwyd Theatr Cymru productions, but colleagues who live in the south of Wales do not often have access to the quality and quantity of live theatre that they could. So, I think that we have a bigger problem in the south than we do in the north. We have this production capacity in Swansea, and we have had the Boyden report, which was a helpful document, and we need to do a bit more work on that. We now have the detail of the ACW participation survey and, as I have said, we have a huge amount of creativity here in Wales. So, we have all the ingredients in place and we will say to the sector, 'Look, there is £0.5 million in the next financial year. We want to have a discussion in the next couple of months to sort out the best way of spending that additional investment'. I think that that is a better way forward than simply rushing at it.

[181] **Eleanor Burnham:** A gaf ddod i mewn yn gyflym?

Eleanor Burnham: May I come in quickly?

[182] **Rosemary Butler:** Other people want to come in, so it will have to be short.

[183] **Eleanor Burnham:** I am not happy with the Minister's response. What is the point of announcing a £0.5 million one-off payment to the arts council and raising people's expectations when he now says that it is not available until 2007-08? It is just pure politicking.

[184] The other issue is about the *dogfen Gymraeg* for people who do not have access to the website. Given that people listen and watch what we are doing, will you remind us of the name of that particular *dogfen*? I am not happy that you did not answer my question about English-language theatre either. We are delighted that the money is available, if it ever comes about, but what about Welsh-language theatre?

[185] **Rosemary Butler:** This item is about English-language theatre; that is why.

[186] **Eleanor Burnham:** I am just asking whether a similar amount is available for Welsh-language theatre.

<p>[187] Alun Pugh: Yr ydym wedi buddsoddi yn Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru, ac mae'r prosiect yn gweithio'n dda iawn ar hyn o bryd. Fodd bynnag, mae gennym broblem gyda cyfrwng Saesneg, a dyna pam yr ydym yn buddsoddi yn y prosiect hwn. Yr oedd cyfarfod cyngor y celfyddydau yn Aberystwyth ddoe yn hapus iawn gyda'r cyhoeddiad.</p>	<p>Alun Pugh: We have invested in Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru, the national Welsh-language theatre company, and the project is progressing very well at present. However, we have a problem with English-medium theatre, so that is why we are investing in this particular project. The arts council meeting at Aberystwyth yesterday was extremely happy with the announcement.</p>
<p>[188] O ran y ddogfen, dyma'r ymgynghoriad gan Lywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru ar yr uno â Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg.</p>	<p>Regarding the document, it is the Welsh Assembly Government's consultation document on the merger with the Welsh Language Board.</p>
<p>[189] In English, it is called, 'Making the Connections: Delivering Better Services for Wales'. There is a clear link to it in the culture section of the Assembly Government's website at www.wales.gov.uk. It is widely distributed, but if a Member or anyone else wants a copy, they just need to write to our publications unit and we will be delighted to send one out. Copies of the document will also be available at public consultations—there is one coming up in Bangor on Friday night. Another will be held in Carmarthen on 18 May at Trinity College, at the University of Wales, Newport on 24 May, and in the new community theatre, which is part of Deeside College, on 25 May. So there is plenty of opportunity for the public to have their say on the issue, and we also have the Fforwm Iaith coming up in the National Waterfront Museum in Swansea.</p>	
<p>[190] Owen John Thomas: Yr wyf wedi derbyn llawer o gwynion am <i>Jerry Springer—The Opera</i>. Nid wyf am anghytuno â'r egwyddor hyd braich, a chytunaf gyda'r Gweinidog ar y pwynt hwnnw. Fodd bynnag, yr wyf yn siomedig fod Canolfan Mileniwm Cymru wedi penderfynu dangos sioe fel hon, sy'n tanseilio daioni, mewn ffordd. Mae'n gwneud sbri am ben yr hyn sy'n dda, ac yn cefnogi pobl i fod yn ddrwg, fel petai. Ni chredaf ei fod yn adeiladol o gwbl.</p>	<p>Owen John Thomas: I have received numerous complaints about <i>Jerry Springer—The Opera</i>. I do not disagree with the arm's-length principle, and I agree with the Minister on that point. However, I am disappointed that Wales Millennium Centre has decided to stage such a show, which undermines all that is good, in a way. It mocks what is good, and consequently encourages people to be bad, as it were. I do not think that it is in any way constructive.</p>
<p>[191] Yr wyf yn croesawu'r arian ar gyfer theatr cyfrwng Saesneg, yn arbennig yn y de achos dyna lle mae 73 y cant o'r boblogaeth yn byw.</p>	<p>I welcome the funding for English-medium theatre, particularly in south Wales, because that is where 73 per cent of the population lives.</p>

