

Answers to Questions not reached in Plenary 30/03/2011

[R] signifies that the Member has declared an interest.

[W] signifies that the question was tabled in Welsh.

Contents

- 1 Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government
- 2 Questions to the Minister for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning

Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government

Equality of Opportunity

9. Mohammad Asghar: *What steps has the Welsh Assembly Government taken to promote equality of opportunity in Wales. OAQ(3)1555(SJL)*

The Minister for Social Justice and Local Government (Carl Sargeant): The steps taken by the Welsh Assembly Government to promote equality of opportunity in Wales are set out in our single equality scheme. The scheme underpins our vision of building a fair, just and tolerant society.

Reorganising Local Government

10. Peter Black: *Will the Minister make a statement on his intentions with regard to re-organising local government. OAQ(3)1550(SJL)*

Carl Sargeant: The Assembly Government has no plans to re-organise local government.

Priorities

11. Darren Millar: *Will the Minister make a statement on his priorities for North Wales for the remaining weeks of the Third Assembly. OAQ(3)1580(SJL)*

Carl Sargeant: I remain committed to resolving the situation in Anglesey, ensuring that the needs of the people of Anglesey come first. We will continue to promote safe, sustainable and fair communities in north Wales and across the country, safeguarding core services and protecting the vulnerable.

Social Justice for Older People

12. Eleanor Burnham: *What is the Minister doing to ensure social justice for older people. OAQ(3)1575(SJL)*

Carl Sargeant: Wales has led the way with our strategy for older people. Through our strategy we will continue to challenge poverty and exclusion, while our recently published paper on social services will transform social services to deliver our ambition for Wales to be the best place to grow older.

Financial Pressure

13. Nick Ramsay: *Will the Minister make a statement on his response to the extra financial*

pressures facing local government. OAQ(3)1584(SJL)

Carl Sargeant: I announced on Monday that I am providing an extra £10 million to local authorities to relieve pressures on childrens' social services and maintain community facilities such as sports centres and family centres. The money comprises £5.5 million in revenue and £4.5 million in capital funding.

Accountability in Local Government

14. Peter Black: *Will the Minister make a statement on accountability in local government. OAQ(3)1549(SJL)*

Carl Sargeant: Local government is accountable to the electorate through their elections every four years. The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 increases that accountability through introducing annual reports for councillors and enabling public engagement with scrutiny.

Disadvantaged People

15. Paul Davies: *Will the Minister outline what the Welsh Assembly Government is doing to support disadvantaged people in West Wales. OAQ(3)1569(SJL)*

Carl Sargeant: Initiatives such as Communities First, the community facilities and activities programme and our overarching child poverty strategy help support the most disadvantaged. They provide the infrastructure, capital funding and help to ensure that all the Assembly Government's policies support the most deprived communities, families and children.

Questions to the Minister for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning

Commitments

5. Andrew R.T. Davies: *Will the Minister outline his remaining commitments for the South Wales Central region prior to dissolution. OAQ(3)1712(CEL) Question transferred for written answer.*

The Minister for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning (Leighton Andrews): You will find these in 'One Wales'. I have also made a commitment to ensure that more resources reach the front line of education.

Questions 6, 7 and 8 were answered during Plenary.

Question 9, OAQ(3)1713(CEL), and question 10, OAQ(3)1730(CEL), were withdrawn.

Questions 11, 12 and 13 were answered during Plenary.

Consultation Periods

14. Eleanor Burnham: *Will the Minister make a statement on consultation periods for school re-organisation. OAQ(3)1726(CEL)*

Leighton Andrews: Consultation periods for school organisation should be sufficient to allow all those affected the opportunity to make their views known. There is no prescription about the length of time that should be allowed for consultation on proposals that may be brought forward under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Educational Attainment

15. Nick Bourne: *Will the Minister make a statement on current educational attainment in Wales. OAQ(3)1707(CEL)*

Leighton Andrews: I refer the member to the written statement that I issued on 2 February.