

## Answers to Questions not reached in Plenary 21 May 2002

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

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

### Questions to the First Minister

#### Promoting Assembly Cross-cutting Themes

**Q4 Pauline Jarman:** How is the First Minister monitoring the effectiveness of the National Assembly in ensuring that the three cross-cutting themes of social inclusion, equality of opportunity and sustainable development are promoted in delivering policies? (OAQ17721) *Transferred for written answer.*

**The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan):** We publish formal annual reports setting out progress on our three guiding themes.

We have recently enjoyed visits to Wales by the equal opportunity commissioners and the UK sustainable development commissioners. All felt that we were setting a lead in our work to date.

We are currently piloting an integration appraisal tool for staff to ensure that the Assembly's cross-cutting themes are reflected consistently in policy development. This will cover the commitment made in the sustainable development action plan to develop a framework for sustainability appraisal.

#### 'Plan for Wales 2001' (Progress Towards Achieving Targets)

**Q13 David Lloyd:** Will the First Minister give a report on progress made towards achieving the targets for 2003-04 in the 'Plan for Wales 2001' strategic document? (OAQ17720)

**The First Minister:** I am confident that we are making good progress toward achieving our targets for 2003-04 as set out in 'Plan for Wales 2001'. However, the targets for the operational plan have been published and the next First Minister's report is due in October.

For example, in health we have already reduced maximum waiting times for in-patient treatment for the priority areas of cardiac surgery to 12 months, and we aim to ensure that, by the end of July 2002, no-one waits longer than 18 months for orthopaedic surgery.

#### Government of Wales Policies (Benefits for Powys)

**Q14 Nick Bourne:** How have the policies of the Government of Wales benefited Powys? (OAQ17726)

**The First Minister:** The Welsh Assembly Government is working hard in Powys, as it is throughout Wales, to ensure that its policies are of real benefit to the people of Wales.

Over the last two years, we have announced £2 million in transport grants for infrastructure projects and Safe Routes to Schools in Powys, as well as specific additional funding for road safety projects, local road maintenance projects and more than £1 million from the local transport services grant.

Small and medium-sized firms in Powys are expected to be major beneficiaries of the new Assembly investment grant.

**Government of Wales Policies (Benefits for South Wales East)**

**Q15 William Graham:** Will the Minister make a statement concerning how the policies of his administration benefit South Wales East? (OAQ17735)

**The First Minister:** The Welsh Assembly Government is working throughout Wales, including South Wales East, to ensure that it delivers its policies to spread prosperity and improve key public services for the people of Wales.

Since July 1999, the Assembly Government has made offers of regional selective assistance in South Wales East worth over £98 million, securing nearly £400 million of private investment, which is expected to create nearly 8,000 new jobs.