<p>[192] Nid yw yn yr adroddiad, ond mae cerddoriaeth yn cyffwrdd â phob rhan o ddiwylliant, ac felly mae ganddi ran fawr i'w chwarae. Yr wyf yn gobeithio y byddwch yn cael gair â'r Gweinidog addysg am y ffaith bod yr arian a ddosberthir i ysgolion i hybu cerddoriaeth wedi mynd i rywle arall, ac nid oes arian ar gyfer cerddoriaeth yn y gyllideb fel y dylai fod. Gobeithio y byddwch yn gwneud rhywbeth am hynny.</p>	<p>It is not included in the report, but music overlaps all aspects of culture, and so has a major role to play. I hope that you will speak with the education Minister about the fact that the funding allocated to schools to promote music has been directed to other purposes, and so there is no funding for music in the budget as there should be. I hope that you will do something about that.</p>
<p>[193] Yr ydych yn cyfeirio at Gemau'r Gymanwlad, a dywedwch fod tîm Cymru wedi gwneud yn dda iawn eleni. Byddai'n ddiddorol gweld sut mae'n cymharu â gemau 2002. Nid oes yn rhaid ichi roi eich ateb heddiw, Weinidog, ond byddwn yn hapus i'w dderbyn rywbryd.</p>	<p>You refer to the Commonwealth Games, and you say that the Welsh team has done very well this year. It would be interesting to see how it compares with the 2002 games. You do not have to give your answer today, Minister, but I would be pleased to see it at some point.</p>
<p>[194] Y prif bwynt yr wyf am ymdrin ag ef yw bwriad y Llywodraeth i lyncu Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg, serch y penderfyniad democrataidd a wnaed gan y Cynulliad i atal y broses nes ein bod yn hapus bod eich cynigion ar gyfer y bwrdd yn dderbyniol gan y Cynulliad cyfan. Nid oes cig ar esgyrn yr adroddiad hwn. O dan bwynt 8.1, yr ydych yn sôn am ddyfarnydd, ond pa fath o ddyfarnydd? Pa bwerau sydd mewn golwg i'r dyfarnydd? Pa annibyniaeth fydd gan y dyfarnydd?</p>	<p>The main point that I wish to address is the Government's intention to swallow up the Welsh Language Board, despite the Assembly's democratic decision to delay the process until we are happy that your proposals for the board are acceptable to the entire Assembly. This report has no meat on the bones. Under point 8.1, you talk about a dyfarnydd, but what type of dyfarnydd? What powers are being considered for the dyfarnydd? What independence will the dyfarnydd have?</p>
<p>11.10 a.m.</p>	
<p>[195] A fydd y pwerau yn golygu ei fod yn gallu gorfodi awdurdodau i wneud pethau er mwyn sicrhau ein bod yn creu Cymru ddwyieithog? Beth am hawliau pobl wrth ymdrin â chwmnïau cyfleustodau fel Nwy Prydain a Swalec ac yn y blaen? Mae'r ffordd y maent yn trin yr iaith ar hyn o bryd yn warthus ac nid wyf yn gweld dim yn y ddogfen sy'n sôn am gryfhau hawliau pobl.</p>	<p>Will the powers mean that he could force authorities to act to ensure that we create a bilingual Wales? What about people's rights when dealing with utilities companies, such as British Gas and Swalec? The way that they treat the language at the moment is a disgrace and I do not see anything in the document that mentions the strengthening of people's rights.</p>

[196] Beth am hawl pobl i gael addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg? Dylai hynny fod yn hawl, ond nid yw'n hawl ar hyn o bryd. Yr oedd llanast yng Nghaerdydd yr wythnos diwethaf gan nad oedd arolwg wedi ei wneud yn gyntaf i ddarganfod beth yn union yw'r galw am addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg. Yr oedd pobl yn cecru ar ei gilydd ac yr oedd y cyngor wedi llwyddo i rannu Caerdydd yn deilchion. Yr wyf eisiau i chi, Weinidog, ymdrin â phroblemau fel hynny, fel pwerau'r dyfarnydd a hawliau pobl.

What about people's right to receive a Welsh-medium education? That should be a right, but it is not at the moment. There was a shambles in Cardiff last week, because a review had not been undertaken to discover the extent of the demand for Welsh-medium education in advance. People were arguing with each other and the council had succeeded only in dividing Cardiff completely. I want you, Minister, to deal with problems like that, like the powers of the dyfarnydd and people's rights.

