

Answers issued to Members on 17 June 2009

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

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

Contents

2	Questions to the Minister for Heritage
---	--

Questions to the Minister for Heritage

Alun Cairns (South Wales West): Will the Minister make a statement on the Value for money achieved in terms of skills and job creation from the £200k invested in the Welsh Language news website? (WAQ54331)

The Minister for Heritage (Alun Ffred Jones): In the initial phase, seven new full-time posts have been created in Golwg360, including four posts for journalists. There are plans to invest in further jobs as the project develops. These are very valuable jobs, especially in a rural area such as the Teifi Valley. The newly appointed journalists have received intensive training from experienced professionals, and this training is on-going. The news service will also be buying in material, for example from freelance reporters and photographers.

Golwg Newydd is working with the Welsh Assembly Government through its Workforce Development Programme to draw out a skills and training programme for new members of staff and existing employees.

Alun Cairns (South Wales West): Will the Minister detail (a) the involvement of TV Everywhere in the work to design and create the Welsh language news website and (b) what implication their status at Companies House has in relations to the use of public funds? (WAQ54332)

Alun Cairns (South Wales West): How much public money did TV Everywhere receive in relation to their design, creation and running of the Welsh language news website? (WAQ54333)

Alun Ffred Jones: Iolo Jones of TVEverywhere acted as a consultant to Golwg Newydd. He worked on the original business plan which was part of the Golwg bid for funding. He then worked with the company in developing the concept, and acted as a co-ordinator between Golwg Newydd and Tinopolis (who were responsible for supplying the software) on the technical side.

The total sum paid to TVEverywhere in 2008/09 was £25,354, and nothing has been paid in 2009/10.

Alun Cairns (South Wales West): Will the Minister make a statement on the performance of the Welsh language news website which has received £200k of public funds? (WAQ54335)

Alun Ffred Jones: The site was launched on 15 May. There were considerable technical problems in the first week, but the site was stabilised by 22 May, and since then it has been available to users on most platforms.

The news service is regularly updated and has been well received by users. One of the original targets set out in the contract was that there would be a minimum of 10 new stories and UK and international headlines every day on the site. Golwg360 have succeeded in surpassing this target regularly since the service started. It is the only Welsh-language website which gives regular coverage of international news. It has also succeeded in providing information that no other Welsh website provided; for instance, it was the first website to provide the full results of the European Parliament Election for all constituencies in Wales.

Alun Cairns (South Wales West): What plans does the Minister have to review the policy of committing £200k of public funds to a Welsh language news website? (WAQ54337)

Alun Ffred Jones: Golwg Newydd was awarded the grant for the website for three years, 2008/9-2010/11, subject to the usual monitoring procedures. The contract between Golwg Newydd and the Welsh Books Council states that there will be a full formal review of the project in the summer of 2010, within a year of the service going live.