[197] Mae'n bwysig bod yr uned iaith, os caiff ei ffurfio, yn cael ei ffurfio o fewn Swyddfa'r Prif Weinidog. Gyda phob parch i chi, Weinidog, eich adran chi yw'r lleiaf, gyda chyllideb o 1 y cant o holl gyllideb y Cynulliad. Mae'n bwysig bod yr uned iaith yn cael ei lleoli mewn swyddfa lle mae gweision sifil sydd â digon o glowt i gael y penaethiaid polisi eraill yn y Cynulliad i dderbyn yr hyn y mae'r uned yn ceisio ei wneud i hyrwyddo'r iaith. Mae'n amlwg bod llawer o waith i'w wneud ar hyn. Mae digon o amser wedi mynd heibio yn awr ac yr wyf yn siomedig iawn ein bod wedi cael adroddiad mor denau â hwn ar bwynt mor bwysig.

It is important that the language unit, if it is set up, is set up as part of the Office of the First Minister. With all due respect to you, Minister, your department is the smallest, with a budget of just 1 per cent of the Assembly's total budget. It is important that the language unit is located in an office where civil servants have enough clout to get other heads of policy in the Assembly to understand what the unit is trying to do to promote the Welsh language. It is evident that there is a great deal of work to do on this. Enough time has passed now and I am very disappointed that we have had such a slim report as this to deal with such an important point.

[198] **Alun Pugh:** Let us start with *Jerry Springer—The Opera*. As far as that programming decision is concerned, you said that you were disappointed about that decision, but I am neither disappointed nor supportive of it. As Minister, I have to be entirely neutral.

[199] **Owen John Thomas:** Yr wyt yn eistedd ar y ffens.

Owen John Thomas: You are sitting on the fence.

[200] **Alun Pugh:** I was very careful about what I said. I said that many people have been offended by this. I was very careful to say that I am neither disappointed nor supportive. I have taken no position on this, as it is not my responsibility as culture Minister to get involved in individual programming decisions. I have been entirely consistent on this throughout.

[201] As far as music education is concerned, I think that you are familiar with the background of the grant and how it has now been passported through to local authorities in terms of their rate support grant. That is entirely consistent with the Assembly's policy on special grants, which has been used over the years.

[202] We will certainly send you a report on the differences between the Commonwealth Games in Manchester and the success story of Melbourne. Obviously, it is far easier to get to Manchester than to Melbourne and, as a Government, we made a major investment to support the infrastructure of the team. Despite the far greater logistical difficulties of getting a Welsh team to the other side of the planet, I know that the athletes were overwhelmingly supportive of the new management team, and I would like to take this opportunity to put on the record my thanks for a job well done to the new management team of the games.

[203] On the Welsh language questions that you raised, as far as the dyfarnydd's role is concerned, I want to be clear that this is not a final position paper, but a consultative document—a *dogfen ymgynghorol*. We want to hear people's views. It is entirely possible, as a result of the consultation, that there will be some refining. At the moment, we are looking for the dyfarnydd to perform the adjudication function, which I currently perform. We are looking for the dyfarnydd to oversee the preparation, implementation and monitoring of the Assembly Government's Welsh language scheme. There may be an issue about the corporate scheme of the parliamentary body—we would be interested in views on that, although it is not a matter for me, of course. We are looking to the dyfarnydd to oversee the preparation, implementation and monitoring of Crown bodies' Welsh language schemes. Now, there are two views on this. Some people believe that there is a strong case for putting public bodies and Crown bodies together within Government, while other people take the view that they are different, they have no adjudication function, and it is better to put that out with the dyfarnydd. We have included a view in this, but it is not our final view as we are really interested in the pros and cons, and we will certainly take close heed of the consultation responses on that one.

[204] There is an issue with regard to complaints. If people are not happy about the way in which a public body or Crown body deals with them through the medium of Welsh, at the moment, many of them are not clear about the best way to take the matter up. Normally, of course, you would take it up with the body itself, then you can go to the Welsh Language Board and, eventually, under the current system, the matter would end up on my desk for adjudication. However, people are not clear about those details. We think that there is an important role for the dyfarnydd in signposting complaints and acting as a front door for the complaints system, if you like, but we need to be careful that we do not take people too far down that road in the handling of such complaints, because we would not want to compromise the ultimate function of adjudication. We think that the dyfarnydd should have an important role to play in advising the Government, and certainly, drawing on experience from such areas as CyMAL within the department and what we are doing in education, for example, we need expert challenge and advice. There is no question about that, and we think that the dyfarnydd would be a good person to do that.

[205] There is a lot of meat on the bones of this document, but it is a consultation document, and not a White Paper. So, we will have this conversation with the public, we will bring the results back to Plenary as part of the ‘Iaith Pawb’ debate and process before we break for the summer, and then there will be a further consultation on the detail of the regulations, and a final Plenary vote before Christmas. So, Plenary will have the last word on this matter, and I have been very careful indeed to ensure that nothing that I do contravenes Plenary resolutions—we do not do that. Sometimes, Plenary resolutions are not the best drafted pieces of work in the world, but I always take legal advice on precisely what they mean, and I never, ever move beyond what my legal advisers tell me would be proper in the light of those Plenary resolutions. However, this is a *dogfen ymgynghorol* and not the final word. We are really interested in people’s views. At the last meeting, I said that I was happy to have further meetings with party spokesmen or with any member of this committee on a one-to-one basis. We have had, as you know, informal meetings, Owen John, at the pre-consultation stage—before we even got to the formal consultation—and we moved our view as a result of those very helpful informal meetings, and we are prepared to do more of the same.

[206] **Rosemary Butler:** That is a very helpful offer, and if anybody who wants to take this matter further, then the Minister is available. You also have the opportunity to put in writing any observations to the Minister and other Members. In the second half of the meeting, we have the Welsh Language Board coming to discuss this issue, so I would like to move on to other topics now, if I may.

[207] **Val Lloyd:** I have two brief issues, Chair. The first is that I do not know what a ‘dyfarnydd’ is, Minister. I do not hear any translation of it on the translation equipment. I hear a list of roles, and so I can make a best guess, but I never hear or see written what it is. I am a non-Welsh speaker, but I do listen carefully to the translation. I just thought that that point needed to be raised.

[208] Secondly, I would like to make a positive comment about the Festival of Muslim Cultures. I am very impressed indeed by the range of topics, by their breadth and depth, their diversity as well as the diversity of the venues. I am very much looking forwards to it. I am disappointed only in that I do not think that I have seen that much publicity for it yet. Perhaps I could have an assurance that it will be well publicised.

[209] **Alun Pugh:** Thank you for your support and comments about that festival and the festival programme. It is important, and we should celebrate it.

11.20 a.m.

[210] I am sorry about not translating ‘dyfarnydd’ into English. I am looking around the table at people who speak far better Welsh than I do. I believe that it is derived from the Welsh word ‘barn’, which means ‘opinion’. Effectively, it is an adjudicator-cum-referee-cum-regulator. That would be my translation. The job is defined as making the final adjudication on alleged breaches but we see a slightly wider role for it, so the translation is ‘an adjudicator-regulator’, but it is also a bit of an adviser.

[211] **Laura Anne Jones:** I am looking forward to seeing your proposals for the next stage of ‘Climbing Higher’, which you have noted in your Minister’s report. We need some more ambitious proposals as we still have a long way to go to get sport up to standard in Wales. It is positive and fantastic to see point 3.6 on your transport schemes for rural areas in particular in terms of getting people out to the facilities that we have. We need more facilities in our communities, but it is good to see that we are trying to do something about getting people to use those that we already have.

[212] On cricket, what representations do you make on our behalf to the England and Wales Cricket Board about getting funding from it so that we are able to get our fair share in Wales, in terms of some of its initiatives that are going out to schools and so on? Also, I do not know whether you know about this, but it recently had an initiative on urban cricket. I thought that it might be good to follow that up, especially with the cricket season kicking off now.

[213] **Rosemary Butler:** You cannot kick off in cricket. [*Laughter.*]

[214] **Laura Anne Jones:** Perhaps I should be saying ‘batting off’. It would be good to make the most of the buzz that will no doubt support the Flintoffs and Simon Joneses of this world, although he is injured. Also, what are we doing to make the most of the World Cup fever that will no doubt be spreading throughout the country?

[215] **Alun Pugh:** We will be launching an action plan around ‘Climbing Higher’, which is the next stage of the process, before we break for the summer. You will be aware that there is a substantial uplift in the budget for sport, which comes in in the next financial year. We will be publishing the details, which will include the ramping up of Dragon Sport, which currently takes place in primary schools, into secondary schools and there will be a whole range of events and additional support. We will publish the document before we break for recess and there will be an opportunity for a full Plenary debate on sports policy before we break, so there will be plenty of opportunities to engage in detailed discussion on that.

[216] As you say, we are only a few weeks away from the start of the World Cup. Once again, there is intense disappointment that Wales did not qualify but we know that a Welshman will play a major part in the English team and would it not be great to see a Welshman score the winning goal in a World Cup final, in a team managed by a Swede? Such is the international nature of football these days.

[217] We have had discussions with the cricketing authorities. It will be a feature of Dragon Sport and I anticipate a growing interest in cricket, especially with the news that it looks as though some major international cricket will be staged in Sophia Gardens. I understand that there was what many people regard as a very positive planning decision—not a matter for me of course—in the last couple of days.

[218] **Eleanor Burnham:** May I ask for clarification on ‘Climbing Higher’? There is a point that I do not understand here.

[219] **Rosemary Butler:** You have asked four questions already today. There are other people here.

[220] **Eleanor Burnham:** Well, we are here to discuss—

[221] **Rosemary Butler:** We are here to discuss the timetable. You will get three questions only next time around.

[222] **Eleanor Burnham:** Sorry, Chair, but—

[223] **Rosemary Butler:** You can come in very briefly.

[224] **Eleanor Burnham:** It is an incomplete sentence. Under bullet point 3 of point 3.5 of the ‘Climbing Higher’ action plan, it says:

‘the free swimming initiative, whilst not overlooking’,

[225] and that is it. I want to know what that means.

[226] **Alun Pugh:** It says:

‘whilst not overlooking the development of sport and the further raising of standards’.

[227] There is an extra bullet point in the report. The sentence continues.

[228] **Rosemary Butler:** There are too many bullet points.

[229] **Eleanor Burnham:** Thank you, Chair.

[230] **Rosemary Butler:** Thank you, Eleanor. I have a couple of points to make. I think that the possibility that one of the Ashes matches could be played in Cardiff is phenomenal. I know that Laura has always been interested in cricket, and she has done some work on that. If you want to provide a note on that, Laura, that might be helpful.

[231] On the Festival of Muslim Cultures, this is a fantastic step forward. However, I could not understand how the Welsh Assembly Government is involved. Are you funding it? Although Val is very pleased with the spread of events, I cannot see that anything is happening in Newport, where there is a large Muslim community. I am not sure who is organising it and how much the Government is putting in.

[232] I am very pleased about the £0.5 million for English-language theatre. Hopefully, we will get not just the quality but a spread of different companies that will be performing on the new stages in south and west Wales in particular.

[233] On ‘Climbing Higher’, it might be helpful if we could have a where-we-are-at paper for the next meeting or the meeting after that, Minister.

[234] **Alun Pugh:** I am happy to provide you with the ‘Climbing Higher’ details. We are a few weeks away from the publication of the action plan. I know that committee members will be very interested in that, because it will detail how we intend to spend the substantial additional investment that we are making in sport. It is very much focused, not so much on elite sport, as important as that is, but on the mass-participation agenda and health.

[235] I will get you the details of the financial support for the Festival of Muslim Cultures. There may well be some additional support coming through social justice budgets, to which I do not have access. I will speak with the other ministry about that and get you the details.

11.27 a.m.

**Yr Adroddiad ar Ddawns: Datganiad y Gweinidog
The Dance Report: The Minister’s Statement**

[236] **Rosemary Butler:** We now have a statement from the Minister.

[237] **Alun Pugh:** I fully agree with the importance of the review of dance in Wales and the committee’s report, and I will be monitoring the process closely. I have asked the Arts Council of Wales to develop a national strategy for dance in Wales. I understand that a date has been set for the first meeting of the national dance forum, which is Monday 26 June. A paper on the dance strategy will be considered by the forum then, as will proposals for commissioning new music for dance.

[238] I wish to refer to some financial details. I have set aside an additional £125,000 for the arts council in 2006-07, and £250,000 in 2007-08, to take forward the committee's recommendations on dance and its report on community regeneration. This money will consolidate existing dance provision in Wales and stabilise many of our dance organisations. In future, this new funding will help to place dance on a par with other art forms, and enable the delivery of the key elements of the new strategy.

[239] Dance is an important art form, but it can also be pretty tough physical exercise and it has substantial potential for health and wider social benefits. I would like to see it promoted in our communities. That is why I would expect the arts council to work very closely with its colleagues in the Sports Council for Wales to develop dance as an activity.

[240] I have set aside £125,000 in 2006-07 and £250,000 in 2007-08 to enable the sports council to make local community facilities suitable for physical activity, and, through community enterprise grants, to support individuals and community groups to provide and promote activity opportunities including, I hope, dance. I expect that the sports council's initiative with the Heritage Lottery Fund, which is about new uses for old spaces, will be an important contributor to this. I would like to see the extra funding being used to lever in investment by others in developing sport and physical activity as a tool for community regeneration.

11.30 a.m.

[241] I would like to talk a little about grants for talented young dancers. Individual training grants of up to £2,000 are available, via the Arts Council of Wales, for dancers to pursue further training. In addition, talented dancers and choreographers may apply for the 'Creative Wales' award, which has a ceiling of £25,000. In recent years, there has been a growth in the number of dance applicants, which I know that committee members will welcome. For example, two years ago, Cai Tomos, a talented, up-and-coming young dancer and choreographer was awarded £10,000 to enable him to establish himself as a choreographer and to set up his own company. Some Welsh education authorities and local councils have bursaries, and people also have access to private trusts, and educational establishments often make bursaries available each year for talented students. I am pleased that educational opportunities for dance students are now available in Wales. There is a one-year full-time course at Rubicon Dance, and a newly-established three-year degree course run by the University of Wales Institute of Cardiff. I hope that what we propose in the strategy, when it appears, will help to develop the potential of dance as an artform, and as a physical activity from which people in Wales can benefit.

[242] **Rosemary Butler:** Before we move on to questions, I would like to clarify something. You said £125,000 and then £250,000 for the arts council, and then you said the same figures for the sports council. We are, therefore, talking about two lots of money.

[243] **Alun Pugh:** Yes.

[244] **Rosemary Butler:** Thank you, that is helpful.

[245] On the grants for talented young dancers, are the grants of up to £2,000 for further training to enable students to go to dance schools or colleges, or is that for continuing professional development once they have qualified? I asked the question during the debate, and I think that you suggested that the money for students to go to college would come from Jane Davidson's budget.

[246] **Alun Pugh:** I will have to get you the precise details of the eligibility schemes, but these awards come from this portfolio.

[247] **Rosemary Butler:** You said that it is for further training, which means continuing professional development.

[248] **Alun Pugh:** I will make absolutely sure of the NVQ levels or whatever and I will get you the precise details of what type of dance training qualifies, and whether there are any exclusions.

[249] **Rosemary Butler:** It would be very helpful, because I know that Members are being approached by students who have a place in a college and who are looking for grant aid. It would be helpful if we could have that information soon. Val, did you want to come in?

[250] **Val Lloyd:** No, thank you. I was just nodding in agreement.

[251] **Rosemary Butler:** Okay.

[252] **Eleanor Burnham:** Why do we not have this paper or the details that you have just read to us? Where is it? I am confused, as was the Chair.

[253] **Rosemary Butler:** I was not confused; I was asking for clarification.

[254] **Eleanor Burnham:** A sum of £125,000 will be given to the arts council in 2006-07, with an additional £50,000 in 2007-08.

[255] **Rosemary Butler:** The figure was £250,000.

[256] **Eleanor Burnham:** Was it £250,000? If we had it on paper, we would not be wasting our time. You accused me of wasting time when I asked a question, but I think this is a thorough waste of time.

[257] **Rosemary Butler:** Can you just ask your questions to the Minister please, Eleanor? Minister, Eleanor is asking if we can have this on paper, please.

[258] **Alun Pugh:** Members have already had this on paper, as it has appeared on previous financial statements. I know that there are lots of numbers on the financial statements that we put out, but you have received these. The details are in the budget documentation.

[259] **Eleanor Burnham:** If I am allowed a last question, Chair, I would like, on paper, exactly what the Minister has said this morning so that we can go away and peruse the matter and question further.

[260] **Owen John Thomas:** It should be a part of the agenda. It is not, and that makes it difficult for us to follow it and to have read it beforehand. I think that that is the point that Eleanor was making, and I think that it is a fair point. We do not want to sit here like children listening to someone reading to us for 10 minutes; that is wholly unnecessary.

[261] **Eleanor Burnham:** I could have asked another question if we had had the information.

[262] **Alun Pugh:** All I will say, Chair, is that I was working from my speaking notes. The figures should not come as a huge surprise, because they have already been published in our budget statements and commentary, so I am not hitting Members with brand new financial information. The detail of what I have said and an amplification of the speaking note will be available in the Record of Proceedings in the next couple of days, but there is no new financial information here. It has been previously published on record.

[263] **Rosemary Butler:** The point is that is that the information has not been pulled out like this before, and that you have given us some more information on it. So it would be useful if you could give us a reminder of where and how the money will be spent. Are there any more questions? I see that there are not.

[264] It is very pleasing that you are taking on our dance review, Minister. We feel that you have responded quite well, and the fact there is now training for dance at Rubicon and also UWIC is interesting. However, the majority of dance schools are in England, and we must ensure that our talented students can afford to go. I know that you have come back to committee today because the protocol states that you must report back within a certain length of time, but it would be helpful for the committee if there could be a bit more space so that we can see things being delivered on the ground, and you can report back to us on what has happened. So I request that we have an update in about six months' time on what has happened with the money that has been allocated.

[265] **Alun Pugh:** Absolutely, Chair. To reiterate the document trail, a formal written statement has been made by the Assembly Government in response to the committee review, which Members will have received. There is a lot of detail in the remit letters that have gone out to the arts council, for example, which specifically mention the dance strategy. Members will have also received them. In terms of our budget papers and commentary, the figures were already published in there, and Members will also have received that. This is a little consolidation that pulls these elements together, and that will be published in the Record, but I am not hitting Members cold with lots of financial information to which they had not been previously privileged. I would not do that to members of the committee.

[266] **Owen John Thomas:** Surely the point is that we are supposed to be on item 5, but there has been an item put in between items 4 and 5 for which we do not have papers.

[267] **Rosemary Butler:** We are on item 5. The Minister is only reading his notes about dance, and he is talking about dance funding and also money for the Sport Council for Wales to encourage people to take up dance, sport-wise. It would be helpful if we could have a consolidation paper, Minister, to show that the Welsh Assembly Government is taking on board our recommendations as a committee, and putting money where we have asked it to do so. Are there any other questions on the report? It has already been before Plenary, and that is why it would be helpful to have a bit more space between Plenary and the final report. It would be helpful if we were to receive that in six months' time, Minister.

11.38 a.m.

**Y Papur Gwyn ar Ddarlledu: Ymateb y Pwyllgor
The Broadcasting White Paper: Committee Response**

[268] **Rosemary Butler:** We have had a number of interesting discussions, debates and evidence-gathering sessions on this issue, and we must respond to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport White Paper. You have had the paper for a few days. Are there any comments on it?

[269] **Eleanor Burnham:** I am concerned about the bit on digital audio broadcasting, the availability of Radio Cymru and Radio Wales, the Office of Communications' great unease about the current lack of coverage—it is on the bottom of page 2—and the slow roll-out of local multiplexes in Wales, which will not provide the coverage required to satisfy audience demand. It says at the bottom of the page that coverage only exists in the urban south-east, and I am extremely concerned about north-east Wales, in particular. There is a general problem there which I have discussed with Ofcom and the BBC, in terms of technical glitches in the Wrexham area. However, in general, the paragraph on digital radio—DAB—is of great concern. What are we able to do about it, if anything, in this committee? Or should we be discussing and lobbying Ministers in Westminster?

11.40 a.m.

[270] **Rosemary Butler:** This is our response to the White Paper, Eleanor, and we will send a letter. If you wish to add to it, we say that there is great unease about the lack of coverage, and we also say, in the last line, that,

‘currently, they only exist in the urban south-east’.

[271] **Eleanor Burnham:** What I am asking is, are we able to lobby from this committee to Westminster?

[272] **Rosemary Butler:** That is what this is about.

[273] **Eleanor Burnham:** Well, how strongly will we be able to lobby, and how relevant will we be? I am concerned, because we had a meeting with Ofcom last night, and we saw its representatives when ITV came along the previous evening. It seems that there are many technical glitches that perhaps have not been taken seriously enough in Westminster. Do you think that this is strong enough, and what else can we do—and what can you do, for instance?

[274] **Rosemary Butler:** I cannot do anything personally. We have the opportunity to respond to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport White Paper, which is what we are doing. That is the only formal avenue that we have. We need to agree that, and agree this letter. We can move on to your other suggestions later on. Can we just agree this letter, which needs to go? Do you want it strengthened?

[275] **Eleanor Burnham:** I think so, yes.

[276] **Rosemary Butler:** How? I apologise if I sound a bit abrupt, but you have had this for a few days, and we have asked you to submit comments.

[277] **Eleanor Burnham:** Unfortunately, I had a bereavement yesterday.

[278] **Rosemary Butler:** I accept that, but this needs to go off.

[279] **Eleanor Burnham:** Fine. I am telling you now, as I am being given the opportunity.

[280] **Rosemary Butler:** We have had the time for a response extended. If you want it strengthened, please tell us how you want it strengthened, and then we will try to incorporate it.

[281] **Owen John Thomas:** I agree with the main message. However, we should perhaps say that we expect this to happen. It is rather like: Wales is there, it has mountains, and so on, and therefore you have problems getting a reception everywhere, so just accept it. However, the Swiss get over these things, and we do not. We should state that in strong a way. I have not read this—I will be frank with you. I have not had the opportunity. Do not forget that this meeting was preceded by two Plenary discussions, and a lot of other work that we do; I am on eight different committees, did you know that?

[282] **Rosemary Butler:** We are all very busy. However, we have had two or three debates on this, and we have known that this letter has had to go off.

[283] **Eleanor Burnham:** This is what we are discussing now, though, Chair.

[284] **Rosemary Butler:** Please, Eleanor, we cannot leave everything to committee—you have to do some things outside committee. We have only this opportunity this morning to add to it, then it is finished and it is going. You want to include a paragraph saying ‘move the mountains’, is that what you said, Owen John?

[285] **Owen John Thomas:** No. What I am saying is that we should make the presumption that we should be getting this service. All the excuses that we are fobbed off with are not acceptable. We expect this to happen—we should have an attitude of presumption rather than a begging bowl one. I am not saying this takes a begging bowl attitude, but that is where we should show strength—in that presumption that we should have this service.

[286] **Eleanor Burnham:** On the last page, for instance, it says that the BBC would ‘wish’ to see—that is rather wishy-washy. I cannot quite understand the grammar of that. It says that,

‘the BBC would wish to see a second UK-wide multiplex make that kind of provision available for Wales’.

[287] I do not believe that that makes grammatical sense.

[288] **Owen John Thomas:** Can that be strengthened?

[289] **Rosemary Butler:** I am finding this quite difficult.

[290] **Eleanor Burnham:** It has been a difficult committee this morning.

[291] **Rosemary Butler:** It has not, actually; it has been a delightful morning. However, this is an important letter. We have had an extension of time, which you have known about—you have had this, and it would have been helpful if someone in your offices could have looked at it and come back. What do you want exactly, Owen John?

[292] **Owen John Thomas:** I want the attitude of that paragraph—an important paragraph—to be one of our expecting this to happen. This is a service that we should be getting; there should not be this wishful, almost cap-in-hand, attitude towards it. It should be made stronger. It should be a demand for what should be a right.

[293] **Rosemary Butler:** Right, can you take that on board, Julia? What was your point, Eleanor?

[294] **Eleanor Burnham:** It is exactly what I said before—the wishy-washy ‘the BBC would wish’ surely needs to be strengthened.

[295] **Owen John Thomas:** We can just change the words here, Eleanor. If the feeling that is expressed is strengthened, would that suit us all?

[296] **Rosemary Butler:** Do you have a different point, Eleanor?

[297] **Eleanor Burnham:** Yes. The grammar of that sentence is not correct.

[298] **Rosemary Butler:** Okay, the grammar in that sentence—is there anything else? I see that there is not. I ask the clerk to try to get that letter sorted today, and to circulate it as soon as it is written. Can we get it done today?

[299] **Ms Annand:** Yes.

[300] **Rosemary Butler:** Right. Can you circulate it then this afternoon? We will need Members’ comments by the morning; otherwise, this letter will go off as it is. Is that alright? I see that it is.

11.45 a.m.

Adroddiad Blynyddol 2005-06 a Blaenraglen Waith Strategol 2006-07
Annual Report 2005-06 and Strategic Forward Work Programme 2006-07

[301] **Rosemary Butler:** We move on to the annual report and the forward work programme. Are there any comments on this from anyone? No? We suggested earlier that Laura prepared a note for us on cricket, which we were going to consider last year, but that did not happen, and we said we would not—

[302] **Laura Anne Jones:** It was because we were doing football.

[303] **Rosemary Butler:** It was raised again this morning. If you want to do that, we need to find a slot in the diary, somewhere, unless you just do a note, and then we can see what happens.

[304] **Owen John Thomas:** We are stumped, are we? It is a sticky wicket.

[305] **Rosemary Butler:** I am sorry, I did not understand at first; the acoustics in here are really difficult. We will take the annual report first. Are there any comments from anyone on it? It is a factual report on what we have been doing as a committee. It will not be discussed in Plenary as in previous years, because all the committee reports will be submitted to Plenary together and be laid before it and will not be discussed individually. If there is anything that you think has been missed, you can look at the report and come back to us on that, but, having looked at it, I think that it is okay. If not, come back and let the clerk know and things can be added.

[306] Let us look at the forward work programme. Are there any comments from anyone? It is an interesting forward work programme. It is quite tight, but we should be able to get through it. It is a shopping list, to be honest, because we can amend it as we go through, but if we add something, you must think about what we will take out. Are there any other comments? I see that there are none. I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting, which is in two weeks' time, when we will be looking at the Welsh-language programme. Thank you very much.

Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 11.47 a.m.

The meeting ended at 11.47 a.m.